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Report of the Presiding Bishop

“Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.” (Matthew 28:5-6)

Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

In these great 50 days of Easter the power and promise of Christ's resurrection is felt poignantly by all who mourn the death of Bishop Margarita Martinez of the Caribbean Synod. This faithful servant of the Gospel taught us again how to sing the Lord's song even in the midst of great struggles. She gave us courage in our pursuit of justice and our commitment to being an anti-racist and increasingly multicultural church. She was highly respected within the Caribbean Synod and throughout the worldwide Lutheran communion for her significant role as a mentor to women in leadership, and for her ecumenical commitment and prophetic voice. We continue to pray for her family and for all who mourn her death and give thanks to God for her life.

The Conference of Bishops last month we expressed our gratitude for the thirteen synodical bishops and Secretary Lowell Almen who complete their service this year. Members of the Conference also prayed with all of us who are facing re-election this spring and summer. In the coming weeks I hope that each of us can find ways to personally and publicly express gratitude to God for these exceptional servant leaders: Bishop Paul Swanson, Bishop Rich Omland, Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Bishop Paul Blom, Bishop George Carlson, Bishop Paul Landahl, Bishop Robert Berg, Bishop Gary Hansen, Bishop Ted Schneider, Bishop Donald McCoid, Bishop A. Donald Main, Bishop Ron Warren, the late Bishop Margarita Martinez, and Secretary Lowell Almen.

Please keep all of our synods and their respective leaders in your prayers as they convene assemblies in the coming months. Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich will be posting on the Church Council online meeting the dates of these assemblies and the results of elections that are held.

I want to say a special word of thanks to three individuals for their many contributions to the life and witness of this church. Thank you to Secretary Lowell Almen for his vital contributions to the work of the Church Council. He has been the bearer of memory; the interpreter of governing documents; the reminder of one holy, catholic, and apostolic church to which we belong; the keeper of historical records; and a key partner in

deepening our ecumenical relationships.

Thank you to Executive for Administration Charles Miller for his significant contributions to the work and ministry of the churchwide organization. Charles led the for Division for Church in Society in its early years as we sought to be public leaders in a public church and provided vital insights into the formation of Lutheran Services in America, whose 10th anniversary we celebrate this year. As executive for administration, Charles has taken the lead in coordinating strategic planning, budget development, supervision of the day-to-day functions of the churchwide organization, and has helped us all to live into our commitment to be better at communication, collaboration, coordination, and cooperation.

And thank you to Donald Hallberg, President of the ELCA Foundation and Executive for Development Services, for the energy and enthusiasm for mission with which he has infused this church during his years of ministry here. Don has been an interpreter of mission; has helped members of this church understand the blessings that come from giving freely to our mission and ministry through deferred and major gifts; and the source of excitement and energy around mission for all of us who serve in the churchwide organization.

I also am aware that several dedicated, gifted servant leaders are finishing their terms on this council in 2007. I thank God for the exemplary leadership and service provided by Grieg Anderson, Faith Ashton, Judy Biffle, Joseph Crippen, Charles Mays, Jessica McKee, David Nelson, Kenneth Rupp, Sarah Stumme, and Allan Thomas during their years of council membership. You have made significant contributions in giving focus to the work of the churchwide organization and the mission to which God calls and equips the ELCA.

At this meeting we will also express thanks to God for the leadership of Ray Schultz, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. This gifted theologian, committed ecumenist, provocative preacher, and global leader will be missed.

The Plan for Mission continues to provide structure for unit strategic planning within the churchwide organization. I use it to structure my report to you as we continue to implement, interpret, and evaluate the work of the churchwide organization.

Strategic Directions

Support congregations in their call to be faithful, welcoming, and generous, sharing the mind of Christ.

Visit to New Orleans

Lent began for me with a visit to New Orleans. In the midst of the massive challenges facing the community, ELCA congregations, pastors, and partners gave faithful witness in heeding the prophet Isaiah's call to rebuild the ruined cities. A very significant part of the recent Conference of Bishops meeting in Galveston involved listening to the stories of those who continue to live in the midst of Katrina's and Rita's devastation and who are faithfully and courageously rebuilding personal lives, congregations, and communities. Even as we continue to thank God for their powerful gospel witness and for the generosity of volunteers and donors throughout this church, we need to assess what we as a church are learning about responding to disasters of this magnitude. Building upon the strong foundation of LDR's work and the collaboration between synods, congregations, and the churchwide organization, we also need to develop improved ways to support congregations that have been affected. I will be convening a table of leaders from synods and within the churchwide organization to discuss how we can be more responsive to the many needs that arise when crises of this magnitude strike.

Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza

In early February I had the privilege of attending the Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza in Tampa Bay, Fla. Under the theme of "Open House," over 500 leaders in youth and family ministries came together for worship, story sharing, and nurturing of the faith. The energy, creativity, and enthusiasm I witnessed were contagious. Amidst all the challenges we face in establishing priorities for ministry, let us recommit to youth and family ministry as central rather than peripheral to our life together in mission.

Simple Living

Simple Living will be a strong component of hunger education in this church, with the publication of two new resources, "Sustaining Simplicity: A Journal" by Anne Basye and "The Race: A Simplicity Musical" by Jay Beech. I thank God for the generosity that members of this church have shown in their increased giving to World Hunger. These gifts, and our own focus on simple living and advocacy through the One campaign,

will do much to provide for those who lack food, shelter, and the other basic necessities of life.

Assist members, congregations, synods, and institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach.

Focus on Discipleship

As a result of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit's strategic planning work, discipleship has emerged as a unifying priority. This includes the work of evangelizing, Christian education, and other aspects of congregational life. A small group of bishops has been in conversation with EOCM staff, providing input, suggestions, and vision about the churchwide organization's role in discipleship. These conversations will guide the development of a new staff position to direct and support the churchwide organization's participation in the ministry of discipleship in the ELCA.

Mission Interpreters' Event

Mission interpreters tell the stories of how God is changing lives through the financial giving of ELCA members. Mission Partners connect congregations in supportive relationships to help them reach out to the unchurched in their communities by helping to start new congregations. A training event in February 2007 brought together both groups. The gathering was spiritually enlivening and asked, "How might the impact on new and renewing congregations be magnified if we work together; if we multiply ourselves and enlarge the circle?" This is yet another example of the collaboration that is taking place within the churchwide organization, as all see themselves as interpreters of the mission to which God calls us.

Outreach Grants to Synods

At the March Conference of Bishops meeting I announced that, due to wise stewardship in spending and income received over expenses, the churchwide organization is giving \$10,000 grants to each of the 65 synods in this church for use in evangelism or outreach-focused initiatives. While bishops from each region have worked with staff from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit to develop basic guidelines for these grants, it is my hope that they will be used freely and creatively to forward the outreach and evangelical mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God's love for all that God has created.

We are a public church as all the baptized live out their faith in their daily callings in home, school, neighborhoods, and the workplace. We are public church as we gather around the means of grace in worship. We are a public church when we wrestle with challenging questions:

- When shall we be leaders who convene people of varying perspectives so that we might discern together what God is calling us to do in the midst of our complex and conflicted world?
- When shall we join others as we advocate for particular public policies and seek to hold elected officials accountable?
- When and how do we accompany those who experience daily the realities of poverty, war, inadequate health care, and HIV and AIDS?

These are questions that synodical bishops and leaders within the churchwide organization are asking of each other. I encourage you as elected leaders of this church to join us as we engage these significant questions.

A Call to Conversation on Iraq

At the end of January I prepared a pastoral letter, "A Call to Conversation on Iraq." It is my hope that the members of this church are coming together in conversation and moral discernment about this conflict that has no end in sight. I believe congregations, colleges and universities, campus ministries, and seminaries, can be safe places in which the rancor that so often characterizes our public discourse is set aside for respectful, thoughtful and prayerful engagement with each other.

Peace between Palestinians and Israel

The ELCA has made a strong commitment to Middle East peace through the "Churchwide Strategy for ELCA Engagement in Israel and Palestine." We continue to live out that commitment through building awareness, advocacy, and accompaniment. Bishop Munib Younan's recent visit and his many opportunities to speak throughout the ELCA built upon those commitments.

With five other religious leaders from the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative, I participated in a lively and helpful conversation with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. I encourage you to become familiar with our statement "Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Peace:

From Crisis to Hope" issued December 12, 2006. This statement can be found at <http://www.elca.org/advocacy/issues/middleeast/06-12-14-nilistatement.html>. It is a helpful teaching tool issued by a group of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious leaders. I appreciate the efforts of Dr. Rice in recent weeks seeking to convene serious negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis.

Lutheran Disaster Response

In addition to the ongoing work of Lutheran Disaster Response along the Gulf Coast, LDR has recently responded to flooding in El Paso, an earthquake in Hawaii, an ice storm that affected the Indian Oaks Mission in Oklahoma and parts of rural Nebraska, and the Groundhog Day tornado in Florida. In December, representatives from the various LDR affiliates gathered in Phoenix for the Lutheran Disaster Response biennial conference, where the overarching theme was "Justice in the Desert." Among other important goals, Lutheran Disaster Response is striving this year to emphasize the need for localized disaster preparedness, a goal which will be enhanced by the 2007 cycle of preparedness grants.

Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships for the sake of God's mission.

60th Anniversary of the Lutheran World Federation

A number of ELCA leaders participated in the 60th anniversary celebration of the Lutheran World Federation in Lund, Sweden. We came together recalling how Lutherans also gathered there 60 years before, in the aftermath of World War II, to confront the painful divisions created by the war and to respond compassionately to the needs of refugees, one out of six of whom were Lutheran. In that same location, we renewed our commitment to engaging the powerful forces that continue to divide humanity and to continue living out our baptismal calling to serve all people following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. We gave thanks to God that we have deepened our relationship with one another within the communion of the Lutheran World Federation in these 60 years, but not at the expense of our shared commitment to unity in the body of Christ and our desire to be engaged in inter-religious dialogue.

The LWF Council adopted a statement on Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church and sent to member churches the report of the task force on

“Marriage, Family, and Human Sexuality” with suggested guidelines for conversation on those topics.

Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.

In the ecumenical sphere, history was made on February 7, 2007, when Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. (CCT) was formally launched at a service in Pasadena, Calif. CCT now counts 36 churches and national organizations as members. Participants at the early February meeting decided to stress evangelism and working to end poverty in this country as the focus of the organization’s work together. A search is presently underway for an executive director. Former ELCA bishop Jon S. Enslin is the chair of the search committee.

National Council of Churches Transition

The National Council of Churches also is about to launch a search for a new general secretary, after the Rev. Robert Edgar chose not to seek another four-year term. The 21-member search committee includes ELCA member Crystal Klein and is co-chaired by Pr. Randy Lee, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations.

Conversation with African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

I am grateful to Bishop Leonard Bolick of the North Carolina Synod for his invaluable assistance in making possible a conversation at the end of February with Bishop George Walker and leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. We had an excellent beginning which led to the decision to meet again in the fall.

Winter Global Mission Events

In addition to the Global Mission Event that will be held this summer in Columbus, Ohio, two winter global mission events were held in the last few months. An “ELCA Global Mission Festival” was held January 26-28 at St. John Lutheran Church in Winter Park, Fla., and an “ELCA Global Mission Fiesta” was held February 2-3 at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Ariz. These new winter events were designed to be smaller and shorter than the summer event and to focus on regional rather than national participation

Assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world.

ELCA Colleges and Universities

In January I had the opportunity to visit Dana and Luther Colleges and to meet with ELCA college and university presidents and board chairs at their annual meeting. On each occasion I reaffirmed our commitment to our shared mission in higher education. As Lutherans, we draw upon our rich history of believing that faith both frees us to engage life’s big questions and informs our engagement. The colleges have an important role in planting unquenchable curiosity within students and in providing the opportunity to nurture their faith in worship and explore it in study. I strongly affirm the way students are experiencing diverse contexts locally and globally, and I admire their desire to make a difference in serving the neighbor, caring for the creation, and striving for justice and peace.

African Descent Young Adult Consultation

An African Descent Young Adult Consultation was held in Chicago in January 2007 at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The three main goals of the event were to raise awareness of leadership opportunities within all expressions of the ELCA; to identify the barriers and challenges to full participation of African Descent young adults within the ELCA; and for at least three participants to agree to pursue an interest in rostered leadership with their pastor or synod. There were 31 participants at the event, ranging in age from 18 to 36. Thirteen of the participants indicated an openness to consider rostered leadership in this church.

LSTC Leadership Conference

The LSTC leadership conference on “No Easy Answers: Engaging Challenging Texts” was one of the many significant contributions to the growing focus on scripture throughout this church. I also had the opportunity to meet with the LSTC faculty. The lively exchange renewed my gratitude for our eight seminaries, the teaching theologians of this church, and our shared commitment to bringing forth and supporting faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world. Our shared commitment was renewed during the annual retreat with seminary presidents and Vocation and Education staff.

We are delighted that Pr. Paul Hanson has accepted the call to serve as the new director of the Fund for

Leaders in Mission. I look forward to conversations this spring on how we as the churchwide organization, synods, and seminaries can continue to meet the challenges of the cost of theological education and work with seminarians as they deal with personal financial challenges and grow as steward leaders.

Commitments for Implementation

Anti-racism

This church's vision of freedom and liberation from the vestiges of racism are spelled out in the ELCA constitution and the social statement, "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture." The constitution committed this church to membership goal of 10 percent people of color by 1998. We still fall far short of this commitment, which is grounded in the Gospel. I challenge us as the governing board of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consider our role in moving the ELCA closer to being an anti-racist and multicultural church.

At this meeting, the Church Council's anti-racism planning team will lead us through a time of continued learning about race and racism. Some of this material will be challenging to our individual and collective ways of being. Christ invites us, our constitution binds us, and our social statement challenges us to stay engaged. In addition to education, the Church Council anti-racism planning team, through the Executive Committee, will bring before the council proposed recommendations for concrete practices designed to move us closer to our commitment to being at 10 percent participation of people of color.

Alliances within the Churchwide Organization

Four alliances based on the churchwide organization's commitments for implementation have begun their work. These alliances: multicultural ministries, justice for women, poverty and wealth, and young adult ministry, are made up of churchwide staff representing each office, program unit, service unit, and section. They have embraced their work with energy and commitment as they come together to carry out this church's mission in new ways.

Additional Initiatives

Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding

At this meeting the Church Council will have opportunity to discuss the report and recommendations

of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding. I have reviewed these recommendations carefully and support them fully. In preparing a proposal for the 2008 budget, I have included funds that will enable us to implement those recommendations that require budgetary support. I believe it is time to make a bold move to turn around our multi-year mission support trends. I am grateful for all those who worked so hard at preparing these recommendations. The faithfulness, dedication, and imagination of those that gathered for these meetings were awe-inspiring. We have their best thinking before us; I encourage us to put it to good use. I am especially grateful to Jennifer Thomas, Grieg Anderson and the late Earl Mummert for their faithful commitment in serving on this committee.

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible

We also will discuss at this meeting a proposal that calls on members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative identified as Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible. I am very excited about this initiative, and I know many of you are as well. It was my privilege to be part of a consultation held in late January that brought together teaching theologians, bishops, parish pastors, Christian educators, youth leaders, and churchwide staff to discuss what this initiative might look like. I trust that this is an effort around which all members of this church can joyfully and eagerly gather.

Thank you

In closing, I give thanks to God for all of you, for your commitment and dedication as elected leaders of this church, and for the faithful ways in which you lead, serve, and bear witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus for the whole world.

Alleluia! Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Mark S. Hanson,
Presiding Bishop
The Resurrection of Our Lord, 2007

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

Exhibit A, Part 1

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Summary of Section Activities

Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

Submitted by: Pr. Randall R. Lee

Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. An executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies relative thereto to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly (15.11.B05.).

This report of the activities of the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop is organized around the various spheres of the section's responsibilities.

Full Communion Relationships

The ecumenical officers of the four churches sharing a relationship of full communion through A Formula of Agreement will meet April 10-11, 2007, to prepare for the meeting of the Lutheran-Reformed Coordinating Committee scheduled for late fall. The group specifically will discuss a proposal that the Lutheran-Reformed Theology Commission engage in a study of the use of Scripture. The group will also continue planning for the 10th anniversary celebration of the adoption of A Formula of Agreement in the fall of 2007.

The Lutheran-Moravian Coordinating Committee met by conference call March 7, 2007. Conversation centered on the recent actions of the West Indies Province of the Moravian Church to endorse, "Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion," the document which established a relationship of full communion between this church and the Northern and Southern Provinces in 1999. The coordinating committee will next meet June 25-27, 2007, in Chicago.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee will meet April 24-26, 2007, at the Diocesan Center in Los Angeles, California. This next meeting of the committee will focus its attention on the youth and young adult ministries of the churches.

Bilateral Dialogues

The fifth meeting of Round XI of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue met March 15-18, 2007, on the campus of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C., home to two members of the dialogue. The theme of this round is,

"The Hope of Eternal Life," and the meeting focused on the presentation of papers on a wide range of topics related to this theme. A public service of Evening Prayer and a seminar for seminary students also characterized this meeting.

A final meeting of select members of the Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue for the present round of conversations was held November 28, 2006, in Pittsburgh. The purpose of this meeting was to finalize edited versions of many of the papers that have been presented in order to post them on the Web sites of the churches. The proposed "Guidebook for Lutheran-Orthodox Relations" also will be finalized in order to make it available online as well. Finally, the meeting will consider topics and time lines for a next round of conversation.

The Lutheran-United Methodist Dialogue continues to await responses from congregations, seminaries, and others to the proposal to establish a relationship of full communion between this church and the United Methodist Church. If the responses suggest changes to the document, the dialogue will convene to consider them; otherwise, the dialogue will have completed its work and will await the appropriate legislative responses of the two churches.

As reported earlier, the Lutheran-Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Dialogue has been postponed while that church engages in study on the doctrine of the ministry related to Churches Uniting in Christ.

Informal conversations, which it is hoped will lead to a more formal relationship, were held February 25-26, 2007, with representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church at the Lutheran Center.

Conciliar Relationships

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Lutheran World Federation will be held in late March 2007 in Lund, Sweden, the site of the establishment of the federation. The meeting is set within the context of a major leadership event and the meeting of the LWF Council. Representatives of the LWF and the International Lutheran Council, a global fellowship of churches related to The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, met February 22-23, 2007, in Toronto, to discuss issues of concern to the two global Lutheran entities.

The plan for the reorganization of the programs and staff of the World Council of Churches voted

upon by the Central Committee in September 2006 is moving forward. The plan calls for shifting the way U.S. member churches relate to the WCC from New York City to Geneva.

A search process to identify a new general secretary for the National Council of the Churches of Christ has been launched following the announcement of the current general secretary, the Rev. Robert Edgar, that he would not be available to serve a third term as general secretary. Pr. Randall Lee serves as co-chair of the search committee and Ms. Crystal Klein also represents this church on the committee.

Reception

Planning and implementation of Phase II of the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations (ER) strategic plan continues. The plan includes an emphasis on ecumenical formation, which the office encourages in a number of ways. First, ER and the LWF co-sponsored a seminary January-Term on Ecumenism in the Global Church. Seminarians from five ELCA seminaries gathered in Geneva for two weeks in January. Thus far, 65 seminarians have attended the course in three years. Second, ER is encouraging greater young adult and gender diversity in appointments to the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network [LERN], which was evident at the last National Workshop on Christian Unity in January 2007. Third, grants and opportunities to young adults and emerging clergy for ecumenical and inter-religious formation have been awarded. Next, the ELCA-UMC study document titled "Confessing Our Faith Together: A Study and Discussion Guide" has been available online since October 2006.

Congregations are sincerely requested to study the document, fill out the evaluation form, and return the form to the indicated address.

Inter-Religious Relations

The inter-religious primer, "Windows for Understanding: Jewish-Muslim-Lutheran Relations," is generating approval and encouragement from ecumenical and inter-religious partners alike. At least one inter-religious partner is requesting the development of mutual resources to address Jewish, Muslim, and Christian concerns in North America.

The Lutheran-Jewish Consultative Panel met March 2-3, 2007, in Chicago. The panel is reassessing how it can best consult on behalf of the presiding bishop, and responded to two consultation requests from the presiding bishop in the fall 2006.

The Rev. Dr. Marc Swanson, professor of

Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, has agreed to serve as the first chair for the new ELCA Lutheran-Muslim Consultative Panel. In June 2007 Dr. Swanson and ER staff will begin planning in earnest for a first meeting of the Lutheran-Muslim Consultative Panel in the fall of 2007.

ER staff have increased presence and responsibility on the National Council of Churches Interfaith Commission, along with other inter-religious commissions. Staff likewise traveled to the Holy Land with an ELCA delegation in order to accompany the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).

Human Resources

Submitted by: Ms. Else B. Thompson

Responsibility for human resources shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide management of the personnel policies for the churchwide organization, except as otherwise determined, including equal-employment opportunity and affirmative action, recruitment, interview, and selection, compensation and benefits, fair-employment practices, staff position description, performance evaluation, and training.

Human Resources, a section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, includes staffing, compensation and benefits, training and development, employee relations, volunteer coordination, and art management.

Human Resources is committed to serving the mission of the churchwide organization by serving its people—those here, those deployed, and those who formerly served. The section accomplishes its goals by working with other units in staffing positions, by meeting needs for training and development, through fair compensation and benefit systems, and by promoting positive relationships. The HR web site can be found at www.elca.org/employment

Staffing

Human Resources received 1,424 applications/resumes in 2006. Fifty-two posted positions were filled. The ELCA continues to be committed to hiring qualified persons of diverse backgrounds. Twenty-three of the 55 posted positions were filled by people of color. As of December 2006, the churchwide organization staff was approximately 65 percent Caucasian and 35 percent people of color.

Positions filled in 2006 included the Assistant Director for Multicultural Leadership (VE); Director

for African American Outreach and Leadership (EOCM); Controller (FO); Director for Young Adult Ministries (VE); Director for Marketing and Public Relations (CO); Coordinator for Anti-Racism Education and Training (OB/HR); Major Gifts Officer (DS); Director for Ministry Leadership—Candidacy and Deployment (VE); Vice President/Chief Officer (MIF); Director for Justice for Women (CS); and many other positions all key to churchwide operations.

In addition, in 2006 HR processed 474 contracts, approximately 20 relocations, 24 promotions (employees moving to a higher grade level because of changed duties or by taking another position within the organization); and 240 requests for withdrawals from continuing education funds.

Compensation and Benefits

As mandated in the personnel policies of the churchwide organization, HR sponsors a regular examination of the salary grades used for compensation administration in the churchwide offices. In addition, grade-level reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis for various positions.

Following a comprehensive study in 2006, the Church Council approved four separate salary ranges, effective February 1, 2007, in order to respond to market pressure. In addition to the regular salary ranges, special market comparisons were made for salaries in Information Technology, Development Services, and the Mission Investment Fund. Salaries in each of these areas are now being administered in ranges specific to its discipline.

The newly approved ranges ensure that ELCA salaries are competitive with similar organizations in the Chicago area. Similar organizations are those that are not-for-profit, render a service to society, and are mission-driven.

In addition to the work on competitive and appropriate ranges for grades, HR worked with unit executives and supervisors to address various salary issues created by the restructuring and to ensure that employees have current job descriptions. Because of the changing nature of today's workplace, this work is ongoing.

At the end of the year, there were 224 employees enrolled in the flexible spending account, 28 waiving Board of Pensions insurance, 34 enrolled in the transit benefit, and 355 participating in continuing education.

Training and Development Opportunities

Throughout the year, various training and development opportunities were made available on site

to staff. Offerings in 2006 included a day-long training in legal issues for unit executives, preventing harassment (required for new hires), and day-long trainings on each of the following—business writing, presentations and public speaking, and successful supervision.

Staff Events

The annual churchwide staff gathering held in December included the singing of carols and an advent service, "The Word Made Flesh in Scripture and Song." Following the service, a reception was held in the 11th floor conference center. Employees then gathered to recognize and celebrate colleagues who had marked service anniversaries in 2006. Twenty-five employees celebrated five-year anniversaries; 21 employees celebrated 10-year anniversaries; and four employees celebrated 15-year anniversaries in 2006.

Staff participated in three service projects during December. Staff contributed \$1,450 that was sent to the Contact Resource Center in Beirut, Lebanon, which advocates for and helps train handicapped people; crocheted and knitted 87 prayer shawls that were given to a hospice in Chicago; and fulfilled the Christmas wish lists for 21 children through a Lutheran Social Services of Illinois project.

Research and Evaluation

Submitted by: Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep

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

Research and Evaluation (RE) is committed to assisting the leaders and staff of the churchwide organization, synods, and congregations by providing reliable and relevant information and appropriate evaluation related to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). RE makes available to the ELCA the experience, knowledge, and technical skills of its staff.

RE, with Multicultural Ministries, completed an initial review of the Ethnic Ministry Strategies. Considerably more work needs to be conducted on the efforts to monitor and implement the strategies. Work also continues to monitor the implementation of the evangelism strategy.

RE continues to gather information to support the

work of churchwide units and synods through its survey work. Surveys have been completed or are in progress for Lutheran Woman Today, the ELCA News Service, the Mission Investment Fund, Seeds for the Parish, the Youth Ministry Network, and ELCA affiliated schools.

RE is finishing the data collection on a survey of clergy in the ELCA that focuses on the work of their congregations and their relationship to the ELCA, both as clergy and as congregations.

RE, in cooperation with Augsburg Fortress Publishers and the worship staff of the ELCA, is currently fielding a questionnaire on the resources used by ELCA congregations for planning worship and using media in worship.

RE is working with Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) to more systematically gather data on new ministry starts. A full study of new starts will be completed this year.

RE coordinated, conducted interviews, and completed a report in support of the work on justice for women in the ELCA.

RE, in cooperation with Synodical Relations, has conducted synod reviews in the Southwestern Texas Synod and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. The unit is also working with the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod on its small congregations project, and with the Minneapolis Area synod to assess the extent of social ministry activities conducted by the congregations of the synod.

Presentations reviewing the ministry context of synods have been made in the Pacifica Synod, the Sierra Pacific Synod, the LaCrosse Area Synod, and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Presentations were also made on the context for ministry to the Luther Seminary Board, the Lutheran Leaders Program (supported by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans), and the Conference of Bishops.

Presentations on the future of mainline denominations were made to a clergy conference in the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, to the Lutheridge Ministries Board in Arden, N.C., and to a Central States Synod group of lay and clergy leaders in Russell, Kan.

RE continues its ongoing evaluation work of the grants made to churchwide units through the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans block grant program. RE also provides training for the grant applicants and reviews applications.

RE continues to respond to synod and other churchwide requests for information about clergy and congregations in their synods.

RE continues to respond to an overwhelming number of requests for demographic information primarily from the mission directors of EOCM. Considerable demographic work has also been completed to support presentations about synod and churchwide ministry context.

Synodical Relations

Submitted by: Pr. Kathie Bender Schwich

Responsibility for synodical relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to coordinate the relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, develop and implement synodical-churchwide consultations and services, render support for synodical bishops and synodical staff, and provide staff services for the Conference of Bishops (15.11.G05.).

Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops met March 1-6, 2007, on Galveston Island, Texas. The meeting included time spent discussing declining membership in the ELCA and exploring new opportunities for growing the church, as well as time in conversation about the cost of funding new mission starts. While gathered in Galveston the bishops had opportunity to bid farewell to twelve colleagues who will leave office this year due to retirement, term limits, or seeking a new call. Following the meeting, several bishops journeyed to New Orleans, where they visited with pastors and leaders from area congregations and saw both the ongoing devastation from last year's hurricanes as well as the recovery efforts that LDR continues to provide.

Bishops' Assistants and Associates Gathering

Prior to the Conference of Bishops meeting in Galveston, assistants and associates to synodical bishops came together for their biennial gathering. The theme of the event was "Islands of Hope: Weathering the Storms" and included presentations by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, Professor Diane Jacobson from Luther Seminary, Professor David Rhoads from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Mr. Jerome Ringo, chair of the National Wildlife Federation. Synod leaders chose to meet in the gulf coast region in order to take part in a hurricane recovery efforts in Port Arthur, Tex., immediately following the gathering.

Synodical Churchwide Consultations

Consultations for 2006-2007 took place with individual synods in regions 1, 5, and 9, and regionally

in the other six regions. Feedback from those involved in the consultations has been very positive; participants appreciated the time spent hearing and learning from one another as they discussed challenges and opportunities faced by the synods and the churchwide organization. Synodical Relations is committed to the ongoing improvement of these consultations so that they will become a valuable resource in our shared efforts to build relationships, emphasize our interconnectedness, and carry out ministry together. We are excited about the gifts and insights that Pr. Craig Settlage, the new Director for Mission Support, will bring to this work.

Synod Council Resource

A task force consisting of nine synodical vice presidents and Synodical Relations staff has created a resource that will provide support for the “orientation and development of the work of synod councils” and specific support for synod vice presidents, secretaries, and treasurers. This resource has been reviewed by a number of synod officers, and will be available online in the next few weeks.

Synod Assembly Preparation

Over the next three months, all 65 synods of this church will meet in assembly. Synodical Relations is working with the churchwide representatives assigned to each assembly, preparing them with the information they will need to respond to questions about various areas of churchwide ministry, and encouraging them to be in conversation with the synod’s leaders to learn about the specific themes and special needs in their respective synods. We value the partnership and the resource that members of the Church Council provide to the synod assemblies in which they participate. Twenty-five synods will be electing bishops in 2007; at least 12 synods will elect a new bishop. Synodical Relations staff is ready to support these synods and their newly elected leaders as they make necessary transitions and begin their ministry together.

Information Sharing with Synods

At its April 2006 meeting, the ELCA Church Council established a systematic process for sharing information with synodical leaders on major churchwide decisions facing future Churchwide Assemblies. Synodical Relations staff has coordinated the dissemination of this information through synod assemblies and the Synodical Relations Website. Synodical leaders and voting members are being encouraged to engage the churchwide representative to

their respective synod assemblies on issues facing the upcoming Churchwide Assembly.

Worship and Liturgical Resources

Submitted by: Pr. Michael L. Burk

Responsibility for leadership of the worship life of this church shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. In so doing, efforts shall be undertaken to support the worship ministry of this church, oversee the development and review of worship resources intended for use throughout this church, and recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies related to worship and sacramental practices to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly (15.11.H05.).

Worship and Liturgical Resources directed efforts to introduce *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Introductory efforts culminate in “Worship Jubilee 2007,” a churchwide worship event designed to feature the flexibility of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and further the ongoing work of worship renewal throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In addition to providing enhanced support for worship and worship planning to other units of the churchwide organization, Worship and Liturgical Resources is working to redesign the worship@elca.org Website, and has introduced an e-newsletter, collaborated on various worship matters with ecumenical partners, and continued work on ethnic-specific worship resources, in particular Chinese-language materials.

Resources produced collaboratively with Augsburg Fortress in 2006 include:

- Chinese Lutheran Book of Worship
- Introductory Kit for *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- Lectionary for Worship C (Ritual, Study Editions)
- Gospel Acclamations, vols. 1 and 2
- Psalter for Worship C, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Pew Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Accompaniment: Liturgies
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Accompaniment: Service Music and Hymns
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Leaders Desk Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Leaders Ritual

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Edition

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Audio CDs (2 Liturgy; 1 hymns)
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Liturgies CD-ROM
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* additions to Sundays and Seasons.com
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Lent and Holy Week offprints
- Kids Celebrate Worship (four titles)

Lutheran Worship is scheduled for 2009.

Resources produced collaboratively with Augsburg Fortress scheduled for 2007 include:

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Gift Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Ceremonial Binder
- Gospel Acclamations, volumes 3 and 4
- Worship for Life series: Christ in Your Marriage
- Lectionary for Worship A (Ritual, Study Editions)
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Simplified Keyboard Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Guitar Edition
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Leaders Guides (5): The Sunday Assembly, The Christian Life, Keeping Time, Indexes to ELW, Guide to the Music of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- Festival Settings: One, Two, Ten
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Note Cards and Posters
- Psalm Settings for the Church Year
- Psalter for Worship A, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Edition
- Kids Celebrate Worship (4 titles)

Major Directions for 2007–2009

Worship and Liturgical Resources will continue to develop worship materials that surround and support *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, attending particularly to the diversity of worship patterns throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Collaboration will mark the ongoing development of an unfolding family of worship resources, involving individuals and groups throughout this church in determining how best to meet varied worship needs. New resources will be produced in either print or electronic formats and sometimes in both, taking greater advantage of the ELCA Website.

In addition to new materials envisioned, resources anticipated in 2008 include Occasional Services, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Braille Edition, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Enlarged Print Edition, and Supplement to Hymns of Praise (Chinese and English). The Hymnal Companion to *Evangelical*

Report of the Vice President

I will begin my report by saying, "I hate change." Yeah, I know that change is good and that it's a part of life. Change is necessary for progress. As a businessman, I initiate change all the time. In order for a business to grow and prosper, policies and procedures constantly must be reviewed and changed when appropriate. I challenge my employees sometimes when they are resistant to their altered routine. I am a Champion of Change!

However, this is different. This change is personal.

Big changes are occurring in my family. My son has recently accepted a job offer in Fort Worth and will be moving out this week. We just returned from College Station, looking for an apartment for my daughter, who will be graduating from high school in May and moving on to college. The house will be empty of kids. I know that is something many of us look forward to at some point in life, but now that it's occurring, I have mixed feelings.

For the first time in 24 years, Diane and I will be at home without a child or children to occupy our lives. That is 5/6 of our married life that we have devoted to focusing on someone other than ourselves. I'm not sure either of us can remember that 1/6 of our married life from long ago and what we ever did to consume our time.

When Steven was leaving for college six years ago, he pointed out to me, "Dad, it would be far *worse* if I *wasn't* leaving for school!" Leave it to a young, uncomplicated mind to point out what should be obvious. Yes, Steven. That was a necessary change that only indicated progress. Diane and I realize that, professionally, Steven needs to make this change. Stephanie needs to gain the schooling that will allow her to start a meaningful career. They need to make these changes in order to become everything God intends for them to be.

But do they really have to go?

In our self-centered ways, we often think only of the inconvenience of what changes will mean for us. We tend to forget the big constant in our lives that will never change: the love of God. When faced with change, why are we so quick to resist and only see the negativity of life? Life is a journey and the road is constantly changing. However, God is always there, guiding our path, leading us through the rough spots, and watching us coast along the smooth ones.

I know this will be true of the changes my family

and I are facing right now. God will lead us through and make us better than we were before. After all, of what consequence are changes in our lives if we have the constant love of God?

There are changes in store for the ELCA too, as retirements are announced among synodical bishops and churchwide personnel. Words alone cannot express my thanks for their ministries. I truly appreciate the help and guidance these people have given me during my time as vice president. Their talents, wisdom, and character will be missed by our church. It will indeed be a change for the ELCA.

Retirement will also be a big change in the personal lives of these good people. We know that God will guide them into this new stage in their lives. Change means progress. May this change bring enlightening and meaningful changes in the lives of the new retirees, their families, and all whose lives they touch.

But do they really need to go?

Fortunately, I have had a quiet schedule since my last report. On January 23, Diane, Steven and I had the pleasure of meeting Bishop Munib Younan in Houston for dinner. He was in town to address the Progressive National Baptist Association's (PNBA) annual meeting. We enjoyed the meal and the time we spent together. Unfortunately, we heard the situation in the Holy Land is not getting any better. Hope seems to be fading as the oppression of Palestinians continues. The region is on the brink of a civil war and many innocent men, women, and children are dying. We must continue to pray and work towards achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. We can do this by following the three A's of the ELCA Middle East strategy: *advocating* for peace, building *awareness*, and *accompanying* our Palestinian brothers and sisters through this difficult time. We are called by God to do so.

While at the meeting the next day, I also had an opportunity to visit with Dr. Tyrone Pitts, General Secretary of the PNBA. Dr. Pitts and I both serve on the World Council of Churches Central Committee and had met in Porto Alegre, Brazil, during the WCC Assembly. It was indeed a treat to visit with him again.

March 1, 2007, marked a red letter day for our family, friends, and neighbors. On that day, Diane, Steven, Stephanie, and I said a big "Howdy!" to the Conference of Bishops, their spouses, and church staff when they came to our home for a Texas-size barbeque welcome dinner. We could not have pulled off feeding over 160 guests without the help of our family and good

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friends. The neighbors were gracious and understanding—even to the point of offering lawn space, refrigerator space, and calls to city clean-up crews. It was an extraordinary evening that was a prelude, in my opinion, to a great conference meeting.

One of the reasons to hold the conference in Galveston was to emphasize this church's response to disaster, as in the response to Hurricane Katrina and Rita in 2005. Hopefully, the bishops gained perspective by seeing the environment that can be so damaged by natural disasters. I was grateful to hear the report from Lutheran Disaster Response on the generosity of the ELCA not only in money, but also in those who volunteered time for aid and rebuilding after these recent hurricanes. It was also enlightening to hear Bishop Hanson report on how we can strengthen future responses by what we have learned from these disasters.

Finally, I would like to express my deep sorrow in hearing of Bishop Margarita Martinez's passing. She was such an inspiration to Diane and me. What a dynamic woman! We will always cherish our visit with her when we were in Puerto Rico. The church service we attended with Bishop Martinez has been a highlight of my term as vice president. Diane will not forget when the bishop, ever the gracious host, moved to sit next to her so as to translate the sermon during the service. Heaven has most certainly gained an angel. God bless Margarita for the love, care, and concern she had for all people.

The time spent since my last report to the council has been a time of change for many of our colleagues, my family, and me. How appropriate! The reminders of change bringing good are everywhere. Springtime comes after a long, often grey winter, and brings budding signs of new life. Easter follows the darkness of Lent, bursting from the tomb with the light of the resurrection. What once seemed empty and barren really is just a stage in bringing forth new life.

May we all approach each change in our lives as another resurrection in Christ and a part of God's plan for us.

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY — APPENDIX ONE
CHURCH COUNCIL
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Chicago, Illinois

In response to requests, the following information on the role of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was prepared. This information is especially timely in view of the forthcoming election of the secretary at the tenth Churchwide Assembly.

**A. VERY BRIEF SUMMARY OF WORK
OF OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

Several years ago, staff of the Office of the Secretary developed with me a very brief summary of our work together:

The Office of the Secretary shall:

- 1. Prepare records for this church in as accurate, thorough, up-to-date, useable, and prompt a way as possible;**
- 2. Preserve the records of this church; and**
- 3. Provide service and assistance to this church and others in a punctual, friendly, and courteous manner.**

That summary is a helpful reminder of the duties and responsibilities that the constitution and bylaws of this church assign to the secretary as an officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The developing historical record of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

represents one of the strategic responsibilities of the secretary and staff of the Office of the Secretary. Meticulous attention is devoted to preparing the authoritative and comprehensive record. Great effort, therefore, is committed to striving for clarity and confirming accuracy in the preparation of the minutes of the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council, and the Conference of Bishops. The minutes provide not only an official record of the decisions made and the actions taken, but they also offer to future historians documentation of this church's history. At the same time, through the Office of the Secretary, advice and guidance are provided to churchwide units to help ensure that the records of boards and committees are complete and filed in a timely way.

Maintaining the official rosters of this church is another obligation of the secretary. Staff members work closely with synodical offices in recording additions, changes, and resignations or removals from the rosters. Further, the secretary oversees the implementation of roster policies adopted by the Church Council.

Legal consultation and services also are provided through the Office of the Secretary to synodical bishops and offices as well as churchwide units.

In connection with each Churchwide Assembly, staff members of the Office of the Secretary and other units must devote untiring attention to planning and managing. The bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America assign to the secretary responsibility for all arrangements for the assembly. In fulfilling that task, the efforts of many people are required.

B. SPECIFIC CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AND BYLAWS

The duties and responsibilities of the secretary, as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, are diverse and numerous:

13.41.

The secretary of this church shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership, as specified in Chapter 11 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the secretary of a corporation.

13.41.01.

The secretary, as the recording officer of this church, shall keep the minutes, have responsibility for rosters, records, and reporting of parochial statistics, oversee the archives, attest to all documents that require such signature, be the custodian of the seal, and perform other duties as prescribed by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

13.41.02.

The secretary shall:

- a. Be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives, and shall receive complete minutes for permanent record of all boards and committees of the churchwide organization.
- b. Maintain the rosters of ordained ministers, all other rostered persons, congregations, and synods.

- c. Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, pre-assembly reports, assembly minutes, a directory of congregations, rostered persons, and entities of this church, and other informational and statistical material.
- d. Receive the annual report of the congregations in a form devised by the secretary, summarize the information, and make the summary available to this church.
- e. Coordinate the use of legal services by the churchwide organization.
- f. Be responsible for the archives of this church.
- g. Implement and operate a records management system for the churchwide organization.
- h. Arrange for and manage meetings of the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council.
- i. Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents.
- j. Provide library and reference services for the churchwide office.

13.41.03.

The secretary, in consultation with the presiding bishop, shall be responsible for preparation and research of amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, as well as the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, to be proposed by the Church Council for action by the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with provisions of Chapter 22.

13.41.04.

The secretary shall prepare interpretations, as necessary, of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If a board,

committee, or synod disagrees with the interpretations, as rendered, the objecting entity may appeal the secretary's interpretation to the Church Council.

13.41.05.

The secretary shall provide staff services to the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly and the nomination process of the Church Council; shall be responsible for declaring an interim vacancy resulting from the resignation, death, or disability of a member of a board, committee, or council; and shall arrange for an election by the Church Council to fill the vacancy consistent with Chapter 19.

13.41.A03.

Responsibilities for Risk Management

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

13.42.

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church.

13.42.01.

The secretary shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month

after election.

13.42.02.

The secretary shall be a full-time, salaried position.

11.33.

Leadership of this church shall be vested in the officers, the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council, boards, and executive directors of churchwide administrative units. The full-time officers shall be the presiding bishop of this church, secretary of this church, and treasurer of this church....

19.31.01.

The churchwide officers shall be elected as follows:

...

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

voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect....

C. POSITION DESCRIPTION PROVIDES LIMITED PICTURE

A position description for the role of the secretary provides, in a sense, a limited picture. In some respects, the description may be too internally focused, as if the Lutheran Center is the sole arena of the work of the secretary. It is not.

TITLE: Secretary

REPORTS TO: Churchwide Assembly, the Presiding Bishop, and the Church Council

POSITION SUMMARY

The secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is elected to a six-year, renewable term by the biennial Churchwide Assembly, the highest legislative authority in this church.

The secretary of this church is accountable for the preparation, maintenance, protection, and preservation of ELCA's minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, Executive Committee, Cabinet of Executives, and for arrangements for and management of Churchwide Assemblies and Church Council meetings.

Official constitutional interpretations are the responsibility of the secretary.

The position also is accountable for the legal affairs of this church; risk management; the maintenance of all official rosters; operation of the library and records management system and this church's archives; the publication of reports, minutes, annual yearbook, and other informational and statistical materials; for

providing an annual summary of the parochial reports of the congregations; and coordination and monitoring of travel for the churchwide organization.

The secretary is one of four officers designated by the constitution. The secretary is a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council. The secretary provides staff services for the nominating processes of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly.

Crucial and extensive contacts occur with synodical bishops and synodical staff, especially on constitutional and policy matters as well as assembly legislative issues.

Frequent contacts with the presiding bishop, Church Council, and board and committee members, executive directors, and other officials and staff are essential for fulfillment of the position's accountabilities.

Ongoing communication with other denominational leaders also is maintained.

DIMENSIONS

Operating Budget: \$3,577,780

No. of Employees: Direct staff 19; general accountability for 500+

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Reports directly to the Churchwide Assembly, the highest legislative authority in this church, and in the interim to the presiding bishop and the Church Council, which is the board of directors.
2. Ensures accurate and timely preparation, preservation, and care of ELCA's official minutes and records.
3. Ensures the proper and timely maintenance of ELCA's rosters as required for individuals and organizations throughout this church.
4. Ensures the timely and accurate publication of reports, minutes, and other required information and statistics, including

- summarization of the congregational annual reports.
5. Researches and renders official interpretations of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.
 6. Ensures the establishment and effective maintenance of a state-of-the-art archives system, including appropriate coordination of archive activities in each of the nine regions, and timely and appropriate communications with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
 7. Implements, directs, and maintains a central records management system and the library resource center.
 8. Provides appropriate guidelines and policies for records management, storage, and retrieval for all congregations, synods, and the churchwide organizations.
 9. Ensures timely and appropriate arrangements for, and effective management of the Churchwide Assemblies and meetings of the Church Council, as well as other meetings of the churchwide organization.
 10. Ensures timely and appropriate provision of staff services to the Church Council and Churchwide Assembly.
 11. Ensures timely and effective communication with other officers and other senior executives concerning plans, progress and major problems, and establishes and maintains appropriate liaison and relations with key external officials and organizations.
 12. Ensures an effective organizational structure and continuity, with appropriate emphases on succession, training, developing, and motivating employees to meet ELCA objectives.
 13. Represents the presiding bishop for various official occasions as well as in meetings of particular boards and committees.
 14. Speaks from time to time on behalf of this church in an official capacity.
 15. Serves as an expert witness on church order, polity, and policy matters in various legal or official proceedings.

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((CC-AP07.SECRETARY-APPENDIX ONE))

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY — APPENDIX TWO
CHURCH COUNCIL
April 13-16, 2007
Chicago, Illinois

UNDERSTANDING OF ROLE CRUCIAL IN SECRETARY'S ELECTION AT THE ASSEMBLY

The Conference of Bishops, in preparation for the March 2007 meeting, asked that I prepare an overview of my work as secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Members of the Conference and Bishops as well as members of the Church Council likely have a clearer understanding of the role of the secretary in this church and the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary than most voting members of the Churchwide Assembly. Therefore, you and others can be helpful for voting members who may seek your advice. After all, you have an understanding from our work together of the knowledge, insights, abilities, commitments, and perspectives that are crucial for the effective service of the secretary.

Limited scope of position description

The formal position description for the role of the secretary—as printed in Exhibit A, Part 3, Appendix One—provides, in a sense, a limited picture. In some respects, the description may be too internally focused, as if the Lutheran Center is the sole arena of the work of the secretary. It is not. The role of the secretary relates not just to one office but also to the broader life of this whole church.

After all, the secretary is elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The secretary is neither selected by the Church Council, nor

appointed by the presiding bishop. Election by the Churchwide Assembly—a thoroughly reasoned decision of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church—reflects the accountability of the secretary related to the life of this whole church and not only one unit in the churchwide office.

Duties determined by assembly

It merits noting that the duties of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary may be altered only by the Churchwide Assembly. That is not the case for the functions of any other unit in the churchwide organization. Except for the presiding bishop and the secretary, unit assignments may be changed by the Church Council.

Given the fact that the presiding bishop and the secretary are elected as full-time officers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the Churchwide Assembly, the governing documents make clear that only the Churchwide Assembly has the authority to alter the assigned responsibilities of presiding bishop and secretary and their respective offices.

Important qualities and abilities

From experience, I have identified some key qualities that I believe are important for the secretary. Let me list them.

1. AN UNDERSTANDING OF AND COMMITMENT TO THE POLITY OF THIS CHURCH

The secretary must have or develop an

understanding of the polity of this church and be committed to its practice. The secretary does not have the right to imagine re-implementing the polity of a predecessor church body or creating a new one for this church. The polity as reflected in the governing documents is the one that we have, subject only to revision by the Churchwide Assembly.

Related to an understanding of this church's polity is the need for an understanding and appreciation of ecclesiology. By this I mean not only ecclesiological perspectives emerging from the Lutheran Reformation of the 16th century but also, more broadly, the ecclesiological perspectives of various churches.

In some sense, I had an advantage in having been present in all of the meetings of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) and most of the meetings of the Transition Team. In the CNLC process, I heard the debates. I read the drafts. I saw the polity—and the ecclesiological assumptions—of this church emerge.

Highly unlikely is the possibility that my successor will come to office with that background. I have been putting together a notebook of key memoranda from the past years to give to my successor. I also have been sitting with Paul Schreck and Ruth Hamilton, reviewing chapter by chapter the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. I have recounted the background of key provisions and their process of development. Pr. Hamilton has taken extensive notes on that review for the benefit of my successor.

My successor likely will want to study *One Great Cloud of Witnesses*, my account of the history and polity of the ELCA in all its expressions. Further, *Anatomy of a Merger* and *High Expectations*, two books by Dr. Edgar R. Trexler, will be very helpful.

2. AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTER-RELATED CONTENT OF THE GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

I have been amused at times and troubled more often by individuals and groups who presume to interpret this church's constitution without an understanding of its inter-related content.

Essential for the secretary is the ability to understand and interpret clearly the governing documents of this church as well as roster policies. For so doing, knowledge on the part of the secretary of the entire text of the governing documents and awareness of the various policies are crucially needed.

Not everyone is willing to exercise such care. For instance, "prooftexting" for a narrow perspective may be the word to describe the actions of some. I have seen numerous synodical resolutions and memorials that do this very thing. In a "Whereas" statement, the author will quote a few words in the first sentence of provision †S7.01. that describes the Synod Assembly as the synod's "highest legislative authority." Then the resolution goes on to assert or claim action that does not lie within the synod's authority.

In "prooftexting" with that phrase, "highest legislative authority," the limitations on the Synod Assembly are ignored. The second sentence of that same provision acknowledges that the Synod Assembly's authority is limited by the synod's constitution and bylaws as well as the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Likewise, before one might assert that some decision of the Churchwide Assembly or policy document adopted by the Church Council is contrary to the constitution and bylaws of this church, one had better understand and know both the content of the constitution and bylaws and the legislative processes of this church.

Clearly, the secretary must possess or quickly gain an understanding of the inter-

related content of the governing documents of this church.

3. A COMMITMENT TO ABSOLUTE FAIRNESS IN CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION AND POLICY APPLICATION

Great responsibility is assigned to the secretary for interpretation of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. To fulfill that responsibility with integrity, both knowledge of the governing documents and a commitment to fair and consistent practice in their interpretation and application are essential.

As some of you may know, I have been criticized at times by some who objected to my commitment to uphold the plain meaning of the governing documents. One must strive to rise above that to focus always on the well-being of this whole church. Therefore, throughout it all, the secretary must seek to be fair and trustworthy.

At the end of each Churchwide Assembly, there are those courtesy resolutions. They are appreciated, but the one that stands out most in my mind related to my work as secretary was adopted at the Milwaukee assembly in 2003. That resolution noted my commitment for fairness. I cherish that acknowledgment.

4. ABILITY TO GIVE ATTENTION TO DIVERSE TOPICS IN THE COURSE OF ANY DAY

Diverse responsibilities reside within the Office of the Secretary. A look at the bylaws and position description will demonstrate that reality.

Consider how distinct the responsibilities of the secretary may be. I walk from legal matters to risk management to assembly management to roster data and policy to

records management to archival preservation to administration and personnel management to constitutional interpretation to handling substantial correspondence to document review to hosting a visiting church leader to some exercise of ecclesiastical diplomacy and then on to whatever surprise is around the next corner. In other words, the secretary must have the ability to adapt quickly to the matter at hand.

As a practical matter, the position of secretary requires the knowledge and skill to draft with clarity a wide variety of documents.

At times in drafting certain documents, the ability to be very precise is necessary. Other times, efforts at eloquence, especially in formal tributes, represent the quality of writing that must be sought. Given the wide variety of material in which the secretary has a hand, I now realize how much writing I have done on behalf of this church throughout the past 20 years.

Although some may not recognize this fact, I have seen over the past 20 years how often it was important that I was clergy serving in this office. Many of my duties and obligations have been shaped by the fact that I am a pastor of this church. In some settings and circumstances, that has been no small factor in being effective and in being able to do what I was asked or what needed to be done.

5. COMMITMENT TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE PRESIDING BISHOP

The secretary is not an assistant to the presiding bishop but an officer of this church. Yet the secretary cannot have some agenda or program separate from or in conflict with that of the presiding bishop. That would not be healthy or appropriate in the life of this church.

Functioning in tune with the presiding bishop at times is no simple task for the secretary. That takes mutual commitment on the part of both the presiding bishop and the

secretary. It also requires mutual trust. (Historically, some heads of churches in the world have been unwilling to render that trust in the secretary, and some secretaries, likewise, have been unwilling to grant such trust to the head of a particular church body. I do not believe we can afford such a pattern in the ELCA.) The fostering of mutual trust is not an option; to me it is an obligation.

Sometimes that mutual commitment occurs naturally. For instance, the mutual interest in church history shared by Dr. George Anderson and me was glue in a bond for our work together. Further, Dr. Herbert W. Chilstrom and I recalled the events that led to the formation of this church. Like Dr. Anderson, he was a member of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church and, as indicated, I was present at all those meetings.

The appreciation that Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson has reflected for my knowledge of historical developments in the life of this church and our predecessor bodies has contributed to mutual trust and common effort. I am grateful.

6. ABILITY TO REPRESENT THIS CHURCH WITH DIGNITY IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS

Let's be realistic. In some circumstances, rank matters. Amid egalitarian preoccupations, that fact sometimes is ignored.

An important role for the secretary is the responsibility, upon request, to represent the presiding bishop in various inter-church, national, and international arenas. The role of secretary of this church is understood in various settings as a "high-ranking" official where such a matter is considered significant.

There are situations in which the presiding bishop is not available but, as a matter of respect and honor, ecclesiastical etiquette requires the sending of one who is understood as a "high-ranking" representative of this

church. At various times, the secretary has carried out that role on behalf of the presiding bishop.

Examples could be cited. Among them was my participation in a delegation of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. on a visit to mark the 1700th anniversary of Christianity in Armenia. Other instances include being a leader in the prayer service at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on the first anniversary of "9-11" and being the representative of the ELCA at the consecration of Archbishop Herman as primate of the Orthodox Church in America at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on September 8, 2002.

I also have represented this church in various national and international ecumenical meetings, including in Rome, Istanbul, Geneva, and London, on behalf of the presiding bishop.

7. ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE CHURCH-TO-CHURCH POLICY MATTERS

For the initial implementation of the first full-communion agreement, I chaired the Lutheran-Reformed Coordinating Committee that developed the policy regulating exchangeability of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament. That policy made clear the accountability of the respective churches and also provided certain protections, including the principle that service of ordained ministers under a full-communion agreement is by invitation only of the inviting body and only with the authorization of the bishop or, in the case of some other churches, the appropriate judicatory executive.

On behalf of the presiding bishop, I was called upon to serve as this church's representative at the 2000, 2003, and 2006 general conventions of The Episcopal Church, addressing the full-communion relationship between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church.

I also once served as the ELCA representative to the southern province assembly of the Moravian Church.

Because of my knowledge of church structure, the polity of the ELCA, and American Lutheran history, as well as ecumenical issues, I was appointed as a member of the tenth round of the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue. I continue as a member of the eleventh round, serving as co-chair with the Most Rev. Richard Sklba.

8. WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN VARIETY OF SETTINGS

Among the treasured opportunities that I have enjoyed are invitations to significant congregation anniversaries. With each one, I ask for a copy of the congregation's history and, in the course of the sermon or banquet address, I have recounted part of the congregation's own history. The response that I have heard is, sometimes even from the pastor, "I didn't know that about us," meaning that particular congregation.

We have throughout the more than 10,000 congregations of this church marvelous stories of courage, faithfulness, and vision exercised by forebears and current pilgrims in witness and service in the name of Christ. Those histories are journals of the faith and vision of our forebears.

I also have appreciated the "snapshot" I get of a synod from participation in Synod Assemblies. But the secretary must be alert in such settings. With sometimes only a moment's notice, the secretary must be able to respond to a question from the synod bishop for advice in the course of the assembly.

An unusual part of my experience as secretary was becoming acquainted with the work of Lutheran military chaplains. That happened, in some sense, by accident. I was invited to preach at the opening service of a chaplains' retreat one year. I discovered, in the

process, their appreciation that someone from "headquarters," in their terminology, would care about their work. They were deeply grateful for the assistant for federal chaplains and his work with them. But knowing that a "senior officer," again in their terminology, would care about them and was supportive of them was significant. So I became a welcomed participant in their retreats.

Through my presence, I have been able to express this church's gratitude to chaplains collectively in conferences and personally on various posts and bases in this country and abroad. Apparently through my highlighting their work, others became interested in the support of chaplaincy ministry. I am grateful.

The pastors who serve as military chaplains represent an outstanding group of courageous and faithful ministers of Word and Sacrament who serve in challenging and, at times, very dangerous settings. I give thanks to God for their dedication and integrity in faithful pastoral ministry—a ministry that is rendered by them with firm commitment to faithful witness and compassionate care for those whom they are called to serve.

UNIQUE PREPARATION FOR OFFICE

When I was elected on May 2, 1987, and immediately undertook my responsibilities as the first secretary of the ELCA, I looked back and realized that—by historical circumstances and my duties throughout the 1970s and 1980s—I had been well prepared for service in the "new" church. Truly, little had I realized in sitting through all those meetings of the Committee on Lutheran Unity, the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, and the churchwide Transition Team that I was gaining crucial knowledge for future responsibilities. Such knowledge was enormously helpful to me in offering principled leadership throughout the years. It also was crucial in enabling me to provide objective and informed constitutional

interpretation and policy development. Throughout the past two decades, I have sought to be a good steward of my responsibilities as secretary.

A few weeks ago, a cartoon appeared in *The New Yorker* magazine that held special meaning for me. The cartoon depicted a psychiatrist with a patient reclining on a sofa. The patient is saying, “Can we start over? Like, from 1987...?”

I am not ready to start over, even if that were possible. But I am ready to give heartfelt thanks for the profound privilege of having served as the first secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

(CC-APO7-SECRETARY.APPENDIX TWO)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007
Chicago, Illinois

A. TWENTY-ONE CONGREGATIONS WERE RECEIVED IN 2006

Twenty-one congregations were recognized and received into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2006. That number is up from 13 in the previous year.

According to reports provided to the Office of the Secretary by synods, newly received congregations were:

<i>SYNOD</i>	<i>CONGREGATION</i>	<i>DATE</i>
1F	Fort Peck	5-6
2D	La Sagrada Familia	6-1
3B	Living Waters	4-29
3F	United	6-1
4B	Kaw Prairie	10-29
4D	Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria de Guadalupe	5-28
4E	Holy Cross	5-19
4F	Joyful Life	10-2
5A	Jubilee Faith Community	10-1
5B	New Creation	6-11
5B	Followers of Christ	6-17
5D	Crossroads Lutheran	3-5
5H	Hope	6-2
5J	Spirit Alive	5-7
6E	New Covenant	1-14
7B	Faith	8-27
7E	Reading/Berks	10-18
7F	Spirit and Truth	5-6
8D	Big Spring United	1-1

9C	Holy Spirit Evangelical	12-3
9D	Peniel Ethiopian	3-1

B. EIGHTEEN CONGREGATIONS WITHDREW FROM ELCA IN 2006

Eighteen congregations were reported by synods as having withdrawn in 2006 from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. They represented a combined baptized membership of 7,669.

In 2005, 21 congregations with a total baptized membership of 14,005 withdrew.

In 2004, 26 congregations with a combined baptized membership of 9,816 withdrew.

In 2003, eight congregations with a total baptized membership of 3,654 withdrew.

Eighteen congregations terminated their affiliations with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2002. They represented 16,689 baptized members.

Six congregations withdrew from the ELCA in 2001. Baptized membership totaled 2,876.

In the past six years, 97 congregations have withdrawn with a combined membership of 54,709.

The list of congregations that withdrew in 2006 is provided below.

2006 WITHDRAWING CONGREGATIONS

Synod	Cong. #	Name	Place	Date	New Affiliation
1E	12808	Trinity	Brookings, Ore.	12-17	Association of Free Lutheran Churches
1F	13409	First	Homestead, Mont.	1-29	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
1F	13435	Medicine Lake	Medicine Lake, Mont.	1-15	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
1F	13456	Reserve	Reserve, Mont.	1-8	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
3A	12658	Marshall	Marshall, N.D.	1-29	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
3C	13600	Romsdal	Hudson, S.D.	5-14	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
3D	11497	Grace	Erhard, Minn.	7-16	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
4A	03331	St. Paul	Osceola, Neb.	1-15	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
4E	05914	Our Saviour	Victoria, Tex.	2-12	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
4E	14072	Trinity	Blanco, Tex.	12-10	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
4E	14150	St. Paul	Hondo, Tex.	2-1	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
5E	10865	Our Saviour	Callender, Iowa	8-27	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
5E	10985	Immanuel	Harlan, Iowa	1-22	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
5E	11114	Lake	Renwick, Iowa	8-27	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
5J	07472	Lord of Life	Oconomowoc, Wis.	12-2	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
6E	04441	Plain	Wooster, Ohio	1-14	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
7E	00767	Alsace	Reading, Pa.	1-18	Association of Free Lutheran Churches
8F	02568	St. Paul	Hagerstown, Md.	1-21	Association of Free Lutheran Churches

DISBANDING, MERGING, AND CONSOLIDATING CONGREGATIONS

	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06
DISBANDING	31	30	36	32	33	34	40	34	32	34	41	22	38	37	28	37
MERGING	4	6	7	7	5	5	9	4	5	5	13	4	9	7	2	9
CONSOLIDATING	10	11	6	13	10	18	12	15	10	4	12	14	6	2	11	12

C. DISBANDING, MERGING, AND CONSOLIDATING

From time to time, the Office of the Secretary receives inquiries about the “closing” of congregations. Congregations that “close” fall into three categories:

1) **DISBANDED, DISSOLVED:** Nothing remains. Disposition of the property has been completed. Baptized members disperse to neighboring congregations.

2) **MERGED:** A smaller, non-viable congregation joins its assets, liabilities, and members with a larger, viable congregation and the small congregation gives up its identity to become part of the larger congregation.

3) **CONSOLIDATED:** Two or more

congregations come together to form a new entity. The old congregations no longer exist but a new congregation comes into being out of their consolidation.

Among the reasons cited for such changes are dwindling members and insufficient money to support leadership, a church building, and program.

D. 2006 TRAVEL COSTS AND SAVINGS

Diligent efforts continue for control of travel costs. Close monitoring is practiced. The changing practices, policies, and fares of airlines affect directly the overall cost of travel for Church Council members, board and committee members,

members of the Conference of Bishops, and staff serving through the churchwide organization and synods, as well as voting members for the Churchwide Assembly.

The chart does not include international travel by staff of the Global Mission unit on tickets issued by Menno Travel of Columbia Heights, Minnesota. Such tickets are issued by Menno because of that agency's experience with international travel arrangements, especially to areas of Africa and Asia.

Menno Travel, however, does not have the computer software that would enable us to obtain the comprehensive reports that are received from Best Travel.

The following chart provides a summary of 2006 travel costs and savings through use of Best Travel, the contracted travel vendor for the churchwide office.

2006 TRAVEL COSTS WITH COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEARS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of tickets</i>	<i>Savings off coach</i>	<i>Total spent</i>	<i>Average domestic ticket</i>
2006	10,390	78.00%	\$3,208,111.00	\$309.00
2005	11,891	76.00%	\$3,560,437.00	\$299.00
2004	9,663	79.00%	\$2,783,658.00	\$281.00
2003	11,531	78.00%	\$3,566,928.00	\$301.00
2002	11,774	80.00%	\$3,188,783.00	\$264.00
2001	13,176	80.66%	\$3,309,590.00	\$244.42
2000	11,839	77.00%	\$3,242,561.46	\$266.50
1999	10,095	71.00%	\$2,951,527.00	\$292.00
1998	8,563	68.00%	\$2,552,481.00	\$291.00
1997	7,882	68.00%	\$2,314,912.00	\$294.00
1996	8,412	65.00%	\$2,414,320.00	\$283.00
1995	8,067	73.61%	\$2,384,816.00	\$295.63
1994	7,639	75.78%	\$2,099,053.00	\$268.21
1993	7,540	73.25%	\$2,269,850.00	\$296.66
1992	7,514	66.00%	\$2,256,850.00	\$296.33
1991	7,381	53.00%	\$2,272,000.00	\$308.00
1990	8,028	54.00%	\$2,602,891.00	\$325.00
1989	9,548	51.50%	\$2,870,164.00	\$301.00
1988	8,272	51.91%	\$2,380,103.00	\$288.00

E. PLANNING FOR ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS AND MEMORIALS

The season of memorials and resolutions is upon us. Each year, the quality of such memorials and resolutions varies significantly.

Some confusion exists in places about what may be addressed more appropriately in resolutions to the Church Council rather than

memorials to the Churchwide Assembly. As the Church Council representative in your synod, perhaps you can help in this regard.

Convey to the chair of your synod's Committee of Reference and Counsel or Resolutions Committee the following principles:

1. A resolution and memorial may NOT be combined in one action.

That is, the Church Council and the

Churchwide Assembly may not be addressed in the same resolution. Neither should a synod address both the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly on the same subject.

2. A resolution may be adopted by the Synod Assembly that is addressed to a particular churchwide unit or to a specific concern related to churchwide ministries, programs, or units.

In the final “resolved” of such an assembly action should be this provision:

- a. ON RESOLUTIONS FOR REFERRAL TO A CHURCHWIDE UNIT:
RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly direct the _____ Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

or

- b. ON THOSE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE CHURCH COUNCIL:
RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly direct the _____ Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

3. A memorial adopted by a Synod Assembly is submitted to the Churchwide Assembly with a recommendation for action from the Memorials Committee.

Memorials should be reserved for broad policy issues that belong in the Churchwide Assembly.

The Church Council voted in November 1988 “that future communications from synods will be dealt with according to ELCA constitutional and

bylaw provisions. . . .”¹ This affirms that:

(1) Synod Assemblies address the Churchwide Assembly;

(2) Synod Councils address the ELCA Church Council; and

(3) Synod Councils address churchwide units through the ELCA Church Council’s Executive Committee, including forwarding actions of the Synod Assembly.

Resolutions follow a more direct route than memorials, which must go to the Churchwide Assembly and await the assembly’s response.

Please encourage your assembly’s Committee of Reference and Counsel or Resolutions Committee to use the resolution route through the Synod Council either to the Church Council or to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral to a churchwide unit.

For the text of resolutions, your assembly’s Committee of Reference and Counsel or Resolutions Committee may find some basic information on the proper language of resolutions and memorials in *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

►Normally, the “Whereas” clauses describe the issue, concern, problem, and basis for or need of the resolution. They state the case. They should be accurate and factual, and should not misrepresent the issue being addressed or offer a false foundation for the proposed action.

¹ Synod Assemblies pass Memorials to the Churchwide Assembly. This is in keeping with bylaw 12.21.c. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which declares, “The Churchwide Assembly shall...receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.” In preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, “a Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall receive memorials from synod assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action” (bylaw 12.51.21.).

Synod Councils may pass Resolutions to the Church Council. “The Church Council shall act on resolutions from synod councils,” according to bylaw 14.21.11. Synod Councils also may seek to address churchwide units through resolutions. These must be submitted to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for appropriate referral, according to bylaw 14.41.11.b., which specifies that the council’s Executive Committee shall “transmit resolutions from synods to the appropriate unit or units of the churchwide organization.”

►“RESOLVED” clauses point to proposed solutions and define requested action.

“Resolved” clauses should clearly define clearly to whom the request for action is addressed: What should be done? What may the action cost and how is it to be funded? When should the action be done? To whom should the results be reported?

Obviously, a resolution of a Synod Council cannot direct the Church Council to take a specific action. Likewise, a memorial from a Synod Assembly cannot order that the Churchwide Assembly vote in a particular way. A memorial, by definition, is a proposal appealing for action.

Clarity in the text of any resolution or memorial is important. A good test is, “Will the resolution be understandable apart from its discussion in your assembly?”

F. ANNUAL REPORT ON LETTERS OF CALL

On an annual basis, the secretary reports the list of Letters of Call issued on behalf of the Church Council to those who serve in various churchwide ministries.

ORDAINED MINISTERS 2006

NAME AND TITLE	SYNOD	SOURCE	EFFECTIVE CALL	DATE ISSUED
EVANGELICAL OUTREACH AND CONGREGATIONAL MISSION				
Herz-Lane, Wolfgang D. mission director for the Delaware- Maryland and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synods	7-A	4.7	11-1-06	10-27-06
Wahl, Gerald E. mission director for the Florida- Bahamas Synod	3-G	4.7	1-1-07	10-27-06
GLOBAL MISSION				
Anderson, William D. pastor of the International Lutheran Church in Seoul, Korea	1-B	11.1	8-27-06	5-31-06
Auchenbach, Joshua E. associate pastor of the Bratislava International Congregation in Bratislava, Slovakia	7-G	11.1	7-9-06	6-6-06
Fredrickson, Charles A. pastor in the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church	5-J	11.1	7-1-06	5-12-06
Godsall-Myers, Stephen E. director for the Wittenberg Center in Wittenberg, Germany	7-F	11.1	7-1-06	4-12-06

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Jones, Robert S. pastor of the Lutheran Church in Vilnius, Lithuania	2-D	11.1	7-9-06	6-6-06
Kienberger, Stephan M. pastor of the American Lutheran Church in Oslo, Norway	9-F	11.1	8-1-06	5-12-06
Lunn, John S. pastor and administrator in the Lutheran Church in Liberia with assignment to Phebe Hospital	2-C	11.1	7-9-06	7-6-06
Rimmer, Chad M. pastor of the International Church in Copenhagen, Denmark	8-D	11.1	7-9-06	6-6-06
Wong-Tsui, May pastor of the Union Congregation in Hong Kong	2-C	11.1	7-1-06	6-6-06

VOCATION AND EDUCATION

Ayers, Shari L. director for admissions at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, Ohio	6-E	10.1	7-1-06	8-16-06
Balch, David L. professor of New Testament at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary at Berkeley, Calif.	4-D	10.1	6-1-06	10-27-06
Beckmann, Kim L. director for candidacy and deployment in the Vocation and Education unit	5-G	4.7	8-28-06	7-28-06
Bixby, Harold W. director for youth ministry in the Vocation and Education unit	7-F	4.7	3-1-07	1-19-07
Bliese, Richard H. president of Luther Seminary at Saint Paul, Minn.	1-C	10.1	7-1-05	10-27-06
Clark, Lawrence J. executive director of the Lutheran Theological Center at Atlanta, Ga.	5-A	10.1	7-15-06	9-27-06
Current, Amy L. interim director of the Center for Youth Ministries at Wartburg Theological Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa	3-B	10.1	8-1-06	9-22-06

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Giere, Samuel D. assistant professor of homiletics at Wartburg Theological Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa	3-B	10.1	7-1-06	9-22-06
Kalb, Lydia E. Rivera director for the multicultural center at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	5-A	10.1	10-1-06	9-27-06
Lange, Dirk G. assistant professor of practical theology-Christian assembly at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia	9-D	10.1	7-1-05	10-27-06
Largen, Kristin Johnston assistant professor of systematic theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa.	9-C	10.1	7-1-06	3-14-06
Larson, Jean deployed staff of Luther Seminary at Saint Paul, Minn.	1-F	10.1	3-1-05	4-6-06
Machado, Jose Antonio coordinator for vocational formation in the Western Mission Cluster	3-H	10.1	8-15-06	10-27-06
Mann, John Martin pastor at Luther Seminary at Saint Paul, Minn.	6-E	10.1	8-1-06	9-27-06
McDonald-Coltvet, Joy L. director for vocation and recruitment at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	5-J	10.1	9-1-06	9-27-06
Miller, Marcus Joel president of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary at Columbia, S.C.	6-E	10.1	8-15-06	6-23-06
Olsen, Mark W. director of admissions at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa.	8-G	10.1	8-21-06	8-28-06
Peterson, Cheryl M. assistant professor of systematic theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, Ohio	5-J	10.1	7-1-05	9-27-06

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Russell, William R. adjunct professor of church history at Columbia Theological Seminary at Decatur, Ga.	3-F	10.2	9-7-06	8-16-06
Sandberg, Gary A. director for development and alumni relations at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, Ohio	7-D	10.1	12-1-05	3-14-06
Seyenkulo, D. Jensen assistant director for multicultural leadership development and recruitment in the Vocation and Education unit	5-A	4.7	7-17-06	5-16-06
Stevens, Marty E. registrar and instructor in biblical studies at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa.	9-B	10.1	9-1-06	8-28-06
Swanson, Mark N. professor of Christian-Muslim studies and interfaith relations at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	3-G	10.1	7-1-0604	8-28-06

CHURCH IN SOCIETY

Harrison, Neil P. director for the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania	2-E	4.7	2-16-07	1-19-07
Haven, Donald M. major gifts director for Lutheran World Relief	4-D	9.3	7-10-06	7-28-06
Kidd, John S. vice president for advancement for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service	7-B	9.3	10-27-05	5-23-06
Reiersen, Kaari M. associate director for studies in the Church in Society unit	5-A	4.7	6-1-06	6-6-06
Willer, Roger A. director for studies in the Church in Society unit	6-E	4.7	2-1-07	1-19-07

PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Carter, Brett D. development editor for Augsburg Fortress, Publishers	3-H	4.7	11-20-06	12-21-06
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WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Hansen, Dawn D. director for programs in Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	5-A	4.7	1-3-06	2-21-06
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COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Berry-Bailey, Barbara associate producer for <i>Grace Matters</i> in the Communication Services unit	7-F	4.7	9-18-06	9-6-06
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DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Prois, Rodger C. major gift officer for the Development Services unit	3-F	4.7	6-1-06	5-10-06
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ECUMENICAL AND INTER-RELIGIOUS RELATIONS

Jeske, Richard L. director for ecumenical and interfaith relations of the American Bible Society	4-B	8.3	5-1-06	4-11-06
Erickson, Donald C. president and chief executive officer of the Wycliffe Foundation	4-B	8.3	8-1-04	2-22-06

MISSION INVESTMENT FUND OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Dudley, Thomas A. associate vice president for the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	2-C	4.7	7-1-06	1-19-07
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BOARD OF PENSIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Rothschiller, Sandra L. regional representative	3-G	4.7	1-5-07	1-19-07
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BUREAU FOR FEDERAL CHAPLAINCY MINISTRIES

Connolly, John David chaplain for the U.S. Navy	9-B	5.5	8-27-06	7-28-06
Dirksmeyer, Paul E. chaplain for the U.S. Army Reserve	4-D	5.5	11-1-05	4-26-06
DuVall, Kenneth E. chaplain for the Montana National Guard	1-F	5.5	12-25-05	8-28-06

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Eckert, James D. chaplain for the U.S. Navy	6-E	5.5	8-27-06	9-6-06
Krogstad, Bruce E. chaplain for the Air National Guard	3-B	5.5	6-1-06	11-22-06
McKenzie, Cynthia K. chaplain for the U.S. Navy	5-F	5.5	2-13-06	7-28-06
Ritchie Jr., James R. chaplain for the Department of Veterans Affairs	9-A	5.5	4-20-03	3-31-06
Schmidt, Judy A. chaplain for the U.S. Army	4-C	5.5	1-27-06	6-6-06

ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY

Allen, Shelly M. admissions associate at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary at Columbia, S.C.	9-A	10.1	1-1-05	11-14-06
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DIACONAL MINISTER

Gable, Nancy E. coordinator for ministry leadership in Region 8	8-C	3.0	7-17-06	7-17-06
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G. APPROVALS ON REAL ESTATE AND SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS

The following is a report of resolutions that have been approved, pursuant to Church Council authorization, by special committees acting on behalf of the Church Council. Photocopies of the signed original minutes for each of these approvals is attached to the protocol copy of the minutes of this meeting. The signed original minutes are maintained in the corporate files in the Office of the Secretary.

<u>Authorization</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Approved By</u>	<u>Subject of Approval</u>
CC90.4.31	2-24-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate 151.54 acres Section 32 Colfax Township, Pocahontas County, IA to Kiburz
CC90.4.31	3-31-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate 99.86 acres of surface land Colorado County Rd 111, Colorado County, TX to Stallman
CC90.4.31	4-25-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate SE Quarter of Section 4, Township 5 North, Phelps County, NE to Wilcox
CC90.4.31	7-10-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate Lot 581 Blue Ridge Section Gateway Mountain, Old Fort, McDowell County, NC to Howard
CC90.4.31	7-10-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate Parcel 2 of Certified Survey Map 2599, Town 4 North, Range 20 East, Norway, Racine County, WI to Peter
CC90.4.31	8-21-06	Hanson/Jackson-Skelton	Subordination Agreement conveying certain real estate to St. John Lutheran Home, Brown County, MN
CC90.4.31	9-5-06	Jackson-Skelton/Almen	Sale of Real Estate L9614 W. Higgins Rd., Unit 3-D Rosemont, Cook County, IL to Cobirzan

Prior Reports of Approvals

Prior reports of approval of Real Estate/Securities Transactions were included in the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, Pages 7 and 8 of the November 18-22, 1990, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit G, pages 2-4 of the August 27-28, 1991, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit D, Part 8, pages 1-4 of the December 3-5, 1993, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, pages 4-5 of the November 17-20, 1995, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, pages 8-9 of the November 14-16, 1997, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the

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Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, pages 8-10 of the November 13-16, 1998, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, pages 15-17 of the April 8-9, 2000, meeting of the Church Council, the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, page 7 of the April 6-8, 2001, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, page 13-14 of the April 6-8, 2002, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, page 10 of the April 5-7, 2003, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3a, pages 9-11 of the April 16-18, 2004, meeting of the Church Council; the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, pages 14-15 of the April 8-11, 2005, meeting of the Church Council; and the Report of the Secretary, Agenda Exhibit A, Part 3, page 6 of the March 31-April 1, 2006, meeting of the Church Council.

The original signed minutes of each of these approvals are maintained in the corporate files in the Office of the Secretary. Photocopies of the original minutes have been included in the protocol copy of the minutes of the November 1990, August 1991, December 1993, November 1995, November 1997, November 1998, April 2000, April 2001, April 2002, April 2003, April 2004, April 2005, April 2006, and April 2007 meetings of the Church Council.

Report of the Treasurer

The churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had income over expense of \$2.97 million in current operating funds for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2007.

Receipts totaled \$82.9 million for fiscal year 2006 compared with \$82 million the previous year, an increase of \$0.9 million or 1.1 percent. Expenses related to the current operating fund amounted to \$79.9 million, an increase of \$1.8 million or 2.4 percent from fiscal 2005 before Church Council designated funds. Revenue was favorable to the budget by \$2.0 million or 2.4 percent. Expenses were below the Church Council authorized level by \$1.0 million or 1.2 percent.

Income from congregations through synods in the form of mission support increased slightly to \$65.7 million, an increase of \$0.2 million or 0.3 percent. This exceeded mission support levels for the two years prior and was the first increase in annual mission support since 2001.

Other temporarily restricted and unrestricted funds available for the budgeted operations of this church amounted to \$17.2 million compared with \$16.5 million in 2005. Major sources of income in these categories included: missionary sponsorship, \$3.8 million; bequest and trust income, \$3.5 million; investment income, \$2.4 million; endowment income, \$2.1 million; support from the Mission Investment Fund for new starts, \$1.5 million; Vision for Mission, \$1.2 million; fraternal grants, \$1.0 million; and other income of \$1.8 million.

Total contributions to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal in 2006 reached \$20.1 million, of which a record \$19.1 million was for the general World Hunger Appeal, as compared to \$17.0 one year ago. This is the largest single-year increase in World Hunger receipts since 1999, and brings us well within reach of the goal established at the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of \$25 million in World Hunger income. Designated World Hunger income was \$0.9 million, of which \$0.7 million was given for the Stand with Africa campaign.

ELCA members in 2006 contributed \$5.1 million in disaster response receipts and an additional \$3.4 million was received in federal grants for hurricane relief, for a total of \$8.5 million. This compares to \$36.8 million from members and \$0.9 million in external grants in 2005. The disaster appeal that received the most donations was the 2005 hurricanes response with receipts of \$2.4 million. Other disaster income was primarily for the general domestic disaster fund with \$0.9 million received and the general international

disaster fund with \$0.4 million.

Overall, it was a year of positive financial results for the churchwide organization. Mission support revenue increased in 37 synods and four regions. The range in synod variances was again high, with increases as high as 27.1 percent and decreases as low as 19.0 percent, but the vast majority of synods performed within five percent of their plan. Investment income realized a short-term boost of 156.9 percent or \$1.4 million due to the great influx of disaster income, the value of the investments, and improved rates. Bequest and trust income exceeded budget by \$1.0 million and once again contributed to a positive revenue variance, allowing for the transfer of \$0.8 million to the newly created Mission Development Fund.

Exhibit A, Part 4b, pages 1-7 provide additional information including variance analysis relative to budget and previous year results and a report of mission support by synods.

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Report of Section Activities

Information Technology

Submitted by: LaRue Unglaube

The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church (13.52.B05).

Integrated/Donor Database Project

Many churchwide staff involved in fundraising activities have been working on the implementation of Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge (RE) software as the new donor management and gift processing system. The current gift processing and the foundation database systems were unified using Blackbaud's Raiser Edge(RE). Many tasks are continuing since the go-live date the first week of October. Information Technology staff continue to work with the involved units as they learn new processes.

The second phase of this integration is the Integrated Database Application (IDA). The objective of the second phase is to move units' contact databases to the Raiser's Edge system. This will allow us to avoid updating information about a constituent in multiple places. The application development and implementation with a group in Vocation and Education is scheduled for first quarter of 2007. Additional list data will be transferred on a prioritized basis following the successful transition of the Vocation and Education unit data.

Application Development

A Web application was created that allows organizations that have endowments to access their monthly reports and history from previous years online. To date 127 users have used this service.

The Giving Basket was upgraded to the "Good Gifts Online" in February. This change improved the ease and focus of giving donations and now allows for Web sites to easily link to elca.org.

Transition activities

Transition activities related to the reconfiguration of the Lutheran Center have been an important component of IT's work during the fall and winter. Each move

presented new challenges. Each move cycle takes about one week of network staff time to complete all of the tasks. This has been a successful project with fewer concerns than anticipated.

Business Continuity Planning (BCP)

A used UNIX system was purchased to enable timely availability of some business systems in the event of the declaration of an incident that would close the churchwide office. This server is being built and will be housed at the Archives in a secured room.

Units with specific immediate needs, in case of a shut down, have been identified. Work continues with those units to deepen their business continuity plans.

Web infrastructure and network improvements staff worked with the Mission Investment Fund's (MIF) technical analyst to separate the MIF infrastructure from the rest of the network. This allows MIF to more easily move off site in the event of a declared incident.

The IT helpdesk offers many services to the organization. One of the resources they offer to staff is a loaner laptop pool. The management of this pool includes re-imaging each laptop when it is returned so it is ready for the next person requesting a loaner. Each year when new laptops are purchased to replace those that are at the end of the life-cycle, the returned laptops are prepared for use in the loaner pool. In addition, the helpdesk ticketing software was upgraded. The new Track-It software has many features that will improve the tracking of tickets and the ability to report on activity.

The desktop configuration for the 2007 refresh has been determined. The vendor has been selected with an expected rollout date before June 1, 2007.

Work has continued on sizing the network servers for the capacity that is needed. Two servers were replaced to allow faster service around e-mail and user document usage. A GroupWise mobile server was added to the network to better meet the needs of staff members with mobile devices that handle e-mail.

In addition, the network staff worked on patches to the many network components around the change in the start and end of daylight savings time.

VPN Remote Access

Currently, we have a total of 160 staff using the VPN to perform some of their daily work. This has been especially helpful as Foundation deployed staff moved to Raiser's Edge as their tool for sharing information with Chicago-based staff.

IT Internal Audit

This section has worked with the ELCA internal auditor to complete the IT audit. During 2007, we will be working to strengthen control processes that were identified in the report.

Management Services

Submitted by: Karen Rathbun

The treasurer shall make provisions for facilities management in support of the operation of the Lutheran Center and the function of Chicago-based churchwide units and, in so doing, the treasurer shall maintain management services with an executive for management services appointed by the treasurer who shall be responsible for building management for the churchwide organization and the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units (13.52.C05.).

Section Responsibilities

Management Services has responsibility for the operation of the Lutheran Center premises in Chicago, Ill., the archives building in Elk Grove Village, Ill., and leased properties in Washington, D.C. and New York City. Management Services also provides infrastructure services including: a copy center; maintenance of floor copiers; office supplies; mail management services; scheduling and maintenance of the conference center; building concierge/reception and building tours; and the ELCAAdvantage Program, a national cooperative buying program. A building management contractor, Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), manages the facilities, garage maintenance, cleaning, and security functions.

Reconfiguration Update

The major focus of work for the Management Services section in 2006 and continuing through to May 2007 is the completion of the Lutheran Center reconfiguration project. This project was the result of the new organizational structure approved by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly and the need to address building upkeep necessary due to 19 years of wear and tear.

At this time the project remains on schedule. We have completed floors 7-11. On March 23, the fifth floor moved into transition space. Next will be the sixth floor, including the lunchroom and an additional conference room that can be used for meetings and meals. When the project is completed, we will have an additional 8,500 square feet for rent on the 6th floor.

A decision has been made to have a security desk in the lobby of the Lutheran Center during normal work

hours. This will serve not only the ELCA, but also our tenants within the facility. The security staff at the desk will be using a visitor photo badge identification system that will produce a visitor photo stick-on badge. The visitor information will be stored on the system and can be accessed easily upon their next visit.

An earlier decision to move the lunchroom to the first floor was changed when Community Alternatives, our largest tenant, asked to lease the space on the first floor for expansion. This income will help to offset the cost of the build-out and will also give us a locked-in lease for 12 years.

To date, the construction is proceeding on schedule and budget. The capital budget for the reconfiguration submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee is \$6.525 million, resulting in total annual depreciation for this expense over 20 years of \$326,250. In 2006, the operating budget will also pay \$411,500 in interest expense on the Lutheran Center building mortgage. The cost for 2007 will be \$343,700. This debt will be paid in full in January 2012, relieving the operating budget of this expense.

The churchwide staff has been patient and helpful throughout the process, resulting in minimal impact on productivity and continuing operations.

Report of the Conference of Bishops

The 49th meeting of the Conference of Bishops was held in Galveston, Texas, March 1-6, 2007. We were delighted to enjoy the warm hospitality of ELCA Vice President Carlos and Diane Peña and the people of First Lutheran Church in Galveston!

As was noted in the Report of the Presiding Bishop, this meeting of the conference was marked particularly by the reality of impending "changes in long-abiding and deep relationships within the Conference." Twelve bishops will not be continuing their service in this office due to retirement, term limits, or choosing not to be available for re-election. In addition, we met in the daily awareness of the grave illness of our Sister, Bishop Margarita Martinez.

Notwithstanding our grief, we gave thanks to God for the ministries of these colleagues and their spouses, and prayed for the powerful guidance of the Holy Spirit in the months ahead, as new servants are chosen. Those we honored included Donald Main, Donald McCoid, Paul Swanson, Paul Blom, Ted Schneider, Bob Berg, Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Paul Landahl, Ron Warren, George Carlson, Gary Hansen, Rich Omland, and Margarita Martinez.

During the meeting we were especially grateful for the reports of Interim Bishop Francisco Sosa and Churchwide Staff Members Kathie Bender Schwich and Tammy Jackson with regard to Bishop Martinez and the Caribbean Synod. In response the bishops pledged \$30,000 in gifts designated for accompanying the Martinez family and the Caribbean Synod.

The purpose for meeting in Galveston was to be near the Gulf Coast and the ongoing work of Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). We received an extended LDR report including the opportunity for conversation with pastors and lay leaders from the hurricane-affected areas. Some 30 bishops extended the meeting by traveling to New Orleans to spend additional time with those engaged in the recovery efforts. We have noted the learnings from this event and join with Presiding Bishop Hanson in considering changes in our disaster response procedures, all of this with enormous thanks to those who have and continue to provide assistance in the wake of all such disasters.

Another major part of our time was spent in twin conversations around the matters of declining ELCA membership and funding related to new mission development. ELCA Research and Evaluation, and especially Dr. Kenneth Inskeep, was very helpful in this continuing discussion.

Among a host of other agenda items, I would note these:

- Reports from churchwide officers
- Pastoral message on the continued journey toward a social statement on human sexuality, Exhibit A, Part 5, page 2.
- Response to the Blue Ribbon Report on Mission Funding.
- LSA CEO Jill Schumann on healthcare in the United States.
- Federal chaplaincy update.
- Plans for the Bishops' Academy to be in Bethlehem (not PA) in 2009.
- Concerns related to immigrant status of Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) candidates.
- Concerns related to student debt of seminarians and first-call pastors.

The spring gathering of the conference includes the joy of having spouses present and meeting with a parallel agenda. That was especially important in this meeting, as we said so many farewells. Thanks be to God for the gift of community.

E. Roy Riley, for
The Conference of Bishops

**Message of the Conference of Bishops
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
March 6, 2007**

This pastoral message of the Conference of Bishops is offered as we prepare for upcoming Synod Assemblies and the Churchwide Assembly.

We remind this church that the 2005 Churchwide Assembly resolved that the "members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions [of this church] be urged to concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we share as members of the body of Christ" (CA05.05.17).

This church is engaged in a careful study of issues related to human sexuality with the intention of adopting a social statement at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. We urge the members of this church to engage fully and faithfully in the study process as part of our "living together faithfully" during this time.

We trust the Holy Spirit to guide us and have confidence in the constitutional process that orders our conversation as we engage together in moral deliberation at Synod Assemblies and the Churchwide Assembly.

The Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to faithful leadership as, together, we seek the mind of Christ on these matters.

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Synodical Resolutions for Referral

1. Human Sexuality Study North Carolina Synod (9B)

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been in a study process (*Journey Together Faithfully*) since 2001; and

WHEREAS, the decisions of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly were the result of that study process; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly resolved that the “members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions [of this church] be urged to concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion that we have as members of the body of Christ” [CA05.05.17]; and

WHEREAS, the study process adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 2001 is ongoing, leading to a social statement on human sexuality to be presented at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Synod ask the Church Council to continue the current study process and consider no changes to “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” pending completion of the study process and adoption of a human sexuality social statement.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the resolution of the North Carolina Synod related to the ELCA Studies on Sexuality;

To acknowledge that the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of this church provide a process for the development and possible revision of “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”; and

To affirm the importance of consultation with the Conference of Bishops, the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Office of the Secretary, and the Vocation and Education unit before consideration of any revisions; and

To request that the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America inform the synod of this action.

2. Rules for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)

WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is the highest legislative authority of this church and will next meet August

6-11, 2007, (ELCA constitutional provision 12.11.); and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the ELCA is the interim legislative authority of this church and, as such, must act in accordance with the actions and policies of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.13.); and

WHEREAS, under the ELCA bylaws, the Church Council has authority to amend,¹ by a simple majority, “Definitions and Guidelines,”² “Vision and Expectations,”³ and the policy on reinstatement to the rosters of this church;⁴ and

WHEREAS, under the ELCA bylaws, the Churchwide Assembly does not itself have authority to amend these same policies but does have authority to direct the Church Council to amend them; and

WHEREAS, it does not seem appropriate that a greater majority should be required for the Churchwide Assembly to direct the Church Council to amend these policies when the Church Council can amend them on its own initiative by a simple majority; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council will recommend rules for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Council recommends and requests that the ELCA Church Council not recommend any rule for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly that would require anything other than a simple majority for matters relating to the rostered service of persons in a committed same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this recommendation and request does not apply to those matters that are specified by the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws themselves as requiring a two-thirds supermajority for adoption by the Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the secretary of this synod will transmit a copy of this resolution to the vice president of the ELCA (Mr. Carlos Peña), the secretary of the ELCA (Pr. Lowell Almen), and the chair of the Church Council’s Legal and Constitutional Review Committee (Pr. Kenneth Ruppert).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the Metropolitan

¹ For this authority, see the minutes of the April 2005 ELCA Church Council meeting, p. 90, explanation by ELCA Secretary Lowell Almen.

² The legislative basis for “Definitions and Guidelines” is contained in ELCA bylaws 20.71.11. and 20.71.12.

³ The legislative basis for “Vision and Expectations” is contained in ELCA bylaws 7.31.11., 7.31.13., and 7.51.03.b.

⁴ The legislative basis for the policy on reinstatement is contained in ELCA Bylaws 7.31.15. and 7.52.13.

Chicago Synod:

To acknowledge that the recommendation of the Church Council to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America related to the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" will be the response of the Church Council to the resolution of the synod; and

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

Text of the ELCA bylaws cited in the preceding resolution

20.71.11. The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline in each of the above categories.

20.71.12. The Committee on Appeals shall present to the Church Council for consideration and recommendation a process and definitions, as required in bylaw 20.71.11.

7.31.11. Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church in its governing documents and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

- a. commitment to Christ;
- b. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- c. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- d. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- e. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- f. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- g. membership in a congregation of this church.

7.31.13.

Preparation and Approval. Except as provided below, a candidate for ordination as a pastor shall have:

- a. membership in a congregation of this church and registration, by its pastor and council, of the candidate with the candidacy committee;
- b. been endorsed by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being approved for ordination;
- c. satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America, including practical preparation, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, such as internship and supervised clinical work;
- d. completed at least one year of residency in a seminary of this church, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church;
- e. been recommended for approval by the faculty of a seminary of this church;
- f. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;
- g. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- h. received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

7.51.03.

Associates in Ministry. This church shall maintain a lay roster of associates in ministry of those commissioned—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church.

The roster of associates in ministry, in addition to those listed in bylaw 7.51.02., shall be composed of:

- a. those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- b. those who are approved, subsequent to September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry in this church according to policies and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- c. Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, a newly approved candidate shall be commissioned, according to the proper service orders of this church, as an associate in ministry.

Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.

- 7.31.15. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement to the ordained ministry as a pastor, whether having served previously in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate

churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a pastor in this church.

- 7.52.13. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as an associate in ministry, whether having previously served in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be endorsed by the pastor and council of the congregation of this church of which such a person is a member, and interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the synodical candidacy committee under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call in this church.
- a. Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active lay roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official rosters of laypersons, as identified in 7.51.03.b. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.
 - b. A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of

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associates in ministry of this church, who
was so certified during the period
between January 1, 1988, and September
1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster
category upon being received and
accepted on another roster of this church.

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Responses to Synodical Resolutions

1. Pension Equalization

Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D)

WHEREAS, pastors' salary recommendations forwarded each year to the parishes of the ELCA are not mandatory and are not uniformly applied, particularly in rural parishes; and

WHEREAS, pastors serving in rural parishes most often must live in a parsonage and are not given a housing allowance. The rural pastor consequently cannot realize the advantage of equity growth from owning and reselling a home that is realized by those in urban settings who have this advantage; and

WHEREAS, rural parishes do not equally provide extra benefits, such as social security and FICA payments and other bonuses; and

WHEREAS, work opportunities for a pastor's spouse are very limited and very often non-existent in rural communities; and

WHEREAS, living on low salaries that are provided to rural pastors does not allow much, if any, opportunity for personal investment in IRAs, real estate, or other insurance or investment products to enhance retirement living, as their urban counterparts are privileged to experience; and

WHEREAS, pension benefits are tied to the salary provisions that they have experienced during their years of active ministry; and

WHEREAS, there is a consequent disparity between the resulting pensions paid to those pastors who have worked in rural ministries in contrast to those who have worked in urban ministries, often resulting in actual poverty or near poverty situations for those on the lower end of the pension benefit scale; and

WHEREAS, lay members of congregations, with the exception of the few who serve in leadership positions, are almost totally uninformed as to how the pension plan works or how unfairly that plan plays out for some retired pastors; and

WHEREAS, the present pension plan plays right into the ever present temptation to ignore the servant model demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ: "Whoever would be first among you let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:27-28), seeking and holding onto those pastoral positions that are highly remunerated and with the consequent higher pension payouts; and

WHEREAS, this seemingly necessary game of always seeking to flee to the urban, well-paid pastoral positions and abandon the rural, low-paid pastoral positions leads to an intensifying of the rural ministry crisis that is facing our church today; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, in assembly, direct the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Council to request the Church Council of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to prepare a proposal to restructure the ELCA pension plan, working toward equalization or, at the very least, setting a base minimum of pension payments for all pastors; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council bring this restructured plan to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly for full consideration and implementation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Council establish a task force to consider possible synod response to pension inequity.

At its November 2006 meeting, the Church Council voted CC06.11.60a:

To receive the resolution of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod related to pension equalization; and

To refer the resolution to the Board of Pensions with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

To anticipate that the report and possible recommendations be included in the summary of Church Council actions prepared for the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Response from the Board of Pensions

This report is the ELCA Board of Pensions' response to the resolution of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod related to pension equalization. It draws heavily from the more comprehensive report on this subject prepared by the Board of Pensions in 2003. A copy of the report is available on the resource table.

Background

Since the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there has been much concern and discussion about the issue of low compensation and pensions for rostered leaders in this church. Although most, if not all, ELCA synods maintain minimum guidelines for cash compensation, actual compensation varies widely—with many rostered leaders paid below guideline.

As for pensions (i.e., retirement income), the ELCA Retirement Plan is similar to other employer-sponsored retirement plans that provide benefits related to the level of compensation earned during an employee's years of active service. Thus, rostered leaders who receive low compensation during their years of active service tend to

have lower retirement income in retirement when compared with those who received higher compensation. (Rostered leaders have the option to annuitize, partially annuitize, or not annuitize their ELCA retirement account as a source of their retirement income.)

Several Churchwide Assemblies and many Synod Assemblies have considered the issue of low compensation and low pensions. The response of this church has been to establish the Special Needs Retirement Fund in order to provide additional income for those retired rostered leaders and surviving spouses in need and supplement retirement income for those currently serving at low salaries.

Most recently, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly addressed low compensation and pension benefits and passed a resolution that called upon the ELCA to

- acknowledge the serious concern about inadequate compensation and pensions expressed in the memorials of the Northwest Washington Synod, the Western North Dakota Synod, and the Northern Great Lakes Synod;
- encourage continued efforts within this church to seek adequate levels of compensation for clergy and other rostered leaders;
- encourage synods to adopt adequate compensation guidelines and to urge congregations to meet or exceed them when possible;
- acknowledge the action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly which created the Special Needs Retirement Fund for retired rostered leaders and surviving spouses who live in poverty;
- call upon congregations and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to give generously to the Special Needs Retirement Fund, noting that \$5 million in additional funding will enable the ELCA to supplement pensions for the approximately 170 retired pastors and spouses living below the poverty level;
- encourage giving beyond \$5 million so the Special Needs Retirement Fund will have sufficient funds to address the need for pension supplementation for pastors currently serving in low-salaried positions; and
- direct the Board of Pensions to prepare methods to bring into equity pensions of professional leaders and to report its findings to the Church Council for further consideration and possible implementation (CA01.06.39).

Summary of 2003 study

In response to the directive from the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, the Board of Pensions examined possible methods of achieving pension equity for the professional leaders of the ELCA. The key observations from that study were:

- Low compensation is a widespread issue within the ELCA. Our analysis of clergy compensation in six ELCA synods revealed that more than half of the parish pastors in those synods are paid below the minimum guideline.
- If compensation is low, then pensions, which are proportional to compensation and years of service, also will be low. The preferred solution, and the only way to achieve true equity, is to raise compensation levels and thereby pensions as well. This would not be easy. While pension policy is managed on a churchwide basis, compensation decisions are made locally.
- A far less effective solution would be to provide disproportionate pensions to narrow the inequities. However, this would not address the primary issue of low compensation. Instead, it could produce a pension program where low-salaried rostered leaders receive more income in retirement than they received while they were in active service.
- Our ecumenical partners have dealt with this issue in different ways. The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have defined benefit pension plans with minimum pension provisions that provide proportionately greater benefits to low-salaried members. The United Church of Christ (UCC) has an individual account plan similar to the ELCA Retirement Plan. The UCC receives a special offering each year as much as \$1 million to provide relief to retired ministers and surviving spouses with very low incomes.
- The defined benefit approach is not practical for the ELCA because of this church's long history of individual account pension plans with member-directed investments and distributions. The only practical approach to improving pensions for the low-salaried rostered leaders would be through a minimum pension contribution year-by-year. A minimum equal to 10 percent of the "guideline defined compensation" would mean rostered leaders who are paid below their synod's minimum guideline would receive a pension contribution as if they were paid the guideline amount.
- There are two key drawbacks to the minimum contribution concept. First, it would apply only to

future years of service. As a result, the improvement for low-salaried rostered leaders would be realized only gradually over a period of many years. Second, the cost to provide a minimum contribution equal to 10 percent of the applicable synod guideline for all rostered leaders in congregation's is very high – an estimated \$4.4 million per year or 0.7 percent of total defined compensation for all sponsored members.

- Funding supplemental contributions could be achieved by requiring additional contributions of 0.7 percent of defined compensation. But this would be a substantial increase and would be on top of the 0.9 percent of defined compensation being collected to help fund retiree medical subsidies. The combined amount would represent a six percent surcharge on the cost of ELCA benefits. This could discourage plan participation and be especially burdensome for smaller congregations.
- With the Special Needs Retirement Fund, the ELCA has a program that was created, in part, for the very purpose of supplementing retirement contributions for low-salaried rostered leaders. However, this fund has grown very slowly and, as of December 31, 2006, amounted to only \$5.6 million. The main challenge is to strengthen fundraising efforts so the Special Needs Retirement Fund can fulfill the objectives for which it was established.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To acknowledge with thanks the background information and recommendations provided by the Board of Pensions in response to the resolution from the Northwestern Minnesota Synod on pension equalization;

That the issue of pension equity (i.e., retirement income) can best be addressed by providing compensation for rostered leaders that is at or above synodical minimum compensation guidelines; and

That additional efforts to grow the Special Needs Retirement Fund are critical, to meet the needs both of those who served at low compensation in the past and now have low retirement income and those currently serving at low salaries.

To decline to initiate a proposal to restructure the ELCA Retirement Plan as a means to address disparities in retirement income,

To request the secretary of this church to convey the background information and this response to the resolution to the Northwestern Minnesota Synod.

2. Commercialism

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

WHEREAS, voluntary giving by church members remains the primary method of financing ministry; and

WHEREAS, our stewardship represents our faith-filled response to God's amazing grace; and

WHEREAS, commercialism, the selling of goods or services in the name of the church with the purpose of securing funds for the operation and mission of the church, its auxiliaries, and church-related institutions, continues to increase steadily in this church; and

WHEREAS, the influence that the secular world, which relies on the selling of goods and services, which encourages the selling of goods and services to support its various benevolent activities and programs, is affecting our decision-making as a church; and

WHEREAS, commercialism is a concern that needs to be addressed in the context of faithful stewardship within our congregations and within our church; and

WHEREAS, two of the predecessor church bodies to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America developed statements on commercialism with the church, statements to which many congregations looked for guidance in making decisions regarding the relationship between stewardship and the selling of goods and services; and

WHEREAS, this church lacks a clear and current policy statement regarding commercialism to guide its synods, congregations, agencies, institutions, *The Lutheran* magazine, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, and other related entities, such as Thrivent Financial for Lutherans; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be asked to consider and study the issue of commercialism in the church so that it can provide this church with a clear policy statement similar to the statements of our predecessor church bodies for guidance to the churchwide, synodical, and local expressions of this church for implementation in our stewardship understanding and practices.

Response from Church in Society unit Background

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod has asked the Church Council "to consider and study the issue of commercialism in the church so that it can provide this church with a clear policy statement" for guidance in the area of stewardship. It says that commercialism in the church is increasing and references the guidance provided by predecessor church bodies.

In 1964, The American Lutheran Church offered a statement on "Commercialism in the Church" as a guide to pastors and congregations, boards, agencies,

institutions, and auxiliaries for their policies and actions. Also in 1964, the Second Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Church in America adopted a social statement on commercialism. Both statements explain the dangers of commercialism in the church to a Christian understanding of stewardship; the consciences of both members and non-members; distinctions from private business; and the church's tax status with the state. Both statements also have in view the need to address this issue in a pastoral, practical manner "in the spirit of Christian love and evangelical freedom" (ALC, page 4) that educates so as to "replace poor practices with better ones" (LCA, n.p.). In the absence of ELCA policy, these predecessor church body statements continue to serve as guidance to this church, though their relevance is tempered by the passage of time.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopted *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: A Social Statement on Economic Life* in 1999. The purpose of this statement is to address economic injustice in the broader society and world as opposed to commercialism in the church: "Out of deep concern for those affected adversely [by the market-based economy], we of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America here assess economic life today..." (p. 1). At the same time, this statement recognizes that:

- "Economic life pervades our lives..." (p. 1);
- "Market-based thought and practices dominate our world today in ways that seem to eclipse other economic, social, political, and religious perspectives" (p. 1);
- "If the economic arena becomes a reigning power for us, the question arises: in what or whom shall we place our trust and hope?" (p. 2); and
- "Economic assumptions can conflict with what we as a church confess. Who we are in Christ places us in tension with priorities given to money, consumption, competition, and profit in our economic system" (p. 3).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended

To thank the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod for its concern for stewardship in the church and how stewardship affects the church's position in society as a whole;

To acknowledge the existence of predecessor church body statements on commercialism in the church;

To decline, at this time, to develop a policy

statement on commercialism in the church; and

To request that the secretary of this church notify the synod of this action and the background information provided.

3. Congregational Voting Membership Requirements

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

At the September 2006 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Church Council, a resolution was received from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod related to congregational voting membership requirements. The resolution read:

RESOLVED, to transmit to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a request that the Model Constitution for Congregations be amended to exempt military personnel from the voting member requirement (*C8.02.c.) of having communed in and made a contribution of record to the congregation of membership during the current or preceding calendar year. The Executive Committee voted (EC06.09.32a):

To receive the resolution of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod related to congregational voting membership requirements for military personnel; and

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Secretary with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council.

The matter has been studied. Clearly, no simple solution exists and possible constitutional solutions may be more complicated than the application of reasonable exception under the circumstances.

The issue of absent military personnel has especially presented itself during the past four years in view of the largest call-up of National Guard units since World War II. Many hope that this circumstance and practice will not be of long-term duration.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended

To acknowledge with gratitude the expression of concern of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod for military personnel absent because of duty for extended duration from their respective congregations;

To encourage all congregations to continue to demonstrate ongoing pastoral care for military personnel and their families throughout the period of their service;

To note that persons who cease to be voting

members under the requirements of *C8.02. in the Model Constitution for Congregations are not terminated automatically from the role of the baptized (*C8.02.a.) and confirmed (*C8.02.b.) members of a congregation;

To note further that provision *C8.05. specifies that the bylaws of a congregation define the meaning of “inactivity” in regard to membership in a congregation;

To advise the synod that a congregation, by means of council resolution, continuing resolution, or approved bylaw, may provide reasonable exemption to the membership requirement of *C8.02.c. for deployed military personnel;

To observe that C10.05 precludes absentee ballot or proxy voting, and further that the requirements in *C8.02.c for voting members to have communed and contributed could be satisfied as recently as the day of a congregational meeting or as far in the past as two full calendar years, perhaps resulting in few if any exclusions for inactivity on the participating members; and

To ask the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to convey this response to the resolution of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

4. Persecution of Christians and Proselytes in Islamic States

West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod (8H)

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America maintains relations with the Islamic community through, among other means, the National Council of the Churches in Christ in the U.S.A. (NCC); and

WHEREAS, the NCC subscribes to the fifth mark of faithfulness in inter-religious dialogue, which states, “True relationship is rooted in accountability and respect. We approach others in humility, not arrogance. In our relationships, we will call ourselves and our partners to a mutual accountability. We will invite each other to join in building a world of love and justice, but we will also challenge each other’s unjust behavior. We can do both only from an attitude of mutual respect”; and

WHEREAS, the state-sponsored or sanctioned persecution of Christians for the faith in Islamic states demonstrates both basic injustice and a lack of respect for the Christian faith and those who subscribe to it; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod Council memorialize the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to condemn the state-sponsored or sanctioned persecution of Christians and proselytes for the faith in

Islamic states, demanding of Islamic leaders in the U.S.A. that they join in this condemnation and exercise all salutary influence upon their coreligionists; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod Council communicate to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that it is the opinion of this synod that fruitful Christian–Islamic dialogue is not possible so long as Christians are executed, tortured, imprisoned, and otherwise persecuted for the faith in Islamic states.

At its November 2006 meeting, the Church Council voted CC06.11.60d:

To receive the resolution of the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod related to the persecution of Christians and proselytes in Islamic states; and

To refer the resolution to the Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations unit of the Office of the Presiding Bishop with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

The resolution from the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod (WV-WM) seeks to address the conditions of persecuted Christians and proselytes in predominantly Islamic states and concludes that such conditions should have a bearing on the ELCA’s participation in Christian-Muslim dialogue.

Similar assembly actions were taken at the 2003 Churchwide Assembly (CA-03.06.40 *Support for Persecuted Churches*) and the 1997 Churchwide Assembly (CA97.06.48 *Religious Persecution*). Both actions call upon members of the ELCA “to pray for all victims of religious persecution, both Christians and non-Christians, and for their oppressors.” Likewise, this church was encouraged to “foster respect, tolerance, and understanding of other faiths, including an examination of the causes and manifestations of religious extremism in a variety of religious contexts.”

The “whereas” clauses of the current WV-WM resolution rely heavily on the conception of inter-religious dialogue adopted by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC), a conciliar body of which the ELCA is an active participant. It is affirmed in the “fifth mark of faithfulness in inter-religious dialogue,” that dialogue should exhibit “accountability and respect” where representatives of different traditions approach one another “in humility.”

Religious persecution perpetrated by any group trespasses all children of God, is a violation of basic human rights, and is an affront to the spirit of possibility in inter-religious cooperation, dialogue, and relationships. However, as the 2003 and 1997 actions make clear, the existence of religious persecution does not create a condition in which “fruitful Christian-Islamic dialogue is not possible.” In fact, the history of inter-religious work and relationships in the ELCA, including local congregations, churchwide assembly actions, and international efforts through the global alliance of Action by Churches Together (ACT) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), all reveal that conditions of conflict are precisely when dialogue and relationships toward reconciliation are most necessary, constructive, and vital to peaceful co-existence.

The WV-WM resolution is concerned with “state-sponsored or sanctioned persecution of Christians for the faith in Islamic states.” Insofar as the ELCA is committed to a model of accompaniment in mission with global partner churches, ACT, and the LWF, the ELCA recommendations and policies regarding Christian involvement in the world are deeply informed by partner perspectives in their respective contexts. For instance, partner churches in Tanzania, Madagascar, and Ethiopia express appreciation to the ELCA for pursuing dialogue and relationships about issues of conflict on their behalf. The ELCA needs to be conscientious about recommendations from these global partners rather than calling for an end to Christian-Islamic dialogue.

Concern expressed in the resolution for Christian minorities around the world is deeply felt. It is important to remember, however, that not all points of conflict involving Christians within largely Islamic societies can be attributed to Islam itself. For instance, Christian minorities in Muslim majority Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Lebanon have differing experiences given their varied political and historical contexts. Furthermore, through the auspices of the LWF and ACT, the ELCA works throughout the world with Muslim partners the pandemic of HIV/AIDS, provides assistance such as to the thousands of Muslims and Christians at the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya; welcomes Muslim students to study at ELCA colleges, universities, and seminaries and encourages the use of church facilities for Christian-Muslim dialogue and relationships that encourage understanding, reconciliation, and peaceful co-existence.

In addition, North American Christians and Muslims struggle with many of the same social and cultural concerns. Dialogue and relationships in North America

take place in a highly politicized context, that includes fear of the other. In this shared context, inter-religious cooperation between Christians and Muslims is and will be increasingly important.

In his own historical context, Martin Luther lived through a period of politicized fear related to Islam. Luther steadfastly resisted calls for a renewed crusade against Muslims. Although he had no opportunities for dialogue like the ones provided by churches today, Luther sought to promote knowledge of Islam from the best possible sources. Similar commitments are reflected in inter-religious dialogue and relationships today.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer observed that living as a human meant having both “responsibility towards the past” and a “desire to shape the future.” Through inter-religious dialogue and relationships, Christians and Muslims deepen their relationships with others outside of their faith tradition, seeking to find common ground to shape a common future with other people of faith and conscience.

One important step toward deepening the ELCA’s awareness and dialogue with Muslim communities in North America is a forthcoming Lutheran-Muslim Consultative Panel, through the auspices of the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The Lutheran-Muslim Consultative Panel will reflect on Christian and Islamic traditions of religious toleration, including reflection on the Qur’anic pronouncement, “There is no compulsion in religion” (2:256). The Lutheran-Muslim Consultative Panel will consult with Global Mission, Church in Society, and Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations to assess the role of religious minorities in Christian and Muslim contexts, paying express attention to the 2003 and 1997 actions to examine the causes and manifestations of religious extremism.”

It is recommended that Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, Global Mission, and Church in Society work together in keeping with the ELCA’s commitment to the accompaniment model of mission with global church partners by communicating with global companions in regions with Christian minorities and larger Muslim population centers. In the spirit of the 2003 and 1997 Churchwide Assembly actions, it is recommended that the churchwide offices continue to produce literature, programs, presentations, and public opportunities committed to countering fear and conflict with a commitment to inter-religious dialogue and relationships filled with accountability and respect, humility, faithfulness, and forthrightness.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To thank the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod for its resolution of concern related to the persecution of Christians and Proselytes in Islamic States; and

To receive the report from the Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations section and to request that the secretary of this church transmit the report as the response of the Church Council to the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod.

**5. Natural Church Development
New Jersey Synod (7A)**

WHEREAS, the kingdom of God can be compared to a man scattering seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come (Mark 4:26-29); and

WHEREAS, the creation of vital and healthy congregations does not consist of pushing or pulling congregations in human strengths and efforts but in releasing and developing their “all by itself” potential God has given to build the Church; and

WHEREAS, Natural Church Development is an approach to church growth that strives to release the “all by itself” growth potential that God has put into every congregation; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through its Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, has adopted Natural Church Development as an assessment tool and now is using it with mid-sized and larger congregations, with new mission starts, with plateaued or declining congregations, and with congregations that are in need of more significant transformation to assess the health of their ministry and gauge its capacity for growth; and

WHEREAS, within a clear biblical, theological, and missional framework, the Natural Church Development tool provides congregations with guidance to build healthy ministries that can grow both in the quality of ministry and in the numbers of faithful and engaged participants, increases congregational capacity for ministry and evangelical outreach, and thereby provides a promising base for healthy ministry development and renewal for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, promoting a healthy culture is something every congregation struggles with at various times in its life-cycle; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit work in cooperation with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers both to create new and to repurpose existing resources that could be used by congregations using the Natural Church Development

tool; and be it further

RESOLVED, that consideration be given that such resources be organized and marketed in such a way as to correspond with the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development in order to facilitate congregational efforts to address their “minimum factor” (weakest characteristic) as they strive to grow naturally as God has given them the ability to grow as vital centers for mission and ministry; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly direct the New Jersey Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Executive Committee of the Church Council for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

At its July 2006 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Church Council voted (EC06.07.24a):

To receive the and refer the resolution of the New Jersey Synod related to Natural Church Development to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit in consultation with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

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

*Response from Evangelical Outreach and
Congregational Mission and Augsburg Fortress,
Publishers*

Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) staff are pleased that Natural Church Development (NCD) is being explored and received with enthusiasm. The unit is working diligently to increase the number of coaches available to assist congregations in its use. In addition, new updates to NCD materials are being received and incorporated into training and materials that the unit is using or developing.

As part of this ongoing work and in response to the above memorial from the NJ Synod:

1. EOCM staff will work with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers through an existing resource management team to assess current Augsburg Fortress resources and their relevance to NCD characteristics and the NCD process. A bibliography will be compiled that includes these resources and their appropriateness for various NCD quality characteristics and steps. This will be available online and as a download at the EOCM website during 2007. The bibliography will include active links to the listed resources

available at the Augsburg Fortress website.

2. EOCM staff will write a series of shorter resources relating specifically to each of the eight quality characteristics, the organic growth (formerly biotic) principles, and the NCD process. These will be available for congregational use as they are completed. Conversation at the resource management team will determine whether these resources are best produced in print or as for downloading from the Internet. Each resource will offer both insights to clarify Lutheran connections and concerns within each specific characteristic and information related to appropriate portion of the bibliography and resource list mentioned above.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended

To offer gratitude to the New Jersey Synod for its resolution related to Natural Church Development; and

To acknowledge the information provided by the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit as the response of the Church Council to the resolution; and

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

6. Mission to the Antitrinitarians

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)

WHEREAS, promulgation and propagation of right doctrine is an essential of the Great Commission; and

WHEREAS, failure to do so among our antitrinitarian brothers and sisters is a failure in Christian love; and

WHEREAS, failure to equip the members of this church to defend the faith from the assaults of antitrinitarianism is also a failure in Christian love; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod memorialize the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take appropriate measures to develop and provide for this church the resources needed to mount a vigorous missionary campaign for outreach to our brothers and sisters who refer to our Lord Jesus as Messiah or Christ without the blessing of the knowledge of the Christ's divinity or his consubstantiality with the Father and the Holy Spirit without confusion of the persons; and be it further

RESOLVED, that such resources be particularly mindful of the impoverished condition of our psilanthropist, tritheist, and modalist brothers and sisters who claim Jesus as Messiah or Christ and withal be well

suited for use in apologetics and proselytization.

At its June 2006 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Church council voted (EC06.06.20a):

To receive the resolution of the Western Virginia-Western Maryland Synod regarding mission and outreach to antitrinitarianists;

To refer the resolution to the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

Response from Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission

Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit staff researched issues raised in the resolution within the broader scope of witnessing to all people. Many of the issues concerning engagement with nontrinitarian groups are comparable to those encountered among the unchurched and among those who hold decision, fundamentalist, or conservative evangelical theologies. In response, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission will continue to:

1. Encourage the development and use of resources that:
 - a. witness confidently to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ; and
 - b. uphold the commitment not only to treat people of other faiths with respect, but also as people to be loved rather than enemies to be defeated;
2. Define this issue in the context of the desire for this church to reclaim the word "evangelical." As evangelizing people, the priority is preparation for encounters with people in general, including those with whom there may be disagreement. These encounters are opportunities to manifest the presence of Christ in our lives.
3. Work for long-term change within this church to create a biblically literate and theologically confident membership. This is part of unit's existing goal to promote a culture of discipleship within the ELCA and its congregations. The institutional change necessary will require extensive time and attention. EOCM also will continue to partner and contribute to other units within the church to ensure that emphases such as "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible" build confidence and competence among ELCA members.
4. Work with the evangelism and outreach staff within EOCM to increase awareness of existing resources

for witnessing, especially those available online at www.elca.org/evangelism. In addition, EOCM will:

- a. develop and incorporate simple and practical resources and practices into the implementation of the current evangelism strategy.
- b. review evangelism and witnessing resources in consultation with campus ministry staff to ensure that resources and practices are accessible and appropriate for campus applications.
- c. review evangelism and witnessing resources to ensure accessibility and applicability for a wider Lutheran audience, seeking to broaden the ability of all members of the ELCA to witness in their daily lives and to engage people of other faiths in lively and respectful conversations.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to mission to antitrinitarians; and

To acknowledge the report of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, including the unit's commitments related to:

1. Encourage the development and use of resources that:
 - a. witness confidently to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ; and
 - b. uphold the commitment not only to treat people of other faiths with respect, but also as people to be loved rather than enemies to be defeated;
2. Define this issue in the context of the desire for this church to reclaim the word "evangelical." As evangelizing people, the priority is preparation for encounters with people in general, including those with whom there may be disagreement. These encounters are opportunities to manifest the presence of Christ in our lives.
3. Work for long-term change within this church to create a biblically literate and theologically confident membership. This is part of unit's existing goal to promote a culture of discipleship within the ELCA and its congregations. The institutional change necessary will require extensive time and attention. EOCM also will

continue to partner and contribute to other units within the church to ensure that emphases such as "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible" build confidence and competence among ELCA members.

4. **Work with the evangelism and outreach staff within EOCM to increase awareness of existing resources for witnessing, especially those available online at www.elca.org/evangelism. In addition, EOCM will:**
 - a. **develop and incorporate simple and practical resources and practices into the implementation of the current evangelism strategy.**
 - b. **review evangelism and witnessing resources in consultation with campus ministry staff to ensure that resources and practices are accessible and appropriate for campus applications.**
 - c. **review evangelism and witnessing resources to ensure accessibility and applicability for a wider Lutheran audience, seeking to broaden the ability of all members of the ELCA to witness in their daily lives and to engage people of other faiths in lively and respectful conversations; and**

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

7. Local Chapters of ELCA Ethnic Associations Northeastern Ohio Synod (6E)

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod Executive Committee request clarification from the Executive Committee of the ELCA Church Council regarding the status, mutual accountability, and constitutional standing of local chapters of ELCA ethnic associations.

At its June 2006 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Church Council voted (EC06.06.20b)

To receive the resolution of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Executive Committee requesting clarification concerning local chapters of ELCA ethnic associations;

To refer the resolution to the Multicultural Ministries unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

Response from Multicultural Ministries

ELCA ethnic associations are mentioned in chapter 16 of the ELCA'S Constitution,
“The Multicultural Ministries unit shall guide the churchwide organization in the multicultural dimensions of its work.” To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall:

- f. relate to and assist the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, the Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the ELCA, and the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, and encourage and support associations in their relationship with other churchwide units.” (16.12E05.f)

Each ethnic association in the ELCA has a constitution and each has its own organizational structure. The only ELCA association that has local chapters is the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA.

The constitution of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA addresses local chapters in Article III:

- III.01. Association with this organization shall be by chapter and individual membership.
- III.03. Chapters shall be made up of individual members as defined in Section III.02 of this Article and in B. Chapter IV, section 1 of the by-laws.

The by-laws of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA address local chapters in Chapter IV:

- B.IV.1.01. The philosophy of this organization is to encourage chapter formation along the geographical boundaries set forth in Subsection B.IV.2.01. of these By-Laws. As indicated in Subsection B.IV.1.02 below, a minimum number of members are necessary to form a chapter. There maybe more than one chapter formed in close geographical proximity, although the latter is not desirable or encouraged. Chapters are encouraged to foster a cooperative spirit and to coordinate mutual goals and plan and implement programs and projects jointly to further the goals and purposes

of this organization.

- B.IV.1.02. A chapter shall consist of at least ten (10) members who agree to be bound by this organization's Constitution and By-Laws.
- B.IV.1.03. No single congregation shall form more than one (1) chapter.
- B.IV.1.04. Chapters shall meet regularly and conduct business consistent with the vision, goals and purposes of this organization as provided in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Article II of the constitution of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA provides additional information related to the vision and purpose of local chapters of the association:

- II.01. We, the African American Lutheran Association, are people of God rooted in the gospel and redeemed by Jesus Christ. We are committed to living out our faith by expressing our love for one another and affirming ourselves and our cultural heritage as gifts to the church (ELCA).
- II.02. God, our Creator, has richly endowed each individual with gifts. Humanity, however, has fallen into bondage to sin and stands separated from God. This sin expresses itself in many ways, including exclusivism and separation among people manifested in racism. We believe that Jesus Christ is our True Liberator, having come into the world proclaiming a Gospel, which gives sight to the blind and released the captives. We believe that we have been called to a ministry of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5), serving as ambassadors for Christ. The church is to be a fully inclusive fellowship, which celebrates the contributions of all members. In recognition and adherence to these principles, this organization exists to:
 - II.02.a. Help assure that each individual will be respected as a unique gift of God (Imago Dei, Genesis 1:31);
 - II.02.b. Help exorcise personal and institutional racism in church and society;
 - II.02.c. Work towards a full realization of the unity that is to be found in Jesus Christ;
 - II.02.d. Celebrate, not worship, diversity in the human family;
 - II.02.e. Proclaim Christ's message of material and

- spiritual liberation to all peoples;
- II.02.f. Exercise a ministry of reconciliation among diverse peoples in the church and society; and
- II.02.g. Encourage members to become fully involved with the affairs of church assemblies, synods, regions and congregations.

The above portions from the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA's constitution and by-laws define local chapters. The Statement of Vision and Purpose speaks to the goals and purposes of the association, which the local chapters are encouraged to support and implement. In that capacity, local chapters do not speak for the association or for the entire ethnic/cultural group of which it is a part. Local chapters do, however, "foster a cooperative spirit and coordinate and implement mutual goals and purposes of the association." A natural example of the latter would be the Cleveland chapter of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA, which assisted in the development and implementation of "A Strategy for Outreach with African American/African Persons in Northeastern Ohio, ELCA."

If the Executive Committee of the Northeastern Ohio Synod has concerns about the local chapter on its territory the Multicultural Ministries unit would be pleased to convene a meeting to discuss such concerns so that the ministry of outreach and reconciliation can move forward in the name of Christ.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the Northeastern Ohio Synod related to local chapters of ELCA Ethnic Associations; and

To acknowledge the report of the Multicultural Ministries unit, including the unit's openness to convene a meeting for further discussion of the synod's concerns; and

To request that the secretary of this church provide the report of the Multicultural Ministries unit as the response of the Church Council to the synod's resolution.

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

Exhibit B, Part 1b

Page 12

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Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions

1. Fund Appeal for New Ministries

Grand Canyon Synod (2D) [2005 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is the commission of the Lord of the Church to “Go and make disciples . . . baptizing them . . . and teaching them . . .” (Matthew 28:19–20); and

WHEREAS, the challenge of the great commission would coincide with the present Evangelical Lutheran Church in America emphasis on evangelism; and

WHEREAS, the resources of this church, the people, are relatively untapped for this kind of witness; and

WHEREAS, new mission development has never, since 1988, reached the level of new starts that existed in the predecessor synods; and

WHEREAS, the basic ministries of the Gospel take place in and through congregations; and

WHEREAS, there is estimated to be over 90,000,000 unchurched people in this country; and

WHEREAS, membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is diminishing, some 200,000 in recent years, now numbering under 5,000,000 people at the same time the population of the nation is increasing; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Grand Canyon Synod in assembly memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to authorize a threeyear professionally guided fund appeal to be used for the establishing of new congregations.

Background

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* includes bylaw 11.41.06., which reads:

No churchwide appeal to congregations or individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Churchwide Assembly, following consultation with the Conference of Bishops. No appeal to selected congregations and individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by this church or churchwide units without the consent of the Church Council, following consultation with either the Conference of Bishops or specific synods as appropriate. Proposals for such special appeals shall be presented to the Church Council through the appropriate council committee with recommendations by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

The topic of a churchwide campaign or funding appeal has been discussed in two churchwide settings during the 2003–2004 biennium.

First, a churchwide staff working group developed a report with recommendations to the Office of the Presiding Bishop in 2003 on the subject of mission funding. One topic addressed in the report is a major churchwide campaign. The commentary indicates that “a major churchwide campaign to support specific churchwide mission priorities (e.g., planting new congregations) could provide significant additional income. Such a campaign could enhance a sense of unity and, possibly, new energy and excitement to advance a common purpose. It could also build major donor capacity and provide an opportunity to ‘tell the story.’ It would, however, require a significant, multi-million dollar up-front outlay to defray fundraising expenses (commensurate with the goals set). It would have a long window for return. In the current fundraising and economic environment, the outcome of such a campaign is not certain.”

The recommendation accompanying the report advises “do not launch a major churchwide campaign at this time.” The report was presented for discussion by the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council in April 2003. A significant portion of the committee meeting was devoted to discussion of the report and recommendations. There were no suggested changes to the recommendations.

Second, as part of the churchwide strategic planning process, a roundtable on mission funding was held October 7–8, 2003. There were twenty participants from congregations, synods, and institutions of this church and ten participants from churchwide staff. In the course of the meeting, a major churchwide funding appeal was discussed, but without definitive conclusion. The final report of the roundtable includes eight far-reaching outcomes related to mission funding with many additional short-term outcomes. No reference is made in the report to a churchwide fund appeal.

Cost Analysis

It is generally estimated that an organization needs to have in hand the equivalent of 20 percent of the fund appeal goal to underwrite the appeal expenses. Thus, for example, if the goal is \$25 million, \$5 million would be required up front to study, plan, and implement the appeal. The source for such funding is unknown at this time.

The Churchwide Assembly voted (CA05.07.39q)

To express gratitude to the Grand Canyon Synod for its commitment to the evangelism strategy, "Sharing Faith in a New Century: A Vision for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," adopted by the 2003 Churchwide Assembly, the great need to increase this church's establishment of new congregations, and the significant funding required for this endeavor; and

To direct, in accordance with churchwide bylaw 11.41.06., that the Division for Outreach (or the appropriate churchwide unit), the Division for Congregational Ministries (or the appropriate churchwide unit), the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Office of the Treasurer, and the Conference of Bishops bring a report related to funding for new and renewing congregations to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council, with a report to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Response from Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission

The response of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding serves as the response from Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission.

[See agenda page 6 and Exhibit F, part 5]

CC ACTION

Recommended:

[See agenda page 6 and 8]

2. New Mission Starts

Southeastern Minnesota Synod (31) [2005 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Church has been called to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, there are over 70 million people without churches in the United States today; and

WHEREAS, the starting of new congregations is a good way to spread the Good News; and

WHEREAS, there are many methods for starting new congregations; and

WHEREAS, local expressions of this church (for example, synods and conferences) need to try some of these processes as well as the current Evangelical Lutheran Church in America model for outreach if the growing population of the unchurched is to be reached; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has identified specific sites for development of mission starts and redevelopments, yet does not have sufficient numbers of leaders identified as mission developers and redevelopers to do the ministry in those places; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call

upon each synod and synodical subdivisions (for example, conferences), where they exist, to work in collaboration with the Division for Outreach (or the appropriate churchwide unit) in outreach and mutual support in a variety of methods to develop and redevelop congregations for people who have no church home; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon each synod and synodical subdivisions (for example, conferences), where they exist, to work in collaboration with the Division for Outreach (or the appropriate churchwide unit) to identify and raise up missional leaders whom God calls to mission development and redevelopment.

Background

The Division for Outreach is grateful for the memorial of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod that encourages synods and their structures to work in partnership to start new and renew existing congregations. An adequate response to this memorial will require both partnership and increased resolve to identify, recruit, support, train, and deploy lay and clergy people with gifts for starting new congregations and renewing existing congregations.

Since the early 1990s, the ELCA has called on this church to increase the number of new starts. The 2003 Churchwide Assembly approved "Sharing Faith in a New Century: A Vision for Evangelism in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," and asked this church not only to "nurture evangelical leaders so that this church will be faithful in its response to God's call to mission and evangelism" but also "to support the development of new ELCA congregations and ministry sites in communities that invite all to faith in Jesus Christ."

The Churchwide Assembly action underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships throughout this church for starting new congregations and renewing existing congregations as centers of evangelical outreach. It expressed gratitude for the possibilities for expanded collaboration in witness and service with ecumenical partners and companion churches around the globe. Finally, the action commended the proposed actions in the strategy to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for inclusion into the overall strategic planning process, which was approved by the ELCA Church Council in April 2004. One strategic direction of the

Plan for Mission is “to assist members, congregations, synods, and institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach.”

The Plan for Mission supports the objectives of the Evangelism Strategy, including the objective to “Start and Renew Congregations,” which calls for “members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies to seek opportunities to strengthen partnerships throughout this church for starting new congregations and renewing existing congregations as centers of service and witness, inviting all to faith in Jesus Christ.” The objective calls for the development of a plan that by 2010 would include a pattern of starting 100 new congregations annually. At least half of these new ministries will be among people of color or people whose language is other than English. At least 20 percent of these new ministries will be among people living in poverty, requiring additional longterm funding or less capital-intensive leadership models. The action also calls for the annual redevelopment of at least 200 existing congregations by 2010. At least 25 percent of these congregations would be in rural areas and 25 percent in urban areas.

The Division for Outreach has been working with synods through its mission directors to plan for a diverse and growing number of new ministry profiles to consider annually. Over the last two years, approximately sixty profiles for new starts were considered by a review table including nine synodical bishops along with Division for Outreach executive staff and mission directors. Each of the past two years, 50–55 sites have been approved for entry, but only 30–35 have been started due to the lack of leaders. The profiles included a wide variety of types of starts and partnerships for funding. There are an increasing number of congregations starting congregations, second site new starts, and clusters of congregations starting congregations.

Plans for starting and renewing congregations also call for a comprehensive plan to revitalize congregations. The plan is to include: identification of assessment tools based on the standards of excellence that can be used to evaluate present ministry and identify assets; development and training of teams of consultants in every synod, available to congregations to support their work with the assessment tools and set in motion specific actions toward increased vitality and effectiveness; and encouragement of congregational plans for outreach. Staff of the churchwide organization have identified Natural Church Development as an

assessment tool to assess health in congregations. Coaches trained in use of the tool work with congregations to identify eight quality characteristics of healthy congregations, assess strengths in each area, and develop a plan for increasing strengths. Transformational Ministry training also addresses the redevelopment of congregations. The training is provided nationally and in many regions with a goal of working with 300 congregations annually.

A series of training events throughout this church for “coaches” seeks to address the call for people in each synod to assist congregations in renewal and to support and encourage mission developers in their work. The second objective of the evangelism strategy is to “Prepare and Renew Evangelical Leaders,” calling on “. . . members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies to nurture evangelical leaders under the renewing power of God’s Spirit so that this church can be faithful in its response to God’s call to mission and evangelism.”

A goal under this objective is “prepare and renew evangelical leaders, lay and clergy, by reaffirming evangelism as a key priority.” A footnote to the goal states: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms its evangelical identity and mission, and calls for further development and renewal of evangelical leaders. Our mission seeks the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to prepare and renew evangelical leaders so that the ELCA can be faithful to God’s will for our church and its ministry. Effective evangelical leaders:

1. hold Jesus at the heart of their ministry and set about to make disciples in his name;
2. center ministry in effective proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the sacraments, and equip the people of God for witness and service;
3. are courageous, passionate, and contextual leaders who see themselves as witnesses to Jesus Christ and the in-breaking reign of God;
4. see change as an opportunity for renewed spiritual vitality;
5. understand the gift of the diverse cultural reality in their contexts and develop a plan for their congregations to reflect that diversity;
6. have a clear vision of God’s mission and the commitment to following that vision;
7. work in partnership teams, lay and clergy, for the sake of God’s mission;
8. engage the needs of neighbor, community, and world, shaping their witness and service to fit those needs; and

9. invite all into God's baptismal and Eucharistic community.

Mission developer training, transformational ministry training, and coach training for Natural Church Development all seek, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to renew and strengthen evangelical leaders.

Cost Analysis

The memorial calls for each synod to either start a congregation or to redevelop an existing congregation every year. The current process calls for and budgets for approximately 50 new starts each year. The funding for those new starts, increasingly, is through the churchwide organization and other funding partners.

The approximate cost for a mission developer for a year is \$68,000–70,000. The formula assumes half the cost of mission developers will be generated in the synod, conference, cluster, or local congregation through dollars over and above regular mission support. The formula also expects that the leadership from some starts will be provided by existing congregations at no additional cost, bi-vocational developers that earn most of their salary in secular work, and other varieties of less-than-full-time paid leadership. Under the current approach to funding new starts, if every synod supported a new start (approximately 15 more than are approved now), the churchwide cost beyond currently available funds would be \$500,000 each year to start those ministries with decreasing amounts required for two to three additional years as the new starts grow and mature financially.

The Church Council in April 2005 approved a designated fund that provides \$2,587,000 for support of the leadership development dimensions of the evangelism strategy and a onetime additional amount of \$500,000 for new congregation development and renewal.

Additional resources would be required to meet the goals described in this memorial and the evangelism strategy. The action of the Church Council is a significant step toward identifying needed resources. Continued work on partnership funding of new starts through a wide variety of sources will be critical to reaching the goals.

The Churchwide Assembly voted (CA05.07.39a)

To thank the Southeastern Minnesota Synod and to affirm in principle the synod's memorial for its support of the goals of the evangelism strategy, "Sharing Faith in a New Century: A Vision for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," and the second strategic direction of

"Faithful Yet Changing," the Plan for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: "to assist members, congregations, synods, and institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach";

To reaffirm the call of the ELCA evangelism strategy "to underscore the importance of strengthening partnerships throughout this church for starting new congregations and renewing existing congregations as centers of evangelical outreach";

To direct that the Division for Outreach (or the appropriate churchwide unit), the Division for Congregational Ministries (or the appropriate churchwide unit), the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Office of the Treasurer, and the Conference of Bishops bring a report related to starting and renewing congregations to the April 2007 meeting of the ELCA Church Council, with a report to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Response from Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission

Significant work was done during the 2005-2007 biennium that responds to the 2005 Southeastern Minnesota Synod memorial on new mission starts. The Office of the Presiding Bishop brought together staff of the Vocation and Education, Multicultural Ministries, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units as well as the Office of the Secretary, the Mission Investment Fund, and Research and Evaluation to study the congregational new start process. That process resulted in increased knowledge and partnerships within the churchwide organization to strengthen the work of new starts. The Conference of Bishops also discussed new starts at their meetings in October 2006 and March 2007.

Material was developed that informs and guides the process. The first paper, "Biblical Principles for Starting New Congregations: A Paper to Ground Lutheran Mission in the Twenty-first Century," sets out the learning of a group that included seminary professors, mission developers, churchwide staff, and bishops to outline biblical principles for starting new congregations. It was included in the materials for the November 2006 meeting of the Church Council as Exhibit B, Part 2b, Appendix 1.

The second paper, "New Starts Process," was developed by staff of the Vocation and Education and Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units to describe the work of new starts and to invite stronger partnership in the work as was requested in the memorial of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. It is

printed as Exhibit B, Part 2b, Appendix 1 in the materials for the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:

To acknowledge the memorial of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod related to new mission starts; and

To acknowledge with gratitude the ministry and partnerships of individuals, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in the process of starting new congregations and renewing existing congregations;

To receive the paper “New Mission Starts” as a resource for deepening understanding of this work throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To request that the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America convey this paper and this action to the Southeastern Minnesota Synod as the response of the Church Council.

3. Student Loan Indebtedness

Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2005 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requires four years of graduate education beyond a bachelor's degree for ordained ministry and at least two years of graduate education for most other rostered leaders; and

WHEREAS, tuition rates at both the undergraduate and seminary level have increased at well beyond the rate of inflation for more than a decade, leading to increased student loan indebtedness for those pursuing degrees leading to rostered ministry; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its churchwide and synodical budgets and special appeals subsidizes about 23 percent of the costs of seminary education, so that the average debt load for seminary graduates accepting their first call was approximately \$24,600 in 1999, an increase of 137 percent over the average debt of about \$10,400 in 1991 (a trend which has continued since 1999); and

WHEREAS, average salaries for rostered leaders have at best kept pace with inflation, so that many who have entered rostered ministry recently are faced with serious financial challenges due to student loan indebtedness; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Council be encouraged to develop programs (perhaps similar to the Eastern North Dakota Synod's endowment fund) that help relieve student loan indebtedness for rostered leaders; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consider plans for relieving student loan indebtedness for current rostered leaders.

Background

The Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorial identifies a significant reality facing rostered leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—that of increasing educational and consumer indebtedness for many seminary students and first-call rostered leaders. Many of these students enter seminary with significant educational and consumer debt. While there are still a significant percentage of ELCA candidates who graduate without indebtedness, the number of those with debt and the size of indebtedness are increasing. While tuition rates are a factor in this indebtedness, the net tuition increases have been modest due to increased financial aid. The ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission, established in 1999, is a long-term churchwide strategy to provide tuition scholarships for all ELCA candidates at ELCA seminaries. The Fund presently has an endowment of over \$10 million and to date has provided more than \$1.2 million in scholarships. The ELCA Foundation and the Division for Ministry continue to urge the members of the ELCA to support this fund.

In 2004–2005 the Division for Ministry participated in an inter-Lutheran study of indebtedness of seminarians and rostered leaders funded by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, which indicated that both student loans and consumer indebtedness is an increasing reality. There is a commitment from all three Lutheran church bodies to continue to monitor this and consider possible strategies to address this issue.

The 2005 Churchwide Assembly voted (CA05.07.39y):

To thank the Indiana-Kentucky Synod for the memorial on student loan indebtedness;

To request that the Division for Ministry (or the appropriate churchwide unit), in consultation with ELCA seminaries, continue to monitor the level of indebtedness among ELCA candidates and first-call rostered leaders, to investigate existing programs to address this issue, and to report biennially to the Church Council concerning this topic including possible strategies to address this issue; and

To encourage members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to support generously the Fund for Leaders in Mission.

At its November 2005 meeting, the Church Council voted (CC05.11.77i):

To refer the action of the Churchwide Assembly on student loan indebtedness to the Vocation and Education unit in consultation with seminaries; and

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from Vocation and Education:

The level of indebtedness continues to be a concern for those working with candidates and rostered leaders. ELCA seminaries attend to the total debt level and projected need of each student who applies for financial aid and offers counsel in a variety of ways. Synod candidacy committees increasingly raise these questions with candidates during the years of preparation and discernment. Committees are required to ask the candidate about debt at the entrance interview and at the approval interview. Committees occasionally must challenge a candidate to make specific plans for addressing debt, including the possibility of taking a period off from study. A number of synods have developed specific plans to help address education costs for their candidates and some are attempting to facilitate debt reduction for rostered leaders in their first years of service. The Vocation and Education unit gathers and monitors anecdotal and systematic data from these various sources. At the initiation of the seminaries and as part of the work of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Support, there is growing attention to stewardship education and formation of candidates, including personal financial management.

In response to the Churchwide Assembly, Vocation and Education staff have consulted with ELCA seminary presidents and other leaders about how best to proceed in assessing current levels and trends of ELCA seminarian indebtedness and in determining what actions would be most helpful. On January 30, 2007, a telephone meeting of seminary presidents and leadership of the Conference of Bishops, the Fund for Leaders, and the Board of Pensions reviewed historical data on seminarian student debt, both in the ELCA and in other denominations, made plans for a full survey of debt levels of the most recent graduating class, and agreed to meet face-to-face with a somewhat expanded table in the spring to consider possible courses of coordinated action. A survey instrument has been designed in consultation with the financial aid offices of the seminaries and the data gathered will be discussed at a May 23, 2007, meeting convened by Bishop Hanson at

the Lutheran Center.

The ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission, established in 1999, is a long-term churchwide strategy to provide tuition scholarships for all ELCA candidates at ELCA seminaries. The Fund presently has an endowment of over \$15 million with commitments of an additional \$15 million. To date, the Fund for Leaders has provided more than \$2.2 million in scholarships. For the 2006-2007 school year, grants totaling \$640,000 were awarded to 122 students. This figure includes grants from Fund programs established by individual synods. The ELCA Foundation and the Vocation and Education unit continue to work systematically to urge the members of the ELCA to support this fund.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

To express thanks to the Indiana-Kentucky Synod for its attention to indebtedness among candidates and rostered leaders within its synod and throughout this church; and

To express sincere thanks and support for congregations, synods, seminaries, churchwide units that monitor this debt and seek to address it in a variety of ways, including through collaborative efforts ; and

To urge the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to give strong and consistent financial support for scholarship aid to candidates through congregations and seminaries and through the Fund for Leaders in Mission; and

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

New Starts Process

An Invitation

This paper is an invitation to synodical and churchwide leadership to strengthen their partnership in order to increase the ELCA capacity for evangelical outreach. Through an asset-based approach, this church will seek to engage more leaders in the formation of evangelizing congregations that make disciples for Jesus Christ and equip them to use their gifts for the reign of God, both in the Church and in the world.

It is encouraging to learn about synodical efforts and intentionality in this area of ministry. Bishops and synodical leaders are trying new things, learning new things and developing new ideas in reaching out with the good news of Jesus Christ. This is also an invitation to hear those ideas so we can jointly increase our capacity for evangelical outreach.

Emerging Context

“The harvest is plentiful...” Matthew 9:37a

These words of Jesus continue to ring true today as the opportunities for outreach multiply throughout the United States and the Caribbean. In the Midwest and the East, where Lutheran presence is strong, new start initiatives abound due to population growth and/or major socio-economic shifts. A growing challenge is the massive population explosion in the South and Southwestern states, where Lutheran concentration is low. All areas of the country—rural, small town, urban, and/or suburban—bring the opportunity to develop ministry among populations of various ethnic backgrounds and among people struggling to break the cycles of poverty. In addition to these, new populations of young adults and young professionals are moving into city and inner-city areas due to preference, studies, or work opportunities.

New starts are vehicles to reach out to groups not currently being served through existing ministries. The geographical, socio-economic, ethnic, and generational gaps can be bridged through intentional and strategic congregational development initiatives that emanate from missional thinking and a passion for people to experience God’s wholeness. Truly, the harvest is plentiful, and leaders in the ELCA are invited to raise their evangelical and prophetic voices to share the transforming story of Jesus and his love for all creation.

Entry Points

The following are entry points into new areas of mission with leaders who read and understand the community and develop contextual models that address its uniqueness:

1. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities (SAWCs)

These are gatherings of local leaders in a new area with ministry potential that, upon consultation with synodical leadership, become authorized to launch worship services and basic ministry in that area. These communities are becoming excellent vehicles to explore the potential of a community for developing a new congregation in the future. The synodical bishop’s office assists with securing pastoral leadership, according to their financial ability and ministry projections.

EOCM partners with synods in support of these initiatives and offers a one-time grant of up to \$10,000 for their first year of operation, plus training and coaching. EOCM has developed a template by which a mission director easily can guide synodical leaders through the steps to develop and incorporate (as necessary) a new

SAWC. EOCM averages ten new SAWCs a year; about 50 percent of them become congregations under development after one or two years of existence. Joy Reigns Lutheran in Annapolis, Md. is an example; after one year as SAWC, Joy Reigns has become a new start and, after two years, will organize as a new ELCA congregation.

2. Churches Starting Churches

A growing number of congregations who show signs of health and missional thinking are taking the initiative to extend their outreach ministry into strategic communities with ministry potential. Regardless of size, these congregations aim at functioning out of their strength and missional DNA. Local leaders are invited to share their gifts and assets to see another ministry emerge. In consultation with mission directors and synodical leadership, these congregations participate in the identification of potential fields, in the nurturing of leaders, and in the sharing of the cost of these new efforts. The sense of ownership is present from the very beginning, new people come forward to participate, and new resources are brought forward to sustain these efforts.

In some cases, the result of these ventures is a second campus of the main church or one church with two sites, as is the case for Hope Lutheran Church in Fargo, ND. Another example is Lord of Life Lutheran in Fairfax, Va.

In other cases, the aim is to develop a satellite ministry that will result in a new ELCA congregation. The parent church in a sense gives birth to another. Sometimes the developer comes out of the parent church, and in other situations, a potential developer becomes part of the staff in the parent church with the goal of launching a satellite ministry in the near future. When the time comes to start the new ministry, congregational members are invited to participate in the new initiative to provide support. Some return, while others choose to join the emerging satellite ministry.

EOCM partners with synods in support of these initiatives. Over the last three years, we have identified and provided training to 75 congregations interested in this ministry model. About one-third of them already have launched their ministries and others are in the planning stages. Yet, the potential is real. Through the Research and Evaluation section, EOCM has identified 500 ELCA congregations with signs of health, vitality, and missional thinking. Our aim is to coordinate efforts with synodical bishops and other leaders to invite them into this outreach opportunity.

McArthur Park Lutheran in San Antonio, Tex. is an example of this model. The congregation called an associate pastor and two years later sent him to start another ministry called El Camino Real Lutheran, which has recently organized. El Camino Real found a leader from within the ministry and launched another ministry among young adults called PM Verb. El Camino Real continues to birth other forms of ministry in the city, in addition to PM Verb. McArthur Park now is thinking about starting another new congregation in the near future.

Historically, Lutherans have done this type of ministry multiplication before. Our emerging context is calling us to do it again.

3. Ethnic-Specific Starts

Ethnic populations continue to expand, permeating every aspect of society and presenting great opportunities to develop new work among them. What is new about this work is the way we are going about it. Based on the principle of full participation

in decision-making processes, leadership from each of the ethnic communities are hard at work, providing key leadership in the ELCA in the area of new starts.

Asian-Pacific Islander, African American, Arab-Middle Eastern, Latino, and African National communities have teams of leaders focused on the development of new starts. American Indian-Alaska Natives are in process of preparation for similar efforts according to their current and future potential.

Because of this approach, there is an increase in capacity, sense of ownership, and responsibility for coordinating efforts between synods and EOCM.

4. Multicultural Starts

Several cities and metropolitan areas already reflect the multicultural future predicted for this society. Any new start in this type of context will need to reflect that constituency. It is a challenging endeavor without a large track record behind it. Yet, this is a must, and new generations of leaders are committed to work in this arena.

5. Traditional New Starts

Initiatives in new areas where there is no Lutheran or Christian presence still are needed. Timing, location, and the availability of leadership availability is critical. Careful visioning and planning in the synod, coupled with local partnerships and EOCM support make these efforts possible in a variety of contexts.

Leadership For Our Contexts

“...therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:37b

God will raise up servant leaders for new and renewing worshipping communities!

Lay leaders with many gifts are critical to this work. Depending on the nature of the “entry point,” these lay leaders may be identified and equipped in a variety of ways by collaboration among existing congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other partners.

Because the ELCA understands the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments to be of the essence of the Church, and because of our understanding of the ministry of Word and sacrament, this church seeks to assist each new and renewing congregation to find and develop faithful ordained leadership to support the mission of Christ in that place. The consistent goal is to have Word and Sacrament leaders who:

- are faithful to Christ and Christ’s mission as articulated in the Bible and the Lutheran confessions;
- will enable the gathered community to draw on that faith heritage and make use of the broad and rich traditions that have grown from it in the ELCA, while always recognizing the special opportunities and needs of particular contexts;
- will lead the new or renewing community in active appreciation of the mission strength that comes from being closely linked to neighboring ELCA congregations, the synod, the ELCA churchwide expression, and our ecumenical and global partners; and
- have been appropriately prepared and authorized by this church.

These pastoral leaders normally will be ordained ELCA clergy or clergy of a full communion partner serving under this church’s agreements for orderly exchange. Clergy may serve new and renewing congregations full or part-time or bi-vocationally, with or

without stipend. When an ordained person is not available, Synodically Authorized Ministry may be used as a transitional structure for pastoral leadership as a community is first developing or exploring new possibilities (see *Manual for Management of the Rosters...*, Part One, pp. 55-57). These pastoral leaders work in partnership with and equip the lay leaders of the congregation.

Building Pastoral Leadership Capacity Systemically

We build our capacity to supply such pastoral leadership in several ways. Each of the following should be seen as a cooperative effort among the gathering community, the synod and churchwide organization, and the individual person. Pastoral leadership in the ELCA is not a matter of people seeking professional careers, but of the local and larger church communities and the person mutually discerning the call of God. There are many ways to increase our ELCA capacity through leadership identification and development:

- Ordained ELCA pastors who may have the capacity to serve new and renewed ministries are identified through active efforts by synods in collaboration with EOCM. They are offered special preparation when called to such ministry and/or as part of the discernment process for that possibility. In the churches-starting-churches model, it may be that one of the congregation's existing pastors has particular potential for this work and will be supported in undertaking it.
- Current candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry increasingly are being invited during their theological education to consider whether they have the special gifts for serving in a new or renewing community. When such gifts are present, the candidates are guided into course and contextual education opportunities that will prepare them. Congregations, synod candidacy committees, and seminaries collaborate in these identification and preparation efforts. In response to the ELCA's evangelism strategy, ELCA seminaries are dramatically expanding their efforts both in identification and preparation. They have set numerical targets to help meet the ELCA's goals. (Note: Currently, ELCA procedures expect three years of experience in an established congregation before a pastor can be called to the specialized ministry of mission development. Exceptions can be and are granted through the roster committee of the Conference of Bishops, upon request of the synodical bishop and Synod Council.).
- As people are recruited to prepare for ordained ministry, this church must do more specifically to recruit people with the unique gifts and passions needed for new and renewed congregations. Such people may need particular invitations to realize that this could be a calling for them. Synod candidacy committees, VE and EOCM deployed staff, and ELCA seminary staff all have collaborative roles to play in such recruitment.
- Many efforts are underway to identify and develop potential ordained leaders from ethnic communities and people with skills for ministering in this church's increasingly multicultural context. All the seminaries require some multicultural experience as part of preparation requirements.
- There are many models where a new or renewing congregation has identified within its own membership one or more people who may have the gifts and passion for ordained pastoral ministry. The congregation can invite and also assist these people in preparing to serve.
- Because the mission opportunities sometimes outstrip our supply of qualified ordained clergy, this church has made provision for Synodically Authorized Ministry (SAM) of Word and Sacrament. The mission needs of this church challenge synods

and congregations to be alert to identify people who could be invited to prepare for service of this type. New and renewing congregations may be asked to look among their own members for such potential pastoral leaders. Rostered lay people, Deaconesses, Diaconal Ministers, and Associates in Ministry may be considered for service as Synodically Authorized Ministers. Because they already have some theological preparation, they may more quickly be able to meet the church's standards of preparation for Word and sacrament ministry. Normally persons who are synodically authorized for ministry and expected to serve for some time will also enter the synod's candidacy process to prepare for ordination.

To prepare those identified as potential pastoral leaders, the ELCA has in place a candidacy system that has consistent policies across the church and a network of candidacy committees that can apply the policies to local contexts. Under the guidance of their synod candidacy committees, candidates prepare either by working toward an MDiv through one of our seminaries or, in specified circumstances, through Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM). (For TEEM guidelines, see the *Candidacy Manual* <http://www.elca.org/candidacy/manual/>.)

Similarly, guidelines for Synodically Authorized Ministry preparation are also agreed upon for the whole church, but are implemented by synods in collaboration with seminaries.

The ELCA has flexible identification, preparation, and authorization processes in place. We believe congregations and synods can make use of these to meet the pastoral leadership needs for new starts now and well into the future.

Synods Building Capacity For Outreach

Several synods already are in the process of building capacity for evangelical outreach, especially in the area of new starts, and in close partnership with EOCM staff. Through this effort, synods are positioning themselves for a greater level of ownership, support, and commitment in local congregational leadership.

The primary way this is happening includes the engaging of key leaders, both lay and clergy, to assume responsibility for a particular area of outreach work (e.g., new starts). These teams of leaders receive training by EOCM and synod staff in all aspects of the work in order to assume leadership into the future.

These teams learn to assess new fields with ministry development potential, set criteria and principles for developing healthy ministries, assist in the preparation of new ministry profiles, identify potential mission developers, monitor the work, and participate in new ministry reviews.

The Metropolitan New York Synod has restructured their outreach committee into three basic teams—new starts, renewal of congregations, and leadership development for outreach. The leaders appointed to direct this work have surrounded themselves with other leaders who share the same passion, commitment, and skills. Their work has started to generate a greater pool of initiatives and resources for new ministries coming up in the near future. The role of the mission director/synod staff is to equip, coordinate, and facilitate their ministry. As a result, more people are involved locally, there is a greater sense of ownership, leaders find other leaders, and new resources and assets are identified.

In other words, there is an increase in the capacity for evangelical outreach in New York, coming first from within the constituency that can be tapped and complemented as necessary. The natural result is an increase in new start initiatives in a variety of settings.

The Grand Canyon Synod has developed a similar approach. The role of mission director is mostly a coordinating role, since a wave of new leaders is now engaged in the outreach enterprise. In this case, there are two key teams, one for new starts and one for renewal of congregations. There are other teams that work along with them, but with a particular context in mind: namely, ministry among people living in poverty, urban ministry, and multicultural ministry. In other words, the two main directions, new and renewal, are lived out contextually throughout the synod. In addition to this, the teams have the responsibility to create regional strategies, so that the work is part of the local scene as early as possible in the process of visioning and implementing.

The Minneapolis Area and the Saint Paul Area Synods have a model that works very effectively. Each synod has at least one executive staff person with outreach responsibilities. The work is designed and implemented with local leaders, in close coordination with the mission director (EOCM). As a result, the synods have claimed their leading role, more local leaders are involved, and more outreach work gets done.

Other synods already doing ministry in this fashion or positioning themselves for this type of work are: Northeastern Ohio, South Carolina, Pacifica, Sierra Pacific, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Michigan, and Southeastern.

The churchwide organization partners with synods in ongoing training of leaders, coaching key leadership, and facilitating the process of affirming and funding new start initiatives. Synod outreach efforts also have led to many individuals realizing that they are called to prepare for ordained or other rostered service through this church's candidacy processes.

The Churchwide Organization Increases Capacity

The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Ministry unit has been at work in this area for some time. The gifts and assets multiply as people work "en conjunto," or in community. Teams of key leaders are invited to bring their gifts to the work of our unit, thus increasing our capacity to initiate and respond to ministry opportunities. Here are some ways that this is happening:

- The development team: formed by mission directors with new starts expertise.
- Bishops at review tables: nine bishops, chosen regionally by peers, assist in decision-making and in the stewardship of resources.
- Ethnic church planting teams: ethnic leaders directing and assisting our work with new starts.
- Urban new starts team: led by this church's best urban leaders.
- Emergent leaders group: young adults developing new ministries share their wisdom and vision for multiplying work in the ELCA.

The Vocation and Education unit works with synods to oversee the church's candidacy and mobility processes and to call forth and support leaders for new and renewing ministries.

- Every synod has a candidacy committee and there are several multi-synod committees. More and more, the committees see recruitment as part of their role. In Region 9, there has been a meeting of all the candidacy committee chairpersons with outreach staff for mutual awareness of each other's work and discovery of ways to collaborate. This model could be adapted to an individual synod, perhaps through a joint meeting of candidacy and outreach committees and staff.

- Along with EOCM, Global Mission, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop, Vocation and Education sponsors an annual gathering of missiologists, seminary teaching theologians whose focus is mission and evangelizing. This “think tank” offers counsel to the churchwide organization and gives these teachers opportunity to learn from one another. This year the subject was “a theology of leadership.”
- VE’s leadership development work has been expanded with the addition of an assistant director for multicultural leadership whose work will focus on recruitment, in close collaboration with the ethnic associations, synods, and seminaries.
- Working with synods and Research and Evaluation, VE is helping to develop some pilot projects on leadership needs and opportunities, encouraging experimentation with such options as bi-vocational and non-stipendiary ministry.

EOCM and VE staff are committed to finding ways to collaborate by working and imagining together. The two units are seeking new ways to facilitate regular staff interaction and consultation. Along with Multicultural Ministries, the units work together consistently to raise up leaders for multicultural and ethnic-specific communities.

Increasing Capacity For Outreach Together

The churchwide organization stands ready to work with synods in various ways to increase capacity for evangelical outreach. Through our network of leaders, the churchwide organization has ways to team up based on gifts and expertise in order to respond to emergent initiatives led by synodical partners. There are many venues that easily can be adjusted to make training of local leaders available.

Most importantly, bishops and synodical leaders, seminaries, and other partners are moving in new and exciting ways and generating new insights and wisdom. We welcome ideas, insights, and wisdom in order to improve this ministry among synods, and in response to the Lord of the Church, who still says the harvest is plentiful. The Lord is raising up workers and Christ says, “I am with you always.”

Examples of the partnerships called for in the memorial of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod come to us from the Mission Partner and Mission Founder program.

- Pastor Keith Prekker was the mission developer of Cross of Christ (CoC), Broomfield, Colo. As a founder for a new start in nearby Erie, CoC not only provided funds and volunteers, it also “gave away” its pastor to start the new congregation. Says Pastor Prekker, “It’s a wonderful opportunity for an established congregation to catch the enthusiasm and excitement around a new mission start.”
- A cluster of five suburban Minneapolis congregations founded Community of Grace in Grayson, Ga. Says Pastor Matt Henning from Grace, “These gifted congregations and their leaders have been very gracious with their time, their prayers, and their support. . . . and we would not be here without them.”
- A California couple, after hearing about the great need for new congregations in underserved communities, were moved to make a significant gift to the ELCA. That gift, together with those of local partners, has enabled the start of six additional ELCA congregations in California, Texas, Nevada, and Hawaii.

Staff of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit continues to work with synods, conferences, and congregations to increase the capacity to start new and renew congregations. Mission directors seek to multiply their efforts by inviting many to join them in the work of identifying, training for, and supporting the work of new starts and renewing congregations. Renewal of congregations is done in a number of ways, but transformational ministry is increasingly being used throughout the church. A paper

developed by Pastor Dave Daubert, EOCM's director for renewal of congregations, describes this work.

A Process for Transformational Ministry

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been working to assist congregations redevelop since it formed in 1988. It has not been an easy process and it has not been done uniformly over the last two decades. Early redevelopment work focused primarily on the pastor as redeveloper, trained him or her in the same manner as a church planter, and then sent them into established congregations to do the work. The success rate for this work appears to have been well below five percent. Most congregations remained the same, most pastors were frustrated, and some went so far as to say that it would be better to give up on renewal and just start new congregations (something I still hear from time to time).

To deal with this reality, work began with a renewed focus in 2000. Blessed with insights from the study of the 1990's evangelism strategy, churchwide leaders were able to discern that keys to renewal involved a clear sense of purpose/vision and willingness to change. In addition, seeing those places that had renewed began to make it clear that leadership was a real key to this and that leadership had to involve more than clergy—lay leadership and a sense of teamwork were often present when a congregation made the move to new life.

Transformation—A Way of Life

Transformational ministry is an ongoing way of life for congregations that will remain effective in mission in a changing world. There is no "arrival point" where the work is done. God is on the move. The world is on the move. An unchanging church will eventually lose touch with both God and the world, becoming spiritually dead and culturally irrelevant. This means that the ELCA had to wrestle (and continues to struggle) with the reality that no short-term program would redevelop a congregation and then things could settle into a new state of "fine." A new vision of church that was as able to change as the world in which it finds itself changes was essential.

Armed with that information, the ELCA's transformational ministry team has been developing a process over the last six to seven years. It involves training teams of leaders rather than just a pastor. It focuses most of the early energy on developing a biblical sense of purpose and articulating missional values. Leadership teams are trained to lead the process, not to do the work for the congregation. Participatory change and change dynamics are taught. Teams then go from the training, not armed with the answers to feed their congregants, but rather to lead a process that engages people in prayer, scripture study and dialog in order to allow God to speak and renew the congregation. Purpose and guiding principles for ministry are articulated.

At the same time, it is clear that most congregations are not only disconnected from God's purpose for their ministry, but they also are disconnected from their neighbors. At one recent event that I led for a small cluster of congregations, I asked people to think of the eight homes closest to their church building and then to write the names of the people who lived in those homes on a sheet of paper. With a pastor and three or more leaders from each congregation, not one team could name more than two of the eight closest neighbors. While they could bemoan the fact that people were not coming, it had not

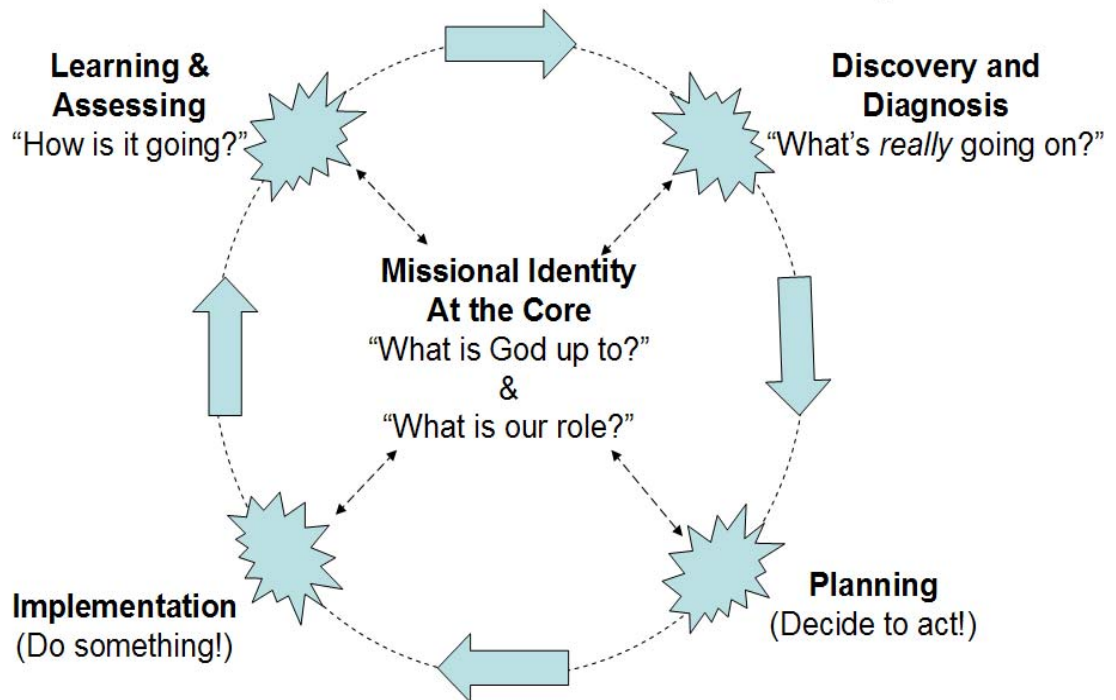
even dawned on them that they weren't sending themselves out either! The process involves tools to help congregations learn not only data about their community, but to restore relationships by meeting people and engaging them in conversations about life in their neighborhood.

The Process

It is crucial that a congregation think about renewal as a process that outlines a way of life. It is not a project for the short term in which everyone pitches in for a while and then settles back into a new comfort zone of effectiveness. This new way of life means that the congregation internalizes change as a part of what it means to be normal in a new way.

The diagram below shows a way of understanding this way of being church in the world.

A Process Map for Ongoing Transformational Ministry



The above process has a “missional identity at the core.” The central questions for the church and for each member of it are, “What is God up to?” and “What is my/our role in it?” The answers to these questions evoke stories—narratives of how we have encountered God at work in our lives. This gives individual disciples a sense of calling. It gives congregations a communal sense of identity grounded in purpose. For both individuals and communities of faith, it brings a sense of identity that shapes values and behaviors for the journey ahead.

While the circle surrounding the missional identity at the core can be accessed at any point in the process, it is most likely that a congregation that comes to grips with God’s claim on its life together will move to “discovery and diagnose.” It is here that a community opens itself up to reality in a truthful and curious way. Curiosity at this point is a gift. It brings a sense of discovery and wonder. Accurate information is no longer threatening, but an opportunity to see clearly. It is this new sight that can open a door to new ways of doing ministry that participate better in what God is up to. Things that were seen but denied (or perhaps never even noticed at all!) become issues and opportunities for a new and increasingly faithful way of doing ministry.

The clearer the outcomes of discovery and diagnosing the current situation, the easier it is to begin to “plan” new ways of carrying out the mission. As communities of disciples come to grips with reality, they are also now free to envision and claim new ministries that engage the situation. This involves seeing and using their assets and gifts to think about what they can do to be faithful. As ideas are claimed as goals, planning involves thinking about what God wants done, how it will be done, who will accept responsibility for the work, and when it will happen.

Eventually, congregations have to do something in order to change. Change is not just an idea or attitude—it involves new behaviors. At this point congregations “implement” missional actions. This is the place where the majority of changes succeeds or fails. Ideas that sound good can produce exciting results and anxiety and stress, all at the same time. The ability to put good energy into the plans, make mid-course corrections, and process grief and conflict are essential skills in this stage. Coaching can provide essential support and clarity to congregations at this point.

A key to long term change also means asking, “How is it going?” “Learning and assessing” are essential to ongoing transformational efforts. To ask what went well, what changes or adjustments could have happened, and what we learned are important in increasing the capacity of a ministry to do its work. An important attitude for this stage in the process is an attitude of openness and a desire to learn. Things that went well are celebrated. Things that could have been better are viewed not simply as failures, but as learning opportunities.

This feeds the process again and leads to not only learning from what we have done, but looking forward to new work and to more “discovery and diagnosis.” And the cycle continues again.

One caveat: the “missional identity at the core” of the ministry is not just an entry point to do pre-work and move on. Each of the four ensuing stages of the process is clearly tied to this core. It is never “done” and then left behind for the remaining work. It is the motivation and lens by which all life in the mission of the congregation is to be understood. As the hub of this work, it is connected to and present in all the work.

The above description describes a particular order that involves starting at the “missional identity at the core” and then moving through “discovery and diagnosis,” “planning,” “implementation,” and “learning and assessing.” It is this order that will flow

most logically. It is also this order that shapes the agenda for the transformational ministry training. However, it is possible that congregations can enter this process in other places and then use it to discern what might be next for them. For example, congregations already doing something may find it easier to identify their missional core and enter through “learning and assessing.” Or a congregation with openness to learning and a willingness to fail without blame may simply decide to do something and then assess and learn from the experience.

When seen as a way of organizing congregational leadership’s thought patterns, the above process can be helpful and provide a framework for thought and clarity about what things in the congregation’s mission need to be focused on as the congregation is transformed into a healthier and more vibrant center for mission.

Summary

The ELCA has been working with variations of this model for thinking since 2001. Over that time we have learned much about transformation and about how congregations deal with processes rather than programs (not well!). In order for the work that is described here to move from theory to practice in a meaningful way, the work must involve an accountability that has been hard to foster in the life of most congregations. To overcome this struggle, the ELCA has incorporated coaching into the process. Congregations send teams of leaders (laity and clergy) to an event to receive help in engaging the change process within their congregation. A coach also works with them, both at the event and in the work they do when they return home. It is clear that coaching provides a structure where accountability is more possible.

Within the ELCA there are 50 to 60 congregations that engage this process each year, either at national trainings or at regional events. Although hard data is still a few years away, since longitudinal studies require more duration than we have, an honest assessment of the outcomes is that 20-25 percent of these congregations appear to undergo significant systemic transformation. An additional 40-50 percent of the congregations experience renewal in the lives of a significant number of their leaders and members, but fail to make the kind of systemic changes needed to provide for significant growth. The remaining 20-30 percent appear to experience little or no transformation at either the individual or corporate levels, generally through a failure to engage the work or the exit of key leaders early in the process. Renewal is a one-in-four or one-in-five chance. The odds are definitely against you!

Having said this, from the work that the ELCA churchwide organization has done, it is safe to say that renewal, while not easy, is an effective and necessary aspect of the life of the church. If one-in-five renewal efforts produces a significant ministry, the cost to renew five congregations is still significantly lower than the cost to start one. Although they precede the process I describe here, both Community Church of Joy in Glendale, Ariz. (attendance of 3200 each week) and Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines, Ia. (attendance of 3600 per week) involved the renewal of existing systems that were struggling before leadership changed. When renewal happens, significant things can follow. More than a few congregations which struggled five-to-ten years ago are now averaging 200 or more people attending worship each week. Some have even started to plant new congregations as a sign of their health and vitality.

The ELCA has no corner on the renewal of the Church, but the work done there has been a good place for research and development on how change happens within the life

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

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Exhibit B, Part 2b, Appendix 1

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of the Church. While this work has not been a magic bullet, many congregations have renewed and many leaders have been formed because of this work.

Appreciation is, once again, expressed to the Southeastern Minnesota Synod for the memorial on new mission starts. Progress has been made during the biennium on involving more partnerships for new starts and renewing congregations. Work will continue with the churchwide organization new starts group, the Conference of Bishops, and the many partners across this church to further strengthen the processes.

Church Council Anti-racism Planning Group Report

The anti-racism planning team was organized by the Church Council and its members appointed by the vice-president at the meeting of the Council in November 2006. Its general purpose, as directed by the Council, is to work with the churchwide coordinator for anti-racism education and training and the director for racial justice ministries, especially as these positions seek to educate and train the ELCA Church Council. The four Church Council members are: Judith Bunker, Lynette Reitz, Judy Tutt-Starr, and Allan Thomas.

The group has met three times since November: first as an initial and brief “getting-to-know-you” session in November after Church Council; second by conference call to “discover” together what was the work of the group; and third for a one-day planning session on February 17, 2007, to develop recommendations for education and training for the Church Council.

The following short-term recommended actions were developed during the planning session in February.

1. To provide the Church Council with some pre-meeting materials, including working definitions for the April 2007 meeting and short pieces for further discussion during the meeting.
2. To approve the use of racial justice monitors at all Council meetings as a mechanism for accountability.
3. To have the Council name the duration and definition of the anti-racism team as an ongoing committee, not necessarily ad hoc, to demonstrate the importance of this work for the church.
4. To request workshop time at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2007.

Long term recommendations for the Council included items to be more thoroughly researched by the coordinator, director, and the anti-racism planning team. These included:

1. Ensuring continuous process of institutionalizing racially just policies and mechanisms. (Draw up a schedule for ongoing anti-racism education.)
2. Ask for regular reporting on racial justice to include anti-racism and institutional racial oppression. (Specifically for the Planning and Evaluation Committee of Church Council in its role of evaluating programs of the churchwide organization.)

3. Assist Church Council members to recognize racism and how racist attitudes move the church.
4. Develop a specific action of repentance including a liturgical expression for the Council and the whole church.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

Recommended action on agenda page 10.

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CHURCH COUNCIL

Clergy [Term 2011] - *to replace vacancy of Pr. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 6E*

1. a. Pr. David P. Anderson, Strongsville, OH 6E
- b. Pr. Robert R. Henderson, Aurora, OH 6E

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

Clergy [Term 2009] - *to replace vacancy of Pr. Ramona S. Rank, Portland, OR 1E*

1. a. Pr. Jesse D. Hill, Charlotte, NC 9B
- b. Pr. Jackie E. Russell, Oaks, OK 4C

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE LUTHERAN

Clergy [Term 2013]

1. a. Pr. Robert L. Driver-Bishop, McLean, VA 8G
- b. Pr. Harold W. Eppley, Milwaukee, WI 5J

Lay Male [Term 2011] - *to replace resignation of Ben McDonald-Coltvet, Waukesha, WI 5J*

1. a. Mr. Jerry Strom, Walnut Creek, CA 2A
- b. Mr. Rick White, Leck Kill, PA 8E

Lay Male (PC/L) [Term 2013]

1. a. Mr. Keith Gatling, Liverpool, NJ 7D
- b. Mr. Frank Ramos, Guaynabo, PR 9F

CHURCHWIDE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

Clergy [Term 2007] - *to replace vacancy of Pr. Edmond Yee, Berkeley, CA 2B*

1. a. Pr. A. Donald Main, Sunbury, PA 8E
- b. Pr. Paul J. Blom, Houston, TX 4F

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

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Exhibit C, Part 1

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CHURCHWIDE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Clergy [Term 2013]

1. a. Pr. Linwood H. Chamberlain, Jr., Lorain, OH 6E
b. Pr. Jonathan L. Eilert, Loveland, OH 6F
2. a. Pr. Simon G. Fensom, Spicer, MN 3F
b. Pr. Loren D. Mai, Hutchinson, KS 4B

Lay Female [Term 2013]

1. a. Ms. Gwen E. Arneson, Cottonwood, MN 3F
b. Ms. Merle E. Freije, Mayville, ND 3B
2. a. Ms. Linda N. Lovell, Ellicott City, MD 8F
b. Ms. Sara 'Sally' C. Williams, Hollidaysburg, PA 8C

Lay Male [Term 2013]

1. a. Mr. James M. Hushagen, Edgewood, WA 1C
b. Mr. Ronald L. Pittman, McMinnville, OR 1E

Lay Male (PC/L) [Term 2013]

1. a. Mr. Wesley L. Crenshaw, Savannah, GA 9D
b. Mr. Jeremy D. Posadas, New York, NY 7C

CHURCH COUNCIL

Clergy [Term 2011]

David P. Anderson

Synod 6E Northeastern Ohio

- 1) *Congregational membership*
St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church, Medina, OH
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Have served on a number of synodical and regional committees;
Have mediated in roughly 70 congregational conflicts;
Have served as parish pastor and assistant to Bishop Marcus Miller
- 3) *Church-related service*
Candidacy Committee of Ohio - 9 years;
Global Mission and Companion Synod Committees (6E);
Church in Society Committee (6E)
- 4) *Education*
B.B.A., Kent State University; M.Div., Trinity Lutheran Seminary (Hanna)
- 5) *Occupation*
Team Pastor; St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
- 6) *Community service*
Southwest General Hospital Institutional Review Committee;
Disaster Response Team - Southwest General Hospital;
Co-chair of the Brandt School District Levy Committee
- 7) *Year of birth*
1950
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Church Council:

1. As the "interim legislative authority between Churchwide Assemblies," the decisions of the Church Council can have great impact in synods, congregations, and our society. It seems this ministry would be challenging yet satisfying.
2. I think I am able to weigh all sides of an issue carefully and reasonably ... listening to, but not being pressured by special interest groups. It would be fascinating to ponder the many facets of an issue, to thoroughly discuss these facets, to pray over them, to decide ... then, to publicly support the decision no matter my personal opinion.
3. In these anxious times leaders need to listen without becoming anxious themselves. Systems training and dealing with congregations in conflict have helped me be a "less-anxious" presence in anxious situations.
4. I can bring the perspective of a parish pastor and former synod staff member to the deliberations of the Council.
5. It would be an honor to serve the ELCA in this way .

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Church Council member?

1. The ELCA is a church of great breadth. GOOD people have differing opinions on almost every issue. Being able to separate people and issues is essential. Mediation and systems training have been helpful with this.
2. The ELCA is an interconnected church. Having served as a parish pastor (21 yr.) and as an Asst. to the Bishop (9 yr.) has made this interconnectedness tangible. Having served in these ways has also given me at least an elementary knowledge of many issues the Church Council might to consider. In other words, I know a little about a lot. (I guess you could also say this makes me dangerous!)

3. I firmly believe the Holy Spirit is active whenever the church gathers in prayer, no matter which part of the church gathers. We have the best shot of understanding God's will for us by trusting that God is active in our prayerful decision-making processes. When the Church Council deliberates, the Holy Spirit IS guiding.

4. I am a team player.

What, in your judgement, is the most important responsibility of the Church Council?

To nurture the health of the ELCA by exercising the following duties of both a council member and the Church Council as a whole:

1. The duty of loyalty: "To act in good faith, in a manner which is reasonably in the best interests, or not opposed to the best interests, of the whole church. That is, to act in good faith on behalf of the whole and not in the self-interest of the individual board member."
2. The duty of care: "To exercise the care that an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances. That is, the board always manages the resources of the organization (especially financial resources) in a reasonable and prudent manner, being good stewards on behalf of the whole."
3. The duty of obedience: "To act within the limits of the law. This duty requires that the board always sets policies and makes decisions in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations."

(paraphrased from legal duties of board members)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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Clergy [Term 2011]

Robert R. Henderson

Synod 6E Northeastern Ohio

1) *Congregational membership*

Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Chagrin Falls, OH

2) *Experience relevant to this position*

Leading congregation and business teams for 20+ years;
Background as CPA & Pastor allows me a unique
perspective on stewardship;
Serving God, congregation & community with a constant
eye on mission

3) *Church-related service*

Healthy Congregations Resource Team 1999 to present;
Northeast Ohio Synod Council 2005 to present;
Synod Restructuring Committee 2003-2004

4) *Education*

B.S., Miami University; Emory Univ. - Candler Sch. of
Theology;
M.Div., Trinity Lutheran Seminary

5) *Occupation*

Senior Pastor; Lord of Life Lutheran Church

6) *Community service*

Habitat for Humanity - Mahoning County Past President;
Lutheran Domestic Disaster Relief - 5 mission trips for
Katrina relief;
Visiting Nurse Association Board of Directors

7) *Year of birth*

1962

8) *Primary language*

English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board /
Committee / Church Council:*

I believe we are at a critical time in the life of the church. I believe Lutherans have a unique opportunity to embrace our history and seize the future. By focusing on mission and finding common ground, we must open dialogue with those from other faiths. We must also reach out to a new generation. The message of our faith is great; the question on the minds of gen-X-ers and younger is "How is it relevant?" By demonstrating the relevance at all levels of decision making, I believe we have a great opportunity for a new reformation.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a
Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

As a scholar in Healthy Congregations my focus tends to be on mission. When we undertake a new initiative I always want to know and understand how it furthers the purpose of Christ and the mission of the church. I also believe my combined ministry and business background allow me a unique perspective in pragmatic, yet mission-focused decision making. Further, I have led my congregation in a successful capital campaign which has allowed us to expand ministry significantly locally, regionally and globally.

*What, in your judgement, is the most important responsibility of
the Church Council?*

No information provided.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

Clergy (PC/L) [Term 2009]

Jessie D. Hill

Synod 9B North Carolina

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Living Saviour Lutheran Church, Charlotte, NC
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Mission developer, Cherokee Indian Reservation;
Advisor to Dept. of Minority Affairs, Ohio State Univ.;
Interim pastor developer, Hope Lutheran (African Amer. start up) Raleigh, NC
- 3) *Church-related service*
Chairperson Multicultural Ministries Com. of NC Synod;
Advisory com. to American Indian Alaska Native Assn.;
Guest teacher-Unresolved Grief & Pastoral Care for Amer. Indian Pastors
- 4) *Education*
M.Div., Southeastern Baptist Theo. Sem.;
Adv. Study., Lutheran Theo. Southern Sem.;
D.Min., Graduate Theo. Foundation
- 5) *Occupation*
Minister, Living Saviour Lutheran Church
- 6) *Community service*
Member, Latin Am. Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte;
Member of Metrolina Native American Assn.;
Co-chair, Interfaith Assn. at Ohio State University
- 7) *Year of birth*
1950
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

My past experience working with people of color & language has enriched my life and my understanding of what the church can be. From these opportunities of learning, I believe that I can help form new community ties and strengthen existing one.

From my teaching experience at university and seminary levels I have had a chance to meet with people of various cultures and countries from around the world. This has been both a learning experience for me and an opportunity to share my faith. From these life experiences, I feel that I would be a resource to the committee.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I have been a pastor at a Native American church in Cherokee, NC (Living Waters) and have been able to develop a bond between my current church and Living Waters helping to bridge gaps in cultural understanding and in cooperative adventures which have strengthened those bonds (construction and renovation projects on the reservation, bring the Cherokee youth to participate in LSLC events and form bonds with our church families.

I have been working with the Metrolina American Indian Assn. to establish a Native American Chamber of Commerce here in Charlotte and establish a program on Native American cultures and traditions.

Clergy (PC/L)

Jackie D. Russell

Synod 4C Arkansas-Oklahoma

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Eben Ezer Lutheran Church, Oaks, OK
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Past member CMM Steering Committee;
Past V.P. (Native American Lutheran Association);
Current Pastor American Indian Congregation
- 3) *Church-related service*
CMM Steering Committee member (2 terms);
Previous member of board for Lutheran Human Relations (Milwaukee,Wi.); Facilitator Anti-Racism for CMM
- 4) *Education*
HS Diploma, Oaks Mission High School; INC, DS Lancaster C.C.; LSTC Chicago
- 5) *Occupation*
Pastor; Eben Ezer Lutheran Church
- 6) *Community service*
Current member of local Community Task Force;
Past Chair of Community Clinic in Great Bend, Ks;
Past Chair of Council for the Elderly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 7) *Year of birth*
1943
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

Having served on the Multiculture Ministries Steering Committee for a number of years, there are many issues relating to American Indian/Alaska Native communities that I feel I can be a bridge from the Church to these communities. Serving on the committee that drafted the Native American Strategic Plan adopted by Churchwide Assembly, I feel this can be brought back to the table and implemented. As a church committed to being inclusive, strides have been made in some areas, but still more work is needed.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

Because I serve as Pastor of a church in the heart of the Cherokee Nation, my ear is to the ground on issues that concern the local community and church. Too often decisions made at the top have not had the input from the local level that is needed to make informed decisions. As a congregation we are re-establishing ties to the Synodical and Churchwide Units that have been dormant in past years. Eben Ezer has a long history of service to the Church, and I am proud to be considered to maintain the ties that bind.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE LUTHERAN

Clergy [Term 2013]

Robert L. Driver-Bishop

- Synod 8G Metropolitan Washington D.C.
- 1) *Congregational membership*
Redeemer, McLean, VA
 - 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Director for Interpretation - ELCA Communications;
Author of Lutheran Voices "People of Purpose";
Communication Officer, US Air Force Intelligence Service
 - 3) *Church-related service*
Coordinator of ELCA Large Church Conference;
Synodical Communications Chair;
National presenter/consultant for Communications in
Technology
 - 4) *Education*
B.S., US Air Force / Eastern; M.DIV., Lutheran School of
Theology, Chicago;
D.MIN., McCormick & Princeton Seminaries
 - 5) *Occupation*
Lead Pastor; Redeemer Lutheran Church
 - 6) *Community service*
Chair of Rockford Area Lutheran Ministers (cooperative
service);
Task Force that built childrens hospital in Tanzania;
Chair of Thrivent Board Raised/gave 300K annual to
charity
 - 7) *Year of birth*
1954
 - 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

I am former communications engineer (military & industry) with a grasp of developing communication trends (and opportunities for the church).

I believe in effective communications for the whole church. One of the best print models for the church was "The Lutheran Standard". It provided a comprehensive view of issues before the church and contributed to organizational alignment.

I would invite Bishop Gary Wollersheim (who nominated me) to comment on this point. I have been a close partner in mission and ministry for the whole church. I also serve as an ongoing consultant to Augsburg-Fortress regarding practical parish needs.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Committee member?

I am an ongoing communication & event coordinator for the ELCA Large Churches. I am in constant contact with these 225 churches which represent over 10% of the ELCA membership. I can share insights from these partners.

I am privileged to serve a ministry at the nation's capitol which enables contacts with people of faith on the national & international scene.

I am a loyal churchman. I'd rather help build up the church than criticize it. I celebrate the many ministries of the ELCA. I have experience in parishes, campus ministry, church wide, and synodical ministries.

I can share Joy.

Clergy [Term 2013]

Harold W. Eppley

- Synod 5J Greater Milwaukee
- 1) *Congregational membership*
Lincoln Park, Milwaukee, WI
 - 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Frequent freelance contributor to The Lutheran/other church publications;
Author of 7 books, including 4 published by Augsburg Fortress;
Pastor 18 yrs; have served in rural, suburban & urban parishes
 - 3) *Church-related service*
Western North Dakota Synod Communications committee member;
Allegheny Synod pastoral continuing education committee member;
Youth & Family ministry conference speaker
 - 4) *Education*
B.A., St. Olaf College; M.DIV., Wartburg Theological Seminary
 - 5) *Occupation*
Pastor; Lincoln Park Lutheran Church
 - 6) *Community service*
Volunteer hospice counselor;
Community organizer, anti-violence ecumenical prayer vigil, 2005;
Lincoln Park neighborhood safety block watch volunteer
 - 7) *Year of birth*
1962
 - 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

Though I am but one person, I have interacted with a cross section of ELCA members during my 18 years in the ordained ministry. I have served open country, rural, suburban, and urban congregations in North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. I have served as an interim campus pastor at a large state university and graduated from a smaller Lutheran college. I have lived in communities where the majority of residents were Lutheran. I was raised and confirmed in a mission congregation in Vermont (one of the "least Lutheran" states).

I am also an excellent listener and observer of personal and congregational interaction. My experiences and spiritual gifts provide me with a keen sense of "where people are at" in the ELCA. Since THE LUTHERAN seeks to serve and inform the entire ELCA community, I believe I can bring insights that will benefit the advisory board in its efforts to guide the magazine in meeting its mission.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as

a Committee member?

In addition, to the experiences I have mentioned in question 14, I bring the perspective of being a freelance writer and editor for more than 20 years. I have done freelance work for THE LUTHERAN, the ELCA, and AUGSBURG FORTRESS in a variety of capacities. I understand the intricacies and challenges of seeking to communicate about spiritual and theological matters with the varied population which comprises the ELCA.

Lay Male [Term 2011]

Mr. Jerry Strom

Synod 2A Sierra Pacific

- 1) *Congregational membership*
St. Matthew, Walnut Creek, CA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Founder: Symmetry-National Church Leadership development program;
Speaker/Strategic Consultant, former COO of two tech start-ups;
Founder of two companies, 25 yrs advertising, branding, communications, design
- 3) *Church-related service*
Synod Trained Coach for Natural Church Development & New Church Univ.;
Congregation Past Council President, Capital Fund Campaign;
Dir., Stephen Minister, Small Group Leader, Leadership Developer
- 4) *Education*
University of Washington; 'Hard Knocks' - being schooled daily
- 5) *Occupation*
Founder; Jerry Strom & Co. Inc. [AKA SymmetryOrg.com)
- 6) *Community service*
Walnut Creek Little League, past coach & vice president;
Walnut Creek Soccer Club, past coach;
WCCL - Capital Funding Director (2 years)
- 7) *Year of birth*
1951
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

Prior career experience includes 25+ years in the advertising, design, brand image and communications industry, as founder and creative director of two firms -- diverse list of clients from large publicly-traded companies to small businesses; diverse industries; and broadly differentiated markets. Began career in the media (radio).

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Committee member?

My leadership profile categorizes my style as entrepreneurial or creative - thus, very open to and not threatened by change. In fact, I'm a proponent of continual change to foster renewal and maintain cultural relevance in a modern world.

Lay Male [Term 2011]

Mr. Rick White

Synod 8E Upper Susquehanna

- 1) *Congregational membership*
St. John's, Leck Kill, PA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
I have worked for 18 yrs as publisher of 4 weekly newspapers;
6 yrs served as Publications Dir., Communications Dir.,
at
Newspaper Trade Assn.
I have served as a board member of printing company
- 3) *Church-related service*
Currently Authorized Lay Worship Leader/member of synod worship/music com.;
Served as congregational council president and treasurer;
Serve as a Sunday School teacher and am a mbr. of synod's ELW Introduction Team
- 4) *Education*
B.A. Elizabethtown College
- 5) *Occupation*
Publisher; Advance Publications of Perry & Juniata Counties
- 6) *Community service*
Past Bd. of Dir., Perry County Literacy Council;
Past Bd. of Dir., Centrtal Susquehanna Habitat for Humanity;
Bd. of Trustees, PA Newspaper Association
- Foundation
- 7) *Year of birth*
1956
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

Because I've been a publisher for many years, I know many of the challenges the magazine (the product) and it's staff (the people) face. I've had to answer the same questions about budgets, journalistic dilemmas, attracting readers, and the effects of technology on print media. I know the language of publishing.

Although a publisher now, my training is that of a journalist. I love to ask questions. If you ask enough of the right questions, problems are revealed and solutions discovered.

I am an "encourager."

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Committee member?

I have been active in my home congregation for many years. I now have a sincere desire to become active in the larger church. I will bring with me a "small rural church" experience - a good one - and that insight may offer a unique perspective.

I am a for-profit publisher, but I've also been a non-profit editor and manager which gives me a dual view of revenue generation and publication expenditures. I have experience on both the business and editorial sides of publishing.

As an Authorized Lay Worship Leader in my synod, I travel to numerous churches supplying in vacant pulpits and for vacationing pastors. I see healthy, vibrant congregations and those that are struggling. I will bring those experiences with me.

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Lay Male (PC/L) [Term 2013]

Mr. Keith Gatling

- Synod 7D Upstate New York
- 1) *Congregational membership*
King of Kings, Liverpool, NJ
 - 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Middle and high school teacher;
Librarianship Training;
Journalism Training [before switching majors]
 - 3) *Church-related service*
Head Deacon and Preaching Deacon at King of Kings;
Board for Lutheran Campus Ministry, Sycamore University;
Former Choir Director
 - 4) *Education*
B.A., Sycamore University; M.L.S., Sycamore University
 - 5) *Occupation*
Computer Instructor; Pebble Hill School
 - 6) *Community service*
Sycamore University Traditions Commission;
Peck Ave. Block Party Committee;
Many other activities through church and school
 - 7) *Year of birth*
1956
 - 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

One of the reasons I believe I would serve well is because of how well I get along with the many faculty and staff members at the school where I teach. As in any large organization, there are little factions, cliques, and people who don't talk to each other, and in my 15 years here, I seem to have been able to work well with everyone - often not understanding person A and person B have problems with each other.

Another reason I believe I would serve well is because I'm a firm believer in the saying "There's no limit to how much good you can cause to happen, as long as you don't care who gets the credit." I've often been the real source of an idea that got put to use here at Manlius Pebble Hill, but realized that the chances of my idea being put to use were better if they seemed to originate with someone else. Since everyone, including myself, benefited from this, I didn't mind. And I've always figured that as others gain, then so do I.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Committee member?

Hmm...another tricky one. I guess one of the particular perspectives I'd contribute is that of a teacher. One who understands what other people don't get and need explained to them. Also one who's worked hard at trying to explain those very things to the people who don't understand them.

I also bring the perspective of one who understands that most of the time it's not a case of one side being right and the other being wrong, but of both sides having equally good intentions borne of different understandings of the same situation. I understand that unless we're willing to initially assume goodwill on the part of those we disagree with, and are able to understand why each side feels the way they do, we will *appear* to be in conflict, when in the end, we all want pretty much the same thing.

Lay Male (PC/L) [Term 2013]

Mr. Frank Ramos

- Synod 9F Caribbean
- 1) *Congregational membership*
San Marcos, Guaynabo, PR
 - 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Graduate of Syracuse University School of Communications;
Newspaper reporter and editor for 25 years;
Communications consultant for 15 years
 - 3) *Church-related service*
Former member of Augsburg Fortress Board;
Communications advisor to Caribbean Synod
 - 4) *Education*
B.A., Syracuse Univ. Sch. of Communications;
GRADUATE, Syracuse Univ. Sch. of Communications
 - 5) *Occupation*
Communications Consultant; Self-employed
 - 6) *Community service*
Salvation Army Advisory Board in Puerto Rico, current;
San Juan Rotary Club member, past;
Lutheran church campaign against violence
 - 7) *Year of birth*
1937
 - 8) *Primary language*
Spanish

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Committee:

I believe my background as a journalist and communications consultant can be an asset while serving on the board. Also, my prior service on the ELCA's Communications Advisory Committee and on the Augsburg Fortress Board can provide valuable insight into the issues affecting The Lutheran.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Committee member?

I believe the fact that I'm an Hispanic and a resident of Puerto Rico gives me a different perspectives from some of the other board members.

CHURCHWIDE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

Clergy [Term 2007]

A. Donald Main

Synod 8E Upper Susquehanna

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Zion Lutheran Church, Sunbury, PA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Ministry as a synodical bishop for 20 years
Familiarity with the constitutional and ecclesiastical foundations of ELCA
- 3) *Church-related service*
Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod
Advisory Bishop to the ELCA Church Council
Former Chair of the COB's Synodical/Churchwide Relations Committee
- 4) *Education*
BA, Gettysburg College; M Div, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysb
- 5) *Occupation*
Bishop; Upper Susquehanna Synod
- 6) *Community service*
Kiwanis
The Hill Association----local community support & development
- 7) *Year of birth*
1943
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I believe my 20 years of experience in the office of synodical bishop provides a perspective which would enable me to serve effectively as a member of the Committee on Appeals. One of my strengths is the ability to listen carefully and then to prayerfully provide suggestions or recommendations concerning the situation.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I have had the privilege of experiencing this church in each of its three expressions---congregations, synods, and churchwide. I also have a sense of the history of where we have been as a church. At the same time I appreciate the foundation which our constitutions provide for our mission, ministries, and governance.

Clergy [Term 2007]

Paul J. Blom

Synod 4F Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Kinsmen Lutheran, Houston, TX
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Serving as bishop of the ELCA
Have dealt with misconduct situations
Have dealt with conflicted situations
- 3) *Church-related service*
ELCA Church Council (1988-91)
Bishop (1991-2007)
Coaching newly elected bishops
- 4) *Education*
B.A., St. Olaf College; M. Div., Luther Seminary
- 5) *Occupation*
Bishop; Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of ELCA
- 6) *Community service*
CORR - Community of Refugee Resettlement founder
NAM - Northwest (Houston) Assistance Ministry Board
Homeless ministry -- Interfaith Ministries of Houston
- 7) *Year of birth*
1941
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I have experience in dealing with the kind of matters that would come before the Committee on Appeals. I have had to deal with violations of the ELCA Visions and Expectations policies directly as a bishop. I have had training in family systems, clinical pastoral education in a hospital setting, and served in four congregations as Assistant Pastor, Solo Pastor and Senior Pastor.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I would seek to be fair and equitable, listening carefully to all views and engaging in dialogue with the other committee members to discern the best outcome for the sake of both the church and the persons involved.

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CHURCHWIDE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Clergy

Linwood H. Chamberlain, Jr.

Synod 6E Northeastern Ohio

- 1) *Congregational membership*
First, Lorain, OH
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Secretary for the Northeastern Ohio Synod (2 terms-6 years);
Lead national clergy retreat programs;
Trained Gestalt Psychotherapist
- 3) *Church-related service*
Secretary for the Northeastern Ohio Synod (2 terms-6 years);
Voting member at 4 Churchwide Assemblies;
Served on Synod Executive Committee (16 years)
- 4) *Education*
M.Div., Hamma School of Theology; D.Min., Ashland Theological Seminary;
Post Grad. Ed., Cleveland Gestalt Institute
- 5) *Occupation*
Co-Pastor; First Lutheran Church
- 6) *Community service*
Chair Lorain County Board of Mental Health (2 terms);
Chair Catholic Health Partners' Lorain Hospital Ethics Committee (current);
Vice President Family Planning Services of Lorain County
- 7) *Year of birth*
1946
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I pray before voting. I believe a diversity of representation best facilitates the church being open to the Holy Spirit. I have learned that a variety of personal perspectives is more indicative of providing a diversity of representation than geography or educational background. I listen to others' opinions before I finalize my vote. I can be brief.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I pray before voting. I believe a diversity of representation best facilitates the church being open to the Holy Spirit. I have learned that a variety of personal perspectives is more indicative of providing a diversity of representation than geography or educational background. I listen to others' opinions before I finalize my vote.

Clergy

Jonathan L. Eilert

Synod 6F Southern Ohio

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Prince of Peace Lutheran, Loveland, OH
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
broad contacts across church from churchwide experiences;
knowledge and experience with positions for which nominations are sought;
support and understanding of the ELCA nomination process
- 3) *Church-related service*
2005 Churchwide Assembly Reference and Counsel Co- chair;
ELCA Church Council- Program and Services Committee Chair; Renewing Worship Resource Proposal Group
- 4) *Education*
B.A., Wittenberg University; M.Div., Trinity Lutheran Seminary
- 5) *Occupation*
Pastor; Prince of Peace Lutheran
- 6) *Community service*
- 7) *Year of birth*
1971
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I believe that my experience on the Church Council prepared me well for this position. The work of the council involves oversight to ensure the representation of the entire ELCA in the work of this church. I believe that I have a good understanding of the values and mission of this church, and would seek to nominate individuals that can contribute to the continual discernment and implementation of our shared mission.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I would contribute the perspective of a parish pastor, former church council member, worship enthusiast, youth and family ministry advocate, global ministry advocate, ELCA seminary and college graduate, former outdoor-ministry staff person who desires to see the ELCA remain a strong visionary church with wise and faithful leaders.

Clergy

Simon G. Fensom

Synod 3F Southwestern Minnesota

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Faith Lutheran, Spicer, MN
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Fifteen years experience in parish ministry;
Fifteen plus years of experience in hospitality management
- 3) *Church-related service*
- 4) *Education*
M Div, Luther Seminary; HND, Cassio College
- 5) *Occupation*
Pastor; Faith Lutheran
- 6) *Community service*
Secretary for Habitat For Humanity Affiliate;
Treasurer for New London Spicer Ministerium
- 7) *Year of birth*
1959
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I am responding to a "surprise" invitation from my bishop to consider serving on the Churchwide Nominating Committee. To be honest, I am not sure why I am responding positively. I must be swayed by flattery. Modesty aside, I do perceive of myself as a thoughtful and reasoned individual who would be quite capable of serving in this capacity.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

No information provided.

Clergy

Loren D. Mai

Synod 4B Central States

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Emanuel Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, KS
 - 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Participation in 2 ELCA Churchwide Assemblies;
Advisor to the Nominating Committee of the Central States Synod;
Awareness of the wider ministry and mission of the ELCA
 - 3) *Church-related service*
Current Secretary of the Central States Synod (since 1996); Parish Pastor for 29 years;
Synod Transition Team
 - 4) *Education*
M. Div., Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, IL;
- B.A.,
Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS
- 5) *Occupation*
Pastor; Emanuel Lutheran Church
 - 6) *Community service*
Current member of Board of Directors, Bethany Lutheran
Home, Lindsborg;
Past Service on Local United Way Board of Directors;
Past officer (President, Secretary) of local Ministerial Association
 - 7) *Year of birth*
1952
 - 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I have served in various capacities on the Synod level, and I have an awareness of the workings of the Church on a number of levels. I think that I would bring a perspective to this committee that would be beneficial.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I would bring a perspective that is rooted in rural/small town/congregational ministry in the Midwest/Great Plains. In my ministry in such settings, I have sought to create an awareness of the ministry of the wider Church; I see my potential service on this committee as the "other way" on a two-way street, that is, representing rural/small town ministry in the wider Church. I am also aware of the importance of "being the Church," regardless of categories and types of ministry.

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Lay Female

Ms. Gwen E. Arneson

Synod 3F Southwestern Minnesota

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Christ Lutheran Church, Cottonwood, MN
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Have met people from around the ELCA through work as Synod Vice President;
Previous work on many boards and committees with a cooperative spirit;
Enjoy meeting and learning about people who are all members of Christ's body
- 3) *Church-related service*
Synodical Vice President (8 yrs);
Former member Augustana College Bd. of Regents and Executive Committee (6 yrs);
Formerly - Synod Bd. Cong. Life, Evangelism Task Force, ELW Training Team
- 4) *Education*
BA Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD
- 5) *Occupation*
Lay Pastoral Assistant/Organist; Christ Lutheran Church
- 6) *Community service*
First Coordinator - Community Adult Volunteer Program in local school;
First Coordinator - KIDS AGAINST HUNGER community event;
Host Parent - foreign exchange high school student - 1 year
- 7) *Year of birth*
1953
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I recognize and appreciate the importance of the work of the Nominating Committee for the ELCA and would undertake the committee responsibilities in a thoughtful, careful and prayerful manner. I am a detail-oriented person who is dependable and committed to any task I undertake or am assigned. In my current and previous callings and opportunities, I have met many people from around our church, and I would draw upon those experiences to help complete the work of the Nominating Committee. It would be a joy and an honor to work cooperatively with others on these important matters.

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I believe I would come to this task with an open and curious mind, a cooperative attitude, a concern and commitment to nominate the persons who would serve our church in fruitful ways, and simply with the perspective of a lay female from the Midwest. I would come with no "agenda" other than to find and nominate people who want to and would best serve the mission we all share.

Lay Female

Ms. Merle E. Freije

Synod 3B Eastern North Dakota

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Mayville Lutheran Church, Mayville, ND
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Leadership roles- Congregation, Synod, Churchwide;
Educator- 30 years;
Leader of workshops, retreats, and multicultural education
- 3) *Church-related service*
VicePresident END Synod;
Churchwide Board Women of the ELCA;
END Synodical President Women of the ELCA
- 4) *Education*
Elem.Teach.Cert, Jamestown College ND; B.A., Mayville State University
- 5) *Occupation*
Instructor; Lake Region State College
- 6) *Community service*
PEO 25 years; AAUW 3 years;
ND Museum of Art 8 years
- 7) *Year of birth*
1941
- 8) *Primary language*
English

Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board / Committee / Church Council:

I believe I would serve well as a member of the nominating committee because I have served on nominating committees at every level of the church and in the secular world. I know the importance of the process of seeking servant-leaders and finding the best place for a person to share their "gifts".

Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?

I think the particular perspective that I would contribute as a member of the nominating committee is my experiences as a lay person and my relationships in the "grass roots" of this church.

Lay Female

Ms. Linda N. Lovell

Synod 8F Delaware-Maryland

- 1) *Congregational membership*
First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ellicott City, MD
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Participating for many years on LutherLink/Ecunet;
Coordinating joint projects with synods of Region 8 and
ELCA Partner Synod;
Serving as staff support to synodical Nominating
Committee
- 3) *Church-related service*
Secretary, Board of Directors, Stewardship of Life
Institute;
Communications volunteer at five churchwide
assemblies;
Member, planning committee, 2004 ELCA
Communication Consultation
- 4) *Education*
B.A., Susquehanna University; M.L.A., The Johns
Hopkins University
- 5) *Occupation*
Coordinator for Communication; Delaware-Maryland
Synod ELCA
- 6) *Community service*
Member, Alumni-Parent Admissions Network,
Susquehanna University; Girl Scout leader
- 7) *Year of birth*
1949
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board /
Committee / Church Council:*

Between volunteering and working professionally with the church for more than 21 years at the congregational, synodical and churchwide levels, I know many people in different parts of the country. I'm confident that I could help broaden and deepen the pool of skilled volunteers on whom the church might call.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a
Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

My experiences cover quite a bit of the church spectrum: I'm the mother of a recent seminary graduate, now ordained; I volunteer on the board of directors of a group which pulls its members from across the ELCA; I still maintain ties to the Lutheran college from which my husband, my daughters and I all graduated; and I'm an active layperson in my congregation as well as a professional church communicator.

Lay Female

Ms. Sara 'Sally' C. Williams

Synod 8C Allegheny

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Zion Lutheran Church, Hollidaysburg, PA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Serve as Vice President of the Allegheny Synod
(second term);
Served two (2) terms on Candidacy Committee;
Current work as a Human Resource Management
Consultant
- 3) *Church-related service*
Participated in Eastern Cluster of Seminaries;
Serve on Region 8 Steering Committee;
Served on Congregational Council and Chair of
Worship Board
- 4) *Education*
SPHR, Various courses in Human Resources; National
Employment Law Institute
- 5) *Occupation*
President; Webber HR Solutions, LLC
- 6) *Community service*
Past President of Hollidaysburg Area Women's Club;
Current Member of Blair Concert Chorale (audition only
choral group);
Past Board Member of Camp Sequanota
- 7) *Year of birth*
1951
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the
Board / Committee / Church Council:*

Working at the Churchwide level would be a rewarding challenge. My work as a Human Resource Consultant has provided me with an opportunity to work in many different types of organizations and businesses (including Lutheran Social Ministry organizations, long term care homes, financial institutions, insurance companies and public sector employers.) In turn, I have met people from all walks of life, both management and staff - each one unique! This experience, coupled with my life-long Lutheran faith and active involvement in my home congregation and synod, have prepared me for this work. I believe that God is calling me to service.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute
as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

I believe that my work experience, my leadership gifts and my strong faith and active involvement in the life of the Church would all positively affect my ability to contribute to this Committee. I work well with others and am a good listener, but not afraid to provide my opinion.

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Lay Male

Mr. James M. Hushagen

Synod 1C Southwestern Washington

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Mountain View Lutheran Church, Edgewood, WA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Served one term on synod nominating committee;
Currently serve on three Lutheran organization
nominating committees
- 3) *Church-related service*
Southwestern Washington Synod vice president;
Former member of Southwestern Washington Synod
nominating committee
- 4) *Education*
jd, University of Puget Sound Law School; ma, Pacific
Lutheran University;
ba, Pacific Lutheran University
- 5) *Occupation*
senior partner; eisenhower & carlson pllc
- 6) *Community service*
Thrivent Financial board;
Pacific Lutheran University board;
Lutheran Music Program board
- 7) *Year of birth*
1948
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board /
Committee / Church Council:*

I have served on many nominating committees, including the local synodical committee, and currently serve on the governance committee of several nonprofits (Thrivent Financial, PLU and Lutheran Music Program) for which the governance committee has nominations responsibility. I have experience reviewing qualifications of nominees and trying to find the nominees with skill sets meeting the needs of the particular board or committee.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a
Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

Although I believe in inclusivity, I have worked with quotas in the nominating context and know from experience they often make it much more difficult to obtain the right skill set for the boards and committees to be filled. This can result in board/committee positions remaining unfilled, or being filled with less-qualified persons, to the detriment of the organization. If elected, I would bring the perspective of looking to nominate the most qualified candidates irrespective of synodical affiliation, clergy/lay status, sex, ethnicity or primary language.

Lay Male

Mr. Ronald L. Pittman

Synod 1E Oregon

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Trinity Lutheran Church, McMinnville, OR
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Vice President of the Oregon Synod;
Voting Member of Churchwide Assembly 3 times;
Community Volunteer work, (School Bds, Head Start
Bd, Community College Bd
- 3) *Church-related service*
President of Trinity Lutheran Church, McMinnville Or;
Chair of Regional Governing Council Reg 1;
Oregon Synod Council prior to being Vice President
- 4) *Education*
BS Oregon State University
- 5) *Occupation*
Career Agent; Country Insurance & Financial Services
- 6) *Community service*
Kids on the Block for after school programs;
Community Action Bd of Directors;
Habitat for Humanity helped build 2 homes
- 7) *Year of birth*
1937
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the
Board / Committee / Church Council:*

I have been involved for most of my adult life as a leader in the local, state and regional programs and governance of the church. I believe I have a good understanding of the qualities need for leadership and I also know a lot of people in the Oregon Synod and Region 1. I also work well in a group in helping build agreements as decisions are reached.

I also have a passion for seeing the church governance process work well at all levels and being able to present qualified names for election is a very important part in providing the leadership that that the ELCA needs in this first part of the 21st Century.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute
as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

No information provided.

Lay Male (PC/L)

Mr. Wesley L. Crenshaw

Synod 9D Southeastern

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Holy Spirit Lutheran, Savannah, GA
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Supervisor of diverse groups of males & females in a manufacturing environ
Leadership on many local boards and associations
- 3) *Church-related service*
President of church council - Holy Spirit
Treasurer, Holy Spirit Lutherans
Vice-president, Southeastern Synod for two terms
- 4) *Education*
MBA, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Ga; Grad Certificate,
Northeastern University, Boston, Mass;
BA, Shaw University, Raleigh, N.C.
- 5) *Occupation*
Executive Director; Inner City Night Shelter, Inc.,
- 6) *Community service*
PTA President, Pulaski Elementary School - 4 years
President, Sylvan Terrace Neighborhood Association, 2
years
Member, local black business organization - Savannah
Silver Summit
- 7) *Year of birth*
1946
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the Board /
Committee / Church Council:*

To serve well within or with a group, one must be comfortable with whom he/she is. One must possess human relations and interpersonal skills that cause one to subconsciously respect opinions and skill sets of all in the group. A person should possess prior experience so that he/she can be effective in a short period of time. My background as a manufacturing supervisor in a blue/gray collar environment for over 6 years, my experience as chairperson of many local boards and associations, and my current position as executive director of a homeless shelter brings contact with individuals of all races, gender, educational, and socio-economic background. With this level of education and diverse experience I believe I can serve well on this committee.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute as a
Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

As an educated black male with years of interpersonal, financial, business, and community leadership, I will be able to bring a positive, multicultural, and diverse perspective to this committee.

Lay Male (PC/L)

Mr. Jeremy D. Posadas

Synod 7C Metropolitan New York

- 1) *Congregational membership*
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of M, New York,
NY
- 2) *Experience relevant to this position*
Work in myriad ecclesial and social contexts with
immense human diversities; Expertise (from personal
study and church work) in ELCA polity and
organization;
Critical awareness of societal trends affecting present
day faith communities
- 3) *Church-related service*
Voting Mbr, 2007 CWA & 2006 Metro NY
Syn.Assembly;
Pastoral associate, Trinity ELC of Manhattan, 2003-
2006;
Congregation Council, Augustana LC, Chicago, 2001-
03
- 4) *Education*
AB, The University of Chicago; MDiv, Union
Theological Seminary NYC; PhD, Emory University
(presently)
- 5) *Occupation*
Graduate Fellow and PhD Student; Emory University
- 6) *Community service*
Transforming Community Project, Emory University;
Sem. intern, Natl Interfaith Com. for Worker Justice;
Family Support Services, Children's Memorial Hospital,
Chicago, IL
- 7) *Year of birth*
1981
- 8) *Primary language*
English

*Describe why you wish to be elected as a member of the
Board / Committee / Church Council:*

I deeply believe that the Lutheran tradition can powerfully speak to spiritual needs in the third millennium, but doing so absolutely requires leadership in the Lutheran church that reflects the multilayered diversities of the People of God. I am committed and able to imagine possibilities and needs that our church will have to embrace 10 and 20 years from now, and to discern what kinds of participants in churchwide leadership can guide us to that point. My work and research have revealed to me the richness in leadership formation that congregational life - and "best practices" in it - can offer. Out of personal interest and desire to learn, I have developed an extensive background in what it means to be one church in three expressions, and in the nuances of the ELCA's structures, governing documents, and policies: this will allow me to grasp the distinct tasks each of the committees and boards plays for the building-up of the whole church.

*Are there particular perspectives that you would contribute
as a Board / Committee / Church Council member?*

As a young person of color in the ELCA, I am verily afraid that we are not working hard enough to channel a steady stream of energized young people and people of color who will join in the leadership of the church. This fear comes from my conviction that we cannot live out the Great Commission if we are not lead by a wide-ranging diversity of leaders. So my work on the Nominating Committee would represent my own effort to help cultivate a critical mass of the ELCA's next leadership generation - especially pressing given the demographic squeeze as Baby Boomers reach later

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years (something that affects our ministerial "pipeline" already). As a scholar who theologically analyzes Christian practices in relation to public life, I also can critically discern challenges of being the public church we have pledged to be, grounded and empowered in our life together around Word and Table.

Church Council Member Synod Visit Summary

A full report is available in a notebook on the resource table located in the Council room.

#	Synod Name	Representative	Event	Date of Visit
1A	Alaska	C. Mays		
1B	Northwest Washington	C. Mays	Synod Council	9/06
1C	Southwest Washington	J. McKee		
1D	Eastern Washington-Idaho	J. McKee	Synod Council	1/07
1E	Oregon	G. Anderson		
1F	Montana	G. Anderson		
2A	Sierra Pacific	J. Tutt-Starr		
2B	Southwest California	J. Tutt-Starr		
2C	Pacifica	S. Loy		
2D	Grand Canyon	S. Loy		
2E	Rocky Mountain	S. Loy		
3A	Western North Dakota	B. Dokken		
3B	Eastern North Dakota	B. Dokken		
3C	South Dakota	J. Sorenson	Synod Council	10//12/07
3D	Northwest Minnesota	A. Niedringhaus		
3E	Northeast Minnesota	A. Niedringhaus	Synod Council	12/06
3F	Southwest Minnesota	J. Sorenson	Synod Assembly	6/10/06
3G	Minneapolis Area	J. Crippen (Niedringhaus)		
3H	Saint Paul Area	J. Crippen (Niedringhaus)		
3I	Southeastern Minnesota	J. Crippen		
4A	Nebraska	D. Nelson		
4B	Central States	D. Nelson		
4C	Arkansas-Oklahoma	J. Biffle		
4D	N. Texas-N. Louisiana	K. Kanouse		
4E	Southwestern Texas	M. Helmke		
4F	Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast	J. Biffle		

#	Synod Name	Representative	Event	Date of Visit
5A	Metropolitan Chicago	S. Stumme		
5B	Northern Illinois	S. Stumme		
5C	Central/Southern Illinois	S. Stumme		
5D	Southeastern Iowa	N. Hirsch	Synod Council	12/2006
5E	Western Iowa	N. Hirsch	Synod Assembly	5/2006
5F	Northeastern Iowa	G. Wipperman		
5G	Northern Great Lakes	D. Jensen		
5H	Northwest Synod of Wisconsin	D. Jensen		
5I	East-Central Synod of Wisconsin	D. Jensen		
5J	Greater Milwaukee	J. Thomas	Synod consultation	2/24/07
5K	South-Central Synod of Wisconsin	J. Thomas		
5L	La Crosse Area	G. Wipperman		
6A	Southeast Michigan	S. Schlesinger		
6B	North/West Lower Michigan	S. Schlesinger		
6C	Indiana-Kentucky	K. Hunsinger		
6D	Northwestern Ohio	K. Hunsinger	Synod Council	12/06, 1/07, 2/07
6E	Northeastern Ohio	E. Eaton		
6F	Southern Ohio	E. Eaton		
7A	New Jersey	J.P. Rajashekar		
7B	New England	D. Truland		
7C	Metropolitan New York	J. Linman		
7D	Upstate New York	D. Truland		
7E	Northeastern Pennsylvania	J. Richter		
7F	Southeastern Pennsylvania	A. Thomas		
7G	Slovak Zion	D. Truland <i>(if needed)</i>		
8A	Northwestern Pennsylvania	L. Reitz		
8B	Southwestern Pennsylvania	J. Linman		
8C	Allegheny	W. Lloyd, Jr.		

#	Synod Name	Representative	Event	Date of Visit
8D	Lower Susquehanna			
8E	Upper Susquehanna	L. Reitz		
8F	Delaware-Maryland	R. Wahl		
8G	Metropolitan Washington, D.C.	R. Wahl		
8H	West Virginia-Western Maryland	W. Lloyd, Jr.		
9A	Virginia	K. Rupp		
9B	North Carolina	F. Ashton		
9C	South Carolina	F. Ashton		
9D	Southeastern	J. Bunker		
9E	Florida-Bahamas	J. Bunker		
9F	Caribbean	P. Wallace		

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The Role of the Church Council

Constitutional

General ELCA

- Be the board of directors (14.11.)
- Serve as the interim legislative authority (14.11.)
- Elect the treasurer (14.14.)
- Adopt policies in accord with CBCR (14.21.04)
- Provide for the installation of officers (14.21.12)
- Establish officers' salary ranges (14.21.13.)
- Establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between this church and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations (14.21.16)

Churchwide Assembly

- Review all recommendations from units for CWA consideration (14.21.03.)
- Submit budget proposals for CWA approval and authorize expenditures (14.21.05.)
- Report to the CWA (14.21.08.)

Church Council

- Elect to fill vacancies on council, boards, and committees (14.15.)
- Remove a voting member (non-officer) of council (14.16.)
- Establish committees and nominate or elect such persons as necessary to carry out the functions assigned to it (14.41.)

Churchwide Units

- Act on policies proposed by units (14.21.01.)
- Review procedures and programs of units (14.21.02.)
- Ratify units' policies concerning routine matters (14.21.02.a.)
- Adopt personnel policies (14.21.06.)
- Be responsible, with CS, for corporate social responsibility (14.21.14.)
- Determine the appropriate unit to fulfill particular program or policy responsibilities (14.21.15.)
- Elect the executive directors of units (14.21.21.)
- Arrange the process for all elections for churchwide units (14.21.22.)

Synod Councils

- Act on resolutions from Synod Councils (14.21.11.)

Identified by the Small-Group Discussions

Build Relationships

1. among council voting members and with advisors
 - use one-on-ones, retreats, etc.
 - ask advisors for observations at the end of each meeting
 - ask advisors for comments at beginning of discussions
 - ask advisors to talk about their group at least once per year
2. with synods
 - participate in Synod Assemblies
3. with seminaries
 - visit

Strengthen Communication

- with synods: create a report highlighting issues that affect them or pre-packaged articles for newsletters
- within council: develop a continuity document on ongoing actions
- within council: express joys and concerns prior to meeting and have chair handle them appropriately
- with this church: Web cast council meetings

Focus on the Plan for Mission

- monitor trends and ensure progress
- make certain action items identify which part of the Plan they are addressing

Increase Leadership Skills and Council Effectiveness

- learn how to have conversations about difficult issues
- make more use of committee-of-the-whole discussions
- build trust
- clarify position description and expectations

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Report of the Executive for Administration

My first report to the Church Council as executive for administration in April 2002 highlighted the major administrative initiatives on the agenda of the churchwide organization that year. The main topics were strategic planning, communications, the ELCA relationship with LWR, the quality of churchwide ministries with key partners, and search processes underway for several executive director positions.

I smiled when I read the list of initiatives from 2002. Perhaps you did also. Many of the 2002 themes are still front and center. One could ask in 2007: has anything changed? Yes, actually a great deal has changed, even though the primary themes remain and probably always will be high on the churchwide organization's agenda.

Strategic thinking and planning is embedded in the fabric of the organization. Of course, the organization has always been engaged in planning. However, thanks to Bishop Hanson's expectation that this would become even more central to churchwide life, the work of strategic planning and thinking during 2001-2007 took on heightened attention and energy.

Now, six years later, more and more leaders can recite the ELCA mission statement and other key components of the ELCA Plan for Mission. Each churchwide unit and section is in some stage of planning that connects the unit's work with the Plan for Mission. The budget development process occurs through the lens of the Plan although the complete prioritization of all churchwide programs and activities remains an unattained goal. Decisions on the deployment of external and internal grant funds depend on the Plan for Mission.

Planning in the organization based on the Plan for Mission is now addressing second and third order implications of the foundational plan, including the cycles of monitoring and evaluation that must accompany a strategic plan. The five ethnic ministry strategies have clearly delineated outcomes and metrics. There is an interunit table convened by Multicultural Ministries that seeks to create organization-wide synergy where the outcomes of the five strategies intersect.

Likewise, a strategic plan is carefully and thoughtfully emerging for the Justice for Women program of Church in Society. This is but one of many ways the organization is honoring its commitment to address "scandalous realities" in church and world. In Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission the

redirected Christian Education program has an ambitious operational plan based on the outcomes from the 2006 consultation.

When a partner or someone from the churchwide staff mentions one of the 'C' words (cooperation, coordination, collaboration, communication), we look at one another knowingly because these descriptions of organizational culture have increasingly become a mantra for staff.

Recently I attended the annual meeting of denominational staff who hold positions similar to the ELCA executive for administration. Our roundtable of sharing highlights and challenges for each of the church bodies always discloses a number of common issues. One of the laments of many at this meeting was the difficulty in overcoming the rugged independence of national units and the resultant fragmentation of churchwide ministries. I was pleased to be able to report some significant strides by our staff in the direction of interdependence. It is a tribute to the Cabinet of Executives that a "four C's" culture is taking hold in the organization and in our daily patterns of partner relationships. We still have far too many exceptions to this high standard, but the organization names these deficiencies and finds new ways to go forward.

The Inter-Denominational Executives Group identified other common themes in its roundtable sharing. At the top of the list was church body identity. This brings me back to the 2002 list of churchwide initiatives and the topic of communications.

As another of Bishop Hanson's priorities when he took office in 2001, communications has been the focus of many assessments and audits. The 2002 planning question (what are the greatest challenges facing this church?) that was asked at synod assemblies and subsequent research on this question have underscored the challenge this church faces in articulating its identity and the story of God's mission through this church's manifold ministries, domestically and globally.

Communications Services now has launched a major endeavor aimed at this very challenge. A marketing and brand project is underway with the help of professional consultants. A pilot brand campaign will be unveiled soon in Denver, Colo. It is our hope that the churchwide campaign will be ready by the time of the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

The comprehensive communications strategy of which this marketing and brand campaign is but one part

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

Exhibit E, Part 1

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will be ready for sharing with the Church Council in November 2007. Meanwhile, at this April 2007 Church Council meeting, the report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding lifts up communication as absolutely essential to strengthened mission funding in this church. The combination of the comprehensive communications strategy and the outcomes contained in the Blue Ribbon Committee report promise substantial progress in our communication challenges in the near future.

Still another initiative in 2002 was that of addressing the quality of churchwide ministries with partners. The organization has held this at a high level of consciousness during these past six years. We can report several important steps forward during the past six months. Bishop Hanson's presentation to the Cabinet of Executives in fall 2006 on the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization within the wider ecology of this church serves as a helpful framework for our partnerships.

The differentiation of roles of ELCA expressions in starting new congregations was a major topic of dialogue at the last two Conference of Bishops meetings. At the March 2007 meeting the Conference focused on the funding of new starts. Much information and opinion was gathered that will now return to the churchwide table on starting new congregations for analysis and proposed next steps with synods.

The 2008 budget proposal includes changes in the Office of the Presiding Bishop that will expand the capacity of our partnerships. According to the proposal, the position of executive for synodical relations will change from part-time to full-time and a new position of executive assistant to the presiding bishop will enable the bishop to maintain a high level of participation in the many partnerships of the churchwide organization.

Rivers of living water and church administration—we don't ordinarily associate these two phrases with one another, do we? Yet in my experience, the biblical imagery of water and the ministry of administration are members of the same conceptual family. This conceptual family is "our vocation as leaders of the mission to which God calls this church."

Pastor John Sabatelli of Christ Lutheran Church in Baltimore and member of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding told the committee that a phrase he uses often in his ministry to describe the church's

mission is "be a river, not a reservoir." The metaphor is striking. On the one hand, the negative connotation is water trapped, contained, and often eventually filtered. On the other hand, the positive connotation is water that is moving, not always predictable, and teeming with life. Many of you may recall Bishop Hanson's keynote address to the synod-churchwide consultation in October 2002 where he used the metaphor of baptismal waters to call us as leaders to a vision of one church with a mighty baptismal river of many strong currents.

The description of several steps taken during 2001-2007 and the present state of major challenges faced by the churchwide organization suggests that the leadership provided by the Church Council and staff of the churchwide organization can well be seen as a river, not a reservoir. Strategic thinking and planning is always evolving and hopefully maturing. It is only useful if it is teeming with life. Communication and mission interpretation is becoming a strong current. The quality of our partnerships, another strong current, is constantly gaining momentum. Living in God's amazing grace, we seek to be faithful to our vocation as leaders of the mission to which God calls this church.

I am thankful to God for the privilege of serving this church in ministry settings I could never have imagined in 1969. I am deeply grateful to Bishop Hanson for his trust in me in this call to service as executive for administration and to my colleagues in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for their outstanding service to this church. God's grace and peace be with you.

Charles S. Miller
Executive for Administration

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

2008 Expense Proposal

With 2007 comparison

	Current Fund			World Hunger			Total		
	2007	2008		2007	2008		2007	2008	
	<i>Revised</i>	Changes	Proposal	<i>Revised</i>	Changes	Proposal	<i>Revised</i>	Changes	Proposal
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	\$20,886,550	(\$618,240)	\$20,268,310				\$20,886,550	(\$618,240)	\$20,268,310
Global Mission	16,108,045	(475,440)	15,632,605	13,428,320	339,480	13,767,800	29,536,365	(135,960)	29,400,405
Multicultural Ministries	1,290,285		1,290,285				1,290,285		1,290,285
Church in Society	3,822,650	(109,160)	3,713,490	4,008,560	101,340	4,109,900	7,831,210	(7,820)	7,823,390
Vocation and Education	11,734,280	(166,160)	11,568,120	151,300	3,825	155,125	11,885,580	(162,335)	11,723,245
Presiding Bishop	6,003,000	80,100	6,083,100				6,003,000	80,100	6,083,100
(Incl. sections of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, Research and Evaluation, Human Resources, Synodical Relations, and Worship and Liturgical Resources)									
Secretary	3,577,705	(20,000)	3,557,705				3,577,705	(20,000)	3,557,705
(Incl. Churchwide Assembly, Church Council and Legal Expenses)									
Treasurer	6,428,665	12,640	6,441,305				6,428,665	12,640	6,441,305
(Incl. sections of Information Technology and Management Services)									
Communication Services	3,263,865	(100,000)	3,163,865				3,263,865	(100,000)	3,163,865
Development Services	2,861,550		2,861,550	1,161,820	55,355	1,217,175	4,023,370	55,355	4,078,725
General Treasury	820,000		820,000				820,000		820,000
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	2,800,000	(300,000)	2,500,000				2,800,000	(300,000)	2,500,000
Depreciation	1,690,000		1,690,000				1,690,000		1,690,000
Compensation Pool		1,400,000	1,400,000					1,400,000	1,400,000
Strategic Initiative Fund	135,405	194,595	330,000				135,405	194,595	330,000
Blue Ribon Committee Recommendations		349,666	349,666					349,666	349,666
Total	\$81,422,000	\$248,000	\$81,670,000	\$18,750,000	\$500,000	\$19,250,000	\$100,172,000	\$748,000	\$100,920,000

2008 Synod Mission Support Plans

And 2006 Actuals with 2007 Plans, and Revisions

SYNOD NAME	#	2006		2007				2008	
		ACTUAL	MS %	SYNOD PLANS		REVISED ESTIMATES **		SYNOD PLANS	
				AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %
ALASKA	1A	187,878	42.00%	205,863	42.00%	157,740	33.60%	159,319	33.60%
N.W. WASH	1B	629,665	45.00%	675,000	45.00%	675,000	45.00%	655,200	45.50%
S.W. WASH	1C	422,668	37.00%	453,463	37.00%	453,463	37.00%	453,463	37.00%
E.WASH/ID	1D	327,332	37.00%	364,800	38.00%	364,800	38.00%	381,150	38.50%
OREGON	1E	463,203	40.00%	456,000	40.00%	456,000	40.00%	494,050	41.00%
MONTANA	1F	399,000	38.00%	419,265	38.50%	419,265	38.50%	439,206	39.00%
SIERRA-PACIFIC	2A	1,125,784	48.10%	1,176,000	49.00%	1,217,328	49.00%	1,200,000	50.00%
SW CALIFORNIA	2B	753,403	48.00%	718,340	49.00%	718,340	49.00%	800,000	50.00%
PACIFICA	2C	1,123,373	54.00%	1,161,000	54.00%	1,161,000	54.00%	1,171,750	54.50%
GRAND CANYON	2D	1,233,753	45.00%	1,294,380	47.00%	1,330,100	47.00%	1,443,300	50.00%
ROCKY MTN	2E	1,482,474	50.00%	1,500,000	50.00%	1,500,000	50.00%	1,600,000	50.00%
W. NO.DAK	3A	380,581	41.50%	358,764	41.50%	358,764	41.50%	385,140	42.00%
E. NO.DAK	3B	418,636	40.00%	504,800	40.00%	504,800	40.00%	432,000	40.00%
SO. DAK.	3C	860,368	42.00%	853,439	42.00%	878,007	42.00%	895,567	42.00%
NW. MINN.	3D	855,271	51.00%	861,900	51.00%	861,900	51.00%		51.00%
NE. MINN.	3E	666,503	49.00%	710,500	49.00%	710,500	49.00%	717,850	49.00%
SW. MINN.	3F	1,190,669	52.50%	1,211,068	52.50%	1,211,068	52.50%	1,225,878	52.50%
MINPLS. AREA	3G	2,011,579	57.10%	2,284,000	57.10%	2,284,000	57.10%		
ST PAUL (M)	3H	1,116,263	50.00%	1,170,000	50.00%	1,170,000	50.00%	1,172,600	50.00%
SE. MINN.	3I	1,180,278	52.50%	1,186,500	52.50%	1,163,925	52.50%	1,210,493	52.50%
NEBRASKA	4A	2,354,023	57.00%	2,394,000	57.00%	2,394,000	57.00%		
CENTRAL STATES	4B	1,190,497	53.00%	1,158,050	53.00%	1,158,050	53.00%	1,173,950	53.00%
ARK/OK	4C	280,217	42.50%	275,200	42.60%	275,200	42.60%	275,200	42.60%
N.TEX/N.LOU	4D	604,225	45.00%	595,350	45.00%	601,965	45.50%	632,923	46.00%
S.W.TEXAS	4E	1,069,167	55.00%	1,058,750	55.00%	1,058,750	55.00%	1,164,625	55.00%
GULF COAST	4F	797,108	50.00%	812,500	50.00%	812,500	50.00%	835,000	50.00%
METRO CHGO	5A	1,982,860	55.00%	2,113,458	55.00%	2,113,458	55.00%	2,095,033	55.00%
NO. ILL	5B	1,525,900	55.00%	1,577,950	55.00%	1,577,950	55.00%	1,612,050	55.00%
CEN.SO. ILL	5C	1,040,474	56.00%	1,196,429	56.00%	1,196,429	56.00%	1,037,904	56.00%
SE IOWA	5D	1,734,643	53.50%	1,755,720	53.50%	1,755,720	53.50%	1,804,043	53.50%
WEST IOWA	5E	577,365	49.00%	588,000	49.00%	588,000	49.00%	595,925	49.25%
NE IOWA	5F	849,353	47.00%	826,500	43.50%	826,500	43.50%	836,000	44.00%
N GRT LKES	5G	571,111	54.00%	550,800	54.00%	550,800	54.00%	561,750	53.50%
NW.SYN (W)	5H	893,493	58.00%	917,560	58.00%	917,560	58.00%	971,645	58.00%
EC WISC	5I	1,043,068	55.00%	1,050,500	55.00%	1,050,500	55.00%	1,058,750	55.00%
GRTR MILWKEE	5J	1,662,889	61.00%	1,628,700	61.00%	1,628,700	61.00%	1,694,275	61.00%
SO.-CENT (W)	5K	1,077,931	59.60%	1,078,760	59.60%	1,078,760	59.60%	1,079,356	59.60%
LACROSSE (W)	5L	466,829	55.00%	450,000	55.00%	450,000	55.00%		

2008 Synod Mission Support Plans

And 2006 Actuals with 2007 Plans, and Revisions

SYNOD NAME	#	2006		2007				2008	
		ACTUAL	MS %	SYNOD PLANS		REVISED ESTIMATES **		SYNOD PLANS	
				AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %
SE. MICH	6A	879,272	53.00%	914,250	53.00%	914,250	53.00%		
N/W LOWER MICH	6B	919,461	50.00%	950,000	50.00%	950,000	50.00%	950,000	50.00%
IND/KY	6C	1,345,866	50.00%	1,325,000	50.00%	1,425,000	50.00%	1,300,000	50.00%
NW OHIO	6D	1,332,025	51.00%	1,292,902	51.00%	1,343,903	51.00%	1,331,484	51.00%
NE OHIO	6E	1,130,723	49.75%	1,200,000	50.00%	1,200,000	50.00%	1,160,000	50.00%
S. OHIO	6F	1,080,000	43.20%	1,080,000	43.20%	1,155,000	45.29%	1,150,000	45.50%
NEW JERSEY	7A	1,313,793	50.00%	1,391,724	50.00%	1,391,724	50.00%	1,350,000	50.00%
NEW ENGLAND	7B	1,254,902	55.00%	1,265,004	55.00%	1,265,004	55.00%	1,361,670	55.00%
METRO NY	7C	603,313	43.50%	651,000	46.50%	651,000	46.50%	651,000	46.50%
UPSTATE NY	7D	738,611	45.00%	775,882	46.00%	775,882	46.00%		47.00%
NE PENN	7E	1,658,443	53.00%	1,722,500	53.00%	1,696,000	53.00%	1,669,500	53.00%
SE PENN	7F	1,476,973	53.00%	1,484,000	53.00%	1,484,000	53.00%	1,510,500	53.00%
SLOVAK ZION	7G	34,297	28.75%	34,220	29.00%	34,220	29.00%	34,866	29.50%
NW PENN	8A	457,157	48.00%	455,000	48.50%	455,000	48.50%	465,000	49.00%
SW PENN	8B	1,366,236	55.00%	1,331,000	55.00%	1,331,000	55.00%	1,320,000	55.00%
ALLEGHENY	8C	515,714	50.00%	525,500	50.00%	525,500	50.00%		
LOW SUSQ	8D	2,156,009	52.50%	2,139,375	52.50%	2,139,375	52.50%	2,152,500	52.50%
UPP SUSQ	8E	612,756	50.00%	620,000	50.00%	620,000	50.00%	620,000	50.00%
DEL-MRYLND	8F	1,422,465	53.00%	1,531,170	53.00%	1,531,170	53.00%	1,459,432	53.00%
METRO DC	8G	1,086,546	55.00%	1,083,500	55.00%	1,107,942	55.00%	1,071,125	55.00%
W. VA/W.MYLD	8H	332,226	50.00%	332,574	50.00%	332,574	50.00%	332,574	50.00%
VIRGINIA	9A	1,103,496	50.00%	1,120,291	50.00%	1,120,291	50.00%	1,222,358	50.50%
NO. CAROLINA	9B	2,000,000	42.20%	2,000,000	41.49%	2,000,000	41.49%	2,100,000	42.00%
SO. CAROLINA	9C	1,484,004	46.20%	1,538,000	46.17%	1,538,000	46.17%	1,538,000	45.00%
SOUTHEASTERN	9D	1,303,496	50.00%	1,442,501	50.00%	1,290,300	50.00%	1,316,000	50.00%
FLORIDA-BAHAMAS	9E	1,474,011	50.50%	1,518,224	50.50%	1,518,224	50.50%	1,703,400	51.00%
CARIBBEAN	9F	32,400	15.64%	45,000	17.08%	45,000	17.08%	40,400	15.13%
TOTAL REMITTANCES		\$65,664,031	50.54%	\$67,361,926	50.58%	\$67,471,201	50.59%	\$60,075,204	50.31%

Mission Flowing From God's Abundance
The Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding
2007

Purpose and Background

The ELCA Church Council, at the urging of the Conference of Bishops, constituted a Blue Ribbon Committee to study the mission funding policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to present a report with recommendations to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council. Topics for consideration by the committee included mission support, stewardship education, planned giving, designated and restricted giving, and referrals by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of memorials on a mission support covenant and a fund appeal for new ministries. The study was to probe ways to improve and build upon current policies and practices as well as to consider alternative policies and practices.

Ever mindful of the outstanding abundance in which we live and of God's grace in our lives, the committee grounded its work in the context of mission—God's mission and our role in it; mission as our common work together as people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The committee's report provides concrete proposals for how we can work together to unleash the capacity of the ELCA for God's mission throughout the world.

The Blue Ribbon Committee's report on mission funding in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is printed in Exhibit F, Part 5. An executive summary of that report is printed in Exhibit F, Part 5a. Financial implications of this report are accounted for in the 2008 churchwide budget proposal.

Primary audiences for this report are the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The Blue Ribbon Committee also hopes this report will more broadly affect the stewardship practices of this church, including but not limited to stewardship staff, synods, seminary presidents and academic deans, rostered leaders, congregation council members, synod councils and assemblies, and churchwide staff.

It is important to state that this report does not attempt to cover all aspects of mission funding and stewardship practices in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The report speaks to our historic patterns and present realities, and their implication for future work. The Blue Ribbon Committee commends this report to the ELCA Church Council and 2007 Churchwide Assembly, as well as to all those involved in strengthening the stewardship practices within the life of this church.

Our Theology of Stewardship¹

"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). Stewardship begins and ends with God. God's stewardship—God's "economy" or plan for the household of the entire world—is summed up in the proposition that God's will is to reconcile the world to himself (John 3:16 and parallels). So, God created and is creating, God redeemed and is redeeming, and God sanctifies and continues to set the redeemed apart as those who live within the plan and carry out God's mission. As supreme giver (James 1:17), God fills the world with abundance, and yet God does not give up ownership. The earth and its fullness remain God's and we are the recipients of the gifts of God.

God's people recognize that all good things are gifts from God and, when we respond by using those gifts responsibly, we practice a fundamental stewardship. We recognize that as God's

¹ This section of the report is based upon the report, "Financial Stewardship Strategy," (CA 93.07.27.) to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly.

people, we participate in God's creating, redeeming, and sanctifying activity. God's people share in God's mission for the world. God's people know the will of God toward the world and proclaim the Gospel through words and actions. "Let your light shine before others," Jesus counsels, "so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

The fuller stewardship of God's people arises from their sense of God's plan for the world. "(God) desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (Timothy 2:4). As we do so, we recognize that God's gifts must be cared for, managed, shepherded, shared, given away—not for their own sake, but in order to accomplish God's ultimate will that the whole world be saved. Because every element of life belongs to God, it is proper to consider every facet of life as an opportunity for emphasizing stewardship. Because stewardship includes a range of caring behaviors, it is proper to speak of stewardship as everything Christians do after they come to faith. "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

One aspect of stewardship—caring for money and possessions—receives great attention in a Christian stewardship lifestyle, because money is one primary way that contemporary cultures measure value. Although financial stewardship should never be considered to encompass the breadth of Christian stewardship, careful management of money is one of the highest priorities for Christians living in response to God's generosity.

When Christians respond generously with their monetary gifts, they respond in faith and participate in God's mission in ways that go beyond what they can accomplish alone. This is an important element in total financial stewardship. Individual Christians and their gathered communities of faith carefully order their financial resources to accomplish objectives that they identify as consonant with God's ultimate will for the world—that the world comes to know Jesus Christ and be saved and that God's kingdom is fulfilled.

Financial Stewardship in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God's mission." (ELCA Constitution, 5.01.c.)

This church, in all its expressions and manifestations, intends to be an effective means by which the Gospel is proclaimed and God's will for the world is effected. This church, like the early Church described in the Acts of the Apostles, is dependent on financial support and rightly asks for the money gifts of its members. This church, a gathering of forgiven saints, rightly asks for the time and talents of members in order to carry out its mission and ministry. This church, interdependent communities of faith where the Word of God is rightly preached and sacraments rightly administered, equips its members for their vital, daily ministries of proclamation and care.

God's stewardship invites the partnering stewardship of the Church. God's stewardship requires the financial support of God's mission. And God's people, living in grace-filled abundance, respond with joy and thanksgiving for what God has provided. Freed from the myth of scarcity, God's people are open to give with a generosity beyond their own imagining.

Thus, God's will is accomplished. God is praised and glorified, and stewardship ends where it begins—with God.

History and Current Context

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is organized into three expressions. Each of these expressions contributes differently to the shared work of achieving God's mission in the world. The funding for this shared work comes from the gifts of members, a portion of which is

passed from congregations to the synods and the churchwide organization. These gifts were initially described as a congregation's "proportionate share" but are now typically referred to as "mission support." Chapter 15, on synods, in *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (2005) describes the relationships with regard to funding in the following ways:

- “†S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent units that share responsibly in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church and thus partnership in this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings.
- a. The mission of this church beyond the congregation is to be supported by such a proportionate share of each congregation's annual budget as each congregation determines. This synod shall develop guidelines for determining "proportionate share," and shall consult with congregational leaders to assist each congregation in making its determination.
 - b. This synod shall receive the proportionate share of the mission support from its congregations, and shall transmit that percentage of each congregation's mission support as determined by the Churchwide Assembly to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

Over the years, however, a pattern has developed in the funding of the mission of the ELCA that has significantly affected the ability of synods and the churchwide organization to do their mission work. This pattern is not specific to the ELCA but has also impacted churches as diverse as the Southern Baptist Convention and the United Church of Christ. In short, members have continued to increase the amount they give to congregations despite a decrease in the overall membership of the ELCA. This means that fewer members are giving more year after year. In 2000, for example, \$1.9 billion was given by members to the congregations of this church. In 2005, the amount had increased to nearly \$2.2 billion. Even after adjustments have been made for inflation, this represents an increase of 3.5 percent (in 2000 dollars). Figure 1 shows the changes in regular giving, and the amount passed on to the synods and the churchwide organization. Figure 1 shows an increase in regular giving and a significant decrease in mission support. Figure 2 shows the amount passed on from congregations to the synods and the churchwide organization as a percent of total giving. This percentage has decreased regularly and persistently over the last 40 years. In 1965, for example, congregations contributed 18 percent of their total giving to the district and synods of the predecessor church bodies. By 1990, the percentage was 10 percent and by 2005, the percentage was 6.0 percent.

Figure 1: Change in Regular Giving to Congregations, and Support to Synods, and the Churchwide Organization Between 1989 and 2005 (adjusted for inflation)

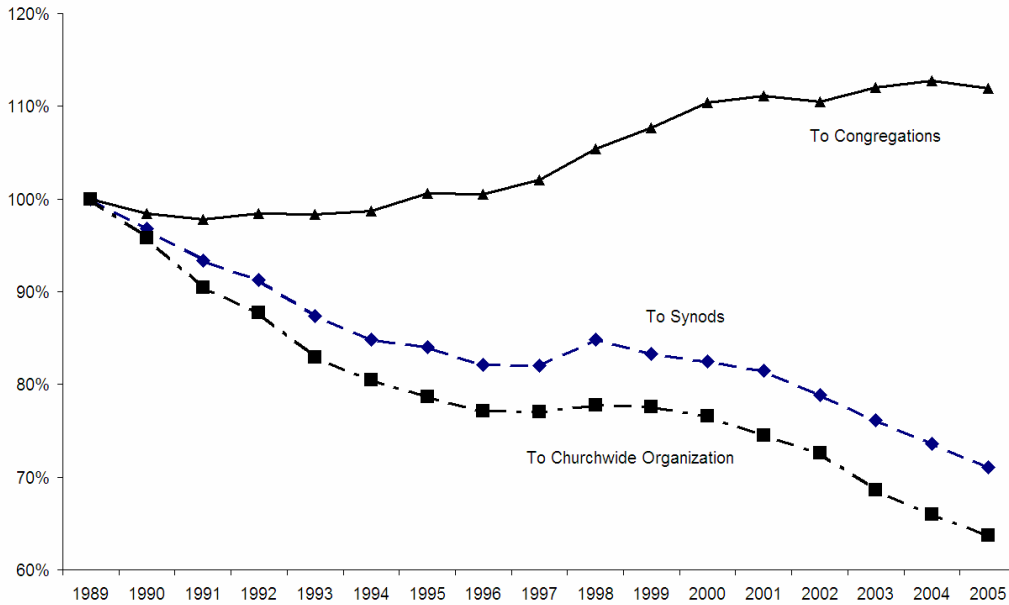
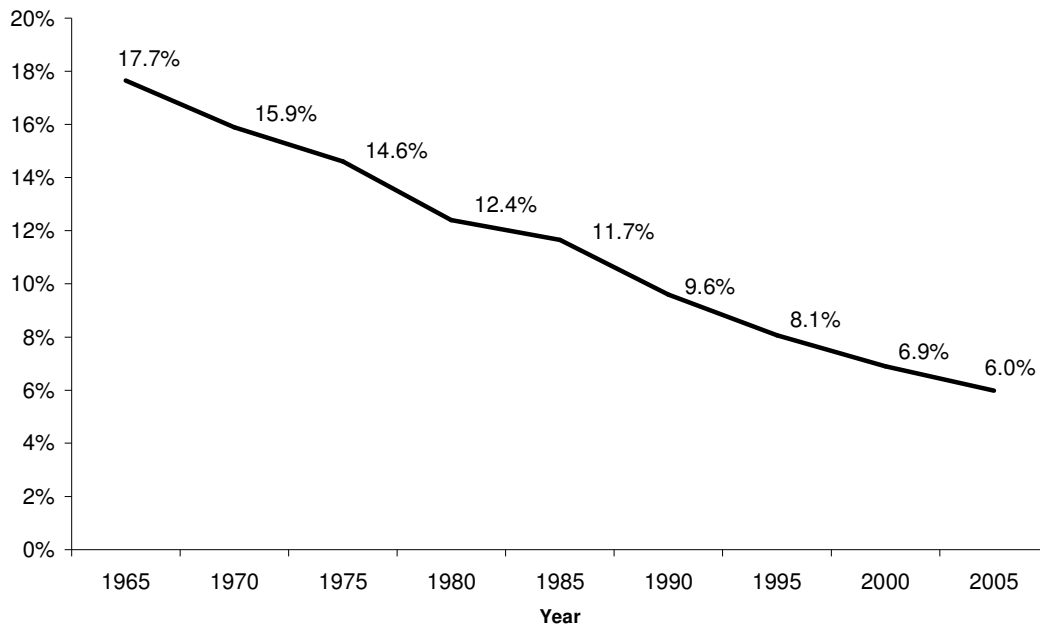


Figure 2: Mission Support as Percent of Total Giving Between 1965 and 2005



There are many hypotheses about why congregations have decreased their level of mission support. Unfortunately, it is difficult to clearly establish the direct relationship of so many factors to the actual decision congregations make with regard to mission support. At the same time, some things are clear. For example, we know that:

- a. The number of small congregations has increased dramatically in the ELCA and small congregations have proportionately higher levels of operating costs than medium-sized and larger congregations. This means that any increase in operating costs, such as an increase in health care premiums, can have a very significant impact on mission support.
- b. Larger congregations, as a group, pass a lower percentage of their total giving to the synods and churchwide organization than is typical of medium-sized congregations.
- c. The vast majority of members are not well-informed about the ministries of the synods and the churchwide organization of the ELCA.
- d. The pattern of decrease is typical of nearly every church body regardless of its polity.
- e. The pattern of decrease has also been reflected in support for many of the agencies and institutions of this church.

Year	Total Giving	Total Mission Support	Percent of Total Giving	To Churchwide Support	Percent to Churchwide Support	Churchwide Proportion
1965	\$299,217,323	\$52,815,469	17.7%	\$38,209,659	12.8%	72.3%
1970	\$371,009,632	\$58,990,076	15.9%	\$40,067,293	10.8%	67.9%
1975	\$490,054,272	\$71,595,139	14.6%	\$48,531,585	9.9%	67.8%
1980	\$725,097,104	\$89,956,467	12.4%	\$57,946,313	8.0%	64.4%
1985	\$1,005,017,788	\$117,165,168	11.7%	\$73,840,080	7.3%	63.0%
1990	\$1,238,424,569	\$118,787,914	9.6%	\$65,943,702	5.3%	55.5%
1995	\$1,490,783,585	\$120,299,945	8.1%	\$63,091,511	4.2%	52.4%
2000	\$1,931,688,679	\$133,306,390	6.9%	\$69,410,796	3.6%	52.1%
2005	\$2,177,901,606	\$130,323,202	6.0%	\$65,468,030	3.0%	50.2%

Grounded in the context of mission, and grateful to God for the abundance in which we live out that mission, the Blue Ribbon Committee strove to be faithful to its charge and bold in its vision. The committee's work, guided by a number of *affirmations for mission* and a well-defined *philosophy of mission funding*, was developed on the basis of *assumptions, outcomes, and goals*.

Affirmations for Mission

Affirmations for mission include acknowledgment of earlier work and processes regarding mission funding. With thanksgiving for God's unfathomable generosity and the tremendous people and resources that make up this church, the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding affirms:

- Mission support is the foundation for supporting churchwide and synodical ministry and mission;
- The necessity of consulting together between congregations and synods and between synods and the churchwide organization before making decisions about changes in mission support sharing and proposed changes in patterns of grants and staffing;
- Development work on major gifts done by the churchwide organization is an effort of great significance for mission funding that benefits the breadth and depth of this whole church;

- Increased giving will benefit congregations, synods, churchwide, and the agencies and institutions of this church; and
- Together as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America we are more and can do more than we could ever be or do on our own.

Philosophy of Mission Funding

The ELCA's *philosophy of mission funding* is based on this church's unique structure as one church in three expressions. Each expression, gifted with God's great abundance, carries out various parts of this church's work. The resulting interdependence among the three expressions of the ELCA is critical to the fullness of its collective mission and ministry. This church's philosophy of mission funding:

- Views unrestricted giving as the anchor for funding mission and ministry.
- Is built on a unified churchwide budget that encourages collaboration among its units.
- Expects that congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization will continue to explore and refine their differentiated roles in carrying out specific aspects of this church's mission.
- Is grounded in the 55/45 percent sharing of mission support between the churchwide organization and synods as a mark of who we are together and our commitment to our shared mission. The formula for sharing is based on all unrestricted giving from congregations to synods.
- Relies on the unique position of the churchwide organization to help this church stay connected to the wider Lutheran and ecumenical communities and redistribute funds across the regions of this church.

Mission Support Assumptions

- Members and the three expressions of this church are diverse in their approaches to mission support.
- Relationships among the three expressions of this church affect both the mission and mission support.
- Mission interpretation and a coordinated communications strategy for the ELCA are essential.
- The engagement of ELCA members in mission interpretation is critical to the advancement of this church's mission.
- Transparency and accountability positively impact relationships and financial support.
- Clarity as to the location of work and differentiated roles between synods and the churchwide expression is fundamental to the effective distribution of mission funding.
- ELCA rostered leaders are called to be financial stewardship leaders and to give public witness to that leadership.
- "Best practices" in this church need to be identified and implemented broadly.

Mission Support Outcomes and Goals

I. "Best practices" for mission funding, alternative methods of raising mission support, and improved consultation processes are identified and implemented.

Goals:

- 1a. Gifts from congregations for synodical and churchwide mission support ("undesignated giving") will be acknowledged as key to "best practices" for mission funding.

- 1b. Operating out of a faith-based belief that we are living in God's gift of abundance, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization will renew the effort to focus attention on the importance of an increased percent sharing of mission support income. By November 2008, a plan will be established for assisting each synod currently sharing below the goal of 55 percent to move toward that level of sharing, while affirming synods that already share mission support of 55 percent or greater. The 2007-2008 consultations will include discussion of "unfunded mandates," the differentiated roles of each expression of this church, and ways in which the churchwide organization can assist each synod to reach its mission funding goals.
- 1c. By mid-2008, the churchwide organization will review the restricted and designated giving opportunities it offers and adjust its processes so that it encourages unrestricted giving and is strategic in providing designated giving opportunities.
- 1d. Through the 2007-2008 consultation process, four or five synods will be identified and asked to develop and submit pilot proposals with clearly defined goals and objectives for increasing the amount of mission support in their synods. The churchwide organization will support these pilot proposals by offering a team that will include a mission interpreter and the stewardship, development, and communication staff of the churchwide organization to provide increased mission interpretation to each congregation of the synod and its members.
- 1e. Beginning in 2008, standardized reporting will allow for expanded acknowledgment of local giving. To facilitate this goal, synods will actively pursue full and accurate submission of parochial data reports.
- 1f. Beginning in 2008, the Conference of Bishops will review all mission support plans of the synods, utilizing a format of consistent data from each synod. The Conference of Bishops will provide for a fuller conversation within the conference agenda regarding the context for mission support within synods, and will provide a recommendation to the ELCA Church Council regarding any requests for mission support exceptions.
- 1g. The churchwide organization will provide a convening role in facilitating discussion regarding the roles of congregations, synods, and the churchwide expression of this church in their interdependent sharing in the mission of the ELCA.

II. An increasing number of ELCA member households receive regular, clear and concise communication focused on mission interpretation from the churchwide organization and their synod.

Goals:

- 2a. As a result of clear and relevant communication from the churchwide organization, ELCA members will know the distinctive missional identity of this church, will be empowered to know and tell the story of God's redeeming love in the world, and, living in God's abundance, will personally support the work of this church in and beyond their congregations.
- 2b. The churchwide organization will implement a process to enable it to better invite, listen, and respond to feedback from ELCA members.

- 2c. Beginning immediately, the churchwide organization will focus on increasing its donor, rostered, and e-mail address databases in size and breadth of information in order to enhance its communication with ELCA members. This will include opportunities through synods for a voluntary opting in to regular e-mail communications.
- 2d. By October 2007, the churchwide organization will have a case statement for mission support in the ELCA.

III. Stewardship education programs and processes are evaluated and a strategy for stewardship leadership is developed and implemented.

Goals:

- 3a. The churchwide organization will develop and implement a process to evaluate existing congregational stewardship education resources and its synodical and churchwide staffing.
- 3b. The churchwide organization will develop and implement a process to determine the potential of deployed stewardship staff to help synods reach their 55/45 percent mission support goal.

IV. Seminaries, lay theological education programs, and Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) programs offer stewardship education opportunities for all those preparing for rostered leadership in this church.

Goals:

- 4a. In consultation with ELCA seminaries, by fall 2007, seminaries will receive a template on suggested stewardship education content. The template will be developed by the Stewardship of Life Institute with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EO) unit of the churchwide organization.
- 4b. Stewardship education content will include six stewardship competencies: Biblical, annual response, capital campaigns, mission endowment funds, planned giving, and ecclesiology; and parish-based internships will include active involvement with the congregation's stewardship and finance committees and programs.
- 4c. By spring 2008, parish-based internship sites will have a template for internship learning goals on stewardship. The template will be developed by Stewardship of Life Institute with the Vocation and Education (VE) unit of the churchwide organization and in consultation with the seminaries of this church. The evaluation of internship will include a report on the completion of these stewardship learning goals.

V. By fall 2009, continuing education (6-10 hours) in financial stewardship is available to first-call rostered leaders to help them build upon the six competencies learned and practiced during seminary education and internship.

Goals:

- 5a. The churchwide organization will develop a template for first call rostered leaders' continuing education in stewardship.

- 5b. Synodical bishops will encourage first call rostered leaders to participate in financial stewardship continuing education and to share their learning with other rostered leaders in the synod.

VI. The churchwide organization will encourage stewardship by convening stewardship leaders (e.g., synodical stewardship committees, Lutheran professional advisers, and others) for the purpose of training, coordinating, motivating, and inspiring faithful stewardship practices.

Goals:

- 6a. Coordination, collaboration, and mutual accountability among the three expressions of the ELCA will be strengthened to promote positive mission funding outcomes.

- 6b. Stewardship leaders will develop training models for stewardship practices.

VII. Congregations, synods and the churchwide organization will model stewardship.

Goals:

- 7a. Beginning immediately and continuing as feasible, the presiding bishop (or a member of the presiding bishop's staff) will meet one-on-one with synodical bishops to ask about their personal and corporate stewardship, including the importance of tithing. This is especially important at the time a synodical bishop takes office.
- 7b. Beginning immediately, the churchwide organization will incorporate the same model with the ELCA Church Council, encouraging Church Council members to challenge each other to tithe and then publicly witness to those gifts.
- 7c. Beginning immediately and continuing as feasible, each synod bishop will meet one-on-one with rostered leaders to ask about their personal and corporate stewardship, including the importance of tithing. This is especially important at the time of a candidate's first call and during call transition. Synod Council members will also be invited into conversation about their personal stewardship and the importance of tithing.
- 7d. Beginning immediately and continuing as feasible, pastors will engage the members of congregational councils in conversation about their personal stewardship, including the importance of tithing, so that the leaders of ELCA congregations are able to witness to their stewardship.

Toward God's Future

This report envisions the congregations, synods, and churchwide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America working together as interdependent partners in supporting the mission and ministry of this church. Such partnership will involve generous support for funding this mission and ministry in our congregations, synods, and churchwide organization as we seek together to serve, support, and witness in Jesus' name for the sake of the world.

“God of abundance, you have poured out a large measure of earthly blessings: our table is richly furnished, our cup overflows, and we live in safety and security. Teach us to set our hearts on you and not these material blessings. Keep us from being captivated by prosperity, and grant us in wisdom to use your blessings to your glory and to the service of humankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

ELW, Additional Prayers.

Mission Flowing From God's Abundance
The Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding
2007
Executive Summary

The ELCA Church Council, at the urging of the Conference of Bishops, constituted a Blue Ribbon Committee to study mission funding policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to present a report to the April 2007 meeting of the Church Council.

This report of the Blue Ribbon Committee, "Mission Flowing from God's Abundance," is grounded in the recognition of God's abundant grace in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—its members, congregations, synods, institutions and agencies, and the churchwide organization. The report speaks to historic patterns of giving in this church and its predecessor bodies. The section on "history and current context" is a critically important description of the pattern of decline in giving from congregations to synods and the churchwide organization and its impact on mission and ministry in the ELCA.

The report includes *affirmations for mission* and a well-defined *philosophy of mission funding*, built upon the basis of *assumptions*, *outcomes*, and *goals*.

Mission funding in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on this church's unique structure as one church in three expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. These three expressions of the church "are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God's mission" (ELCA Constitution, 5.01.c.), and thus mission support is the foundation for supporting synodical and churchwide mission and ministry. The gifts from congregations for synodical and churchwide mission support ("undesignated giving") is the key to "best practices" for mission funding in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The 55-45 percent sharing of mission support between the churchwide organization and synods continues to be goal for those synods that have not yet reached that percentage of sharing. The 2007-2008 synodical-churchwide mission support consultations will include discussion of pilot projects on alternative methods of increasing mission support in synods. There also will be an annual review by the Conference of Bishops of synod mission support plans.

There will be attention given to developing clear and concise communication focused on mission interpretation from the churchwide organization and synods for members of this church. Stewardship education programs and a strategy for stewardship leadership will be developed and implemented. Educational opportunities for all those preparing for rostered leadership in this church will be developed through seminaries, lay schools of theology, and first-call theological education.

The report includes a clear and challenging call to the leaders of this church to model personal stewardship, including the importance of tithing.

The report envisions a growing commitment for the congregations, synods and churchwide expressions of this church to work together as interdependent partners in offering generous support for funding the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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Terminology

ELCA	refers to this whole church and thus to all members, expressions (including congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization), agencies, and institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Mission funding	refers to all financial resources given through congregations and individuals to support the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Mission support	refers to unrestricted financial resources given through congregations to support the ministries of synods and the churchwide organization.
Affirmations	are positive statements of the Blue Ribbon Committee <u>on Mission Funding</u> that are foundational to what follows in the committee's report.
Assumptions	are statements of the Blue Ribbon Committee <u>on Mission Funding</u> that are believed to be true.
Outcomes	are the changes expected to occur in the context of the goals set out by the Blue Ribbon Committee <u>on Mission Funding</u> .
Goals	are the priorities that the Blue Ribbon Committee <u>on Mission Funding</u> urges this church to accomplish in a given timeframe in order to achieve the outcomes.
Objectives	are statements of how each goal will be achieved in more specific, delineated ways.
Means of Measurement	are the quantitative and qualitative ways in which progress on the outcomes will be measured.
Tactics	are the specific steps associated with each objective

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

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Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding:

The Rev. Philip Hougén, Bishop, Southeastern Iowa Synod, Co-Chair
Mr. Grieg L. Anderson, ELCA Church Council Member, Portland, OR, Co-Chair
Mr. Earl Mummert, ELCA Church Council Member, Harrisburg, PA, Co-Chair
(deceased)
The Rev. Leonard H. Bolick, Bishop, North Carolina Synod, Salisbury, NC
Ms. Ann Sponberg Peterson, Director of Development, Luther College, Decorah, IA
Ms. Emma Graeber Porter, Principal, Graeber Consulting, New York, NY
The Rev. John Sabatelli, Senior Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church, Baltimore, MD
The Rev. Thomas Skrenes, Bishop, Northern Great Lakes Synod, Marquette, MI
The Rev. Jennifer J. Thomas, ELCA Church Council Member, Milwaukee, WI
Dr. Phyllis Castens Wiederhoeft, Executive Director, Assoc. of Lutheran Dev.
Executives, Madison, WI

Staff working with the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding:

Ms. Kristi Bangert, ELCA Executive Director for Communication Services
The Rev. Donald M. Hallberg, Executive Director, ELCA Development Services, and
President, ELCA Foundation
Dr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, Executive for Research and Evaluation
Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA Treasurer
The Rev. Michael Meier (former Director for Mission Support, Synodical Relations)
The Rev. Charles S. Miller, Executive for Administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Ms. Maricelis Robles, Administrative Assistant, Synodical Relations
The Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich, Executive for Synodical and Constituent Relations,
Office of the Presiding Bishop
The Rev. A. Craig Settlage, Director for Mission Support, Synodical Relations

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

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POLICY ON CRITERIA FOR SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

Adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Revised April 6¹⁴, 2003⁷

1. BASIS

The possibility of synodically authorized worshiping communities being acknowledged by synods exists on the basis of churchwide bylaws and an optional provision in the *Constitution for Synods*.

Churchwide bylaw 10.02.03. says: “Within the territory of each geographic synod, the synod, ~~in~~ keeping with criteria, policies, and procedures proposed by the Division for Outreach ~~secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units,~~ and approved by the Church Council, ~~may~~ acknowledge certain authorized worshiping communities ~~—~~ such as developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels ~~—~~ as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission. Such authorized worshiping communities of the synod shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.”

Further, churchwide bylaw 10.41.04. indicates: “Synods may establish processes that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, under bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01.”

In the *Constitution for Synods*, S7.26., if adopted by the synod, provides: “This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. Such ~~a~~ Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and

procedures ~~of the ELCA Division for Outreach and approved by~~ the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.”

2. CRITERIA

- a. The primary criteria for acknowledgment of such synodically authorized worshiping communities, under the governing documents of this church, include agreement to:
 - (1) Accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of this church (Chapter 2 of the churchwide constitution);
 - (2) Accept and adhere to the Statement of Purpose of this church (Chapter 4 of the churchwide constitution);
 - (3) Be served by leadership appointed or called on an annual basis by the synod under the criteria of this church;
 - (4) Be subject to the discipline [pattern of order] of this church;
 - (5) Be evaluated annually by the synod to determine next year’s status; and
 - (6) Function under the corporation established through the guidance of the synod.
- b. Other criteria for such synodically authorized worshiping communities (hereafter known as “chapels,” unless otherwise designated) include:
 - (1) Participatory worship for the chapel, consistent with Lutheran expectations, provided under the leadership of a pastor of this church or a licensed lay person;
 - (2) Ability to be a financially self-supporting ministry, unless other arrangements are made in accord with policies of the Division for Evangelical Outreach ~~policies and Congregational Mission unit~~ on developing ministries;

- (3) Participation in benevolent (“mission support”) giving to the synod and churchwide organization, with the expectation that 15 percent of the offerings of such chapels will be provided to the respective synod as a sign of commitment to the overall ministry of this church;
- (4) Commitment to evangelical outreach to unchurched persons within the area of the chapel;
- (5) Authorization by the synod for a specified duration, generally for one year, subject to possible renewal following evaluation jointly by the synod and the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit;
- (6) Maintenance by the leadership appointed or called to serve the chapel of a listing of regular participants to be filed annually with the synod¹;
- (7) Proper recording of such pastoral acts as baptism (see item 4.b.1.); and
- (8) If an authorized worship community is discontinuing, refer remaining participants to a regularly recognized congregation of this church for possible membership.

3. EXAMPLES OF CHAPELS AND OTHER AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES

Generic designation—*Chapels*: Such gatherings of small groups sometimes are known as preaching points and places where the population base is insufficient to establish or maintain a congregation, as defined in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (9.11., 9.21., 9.23., 9.25., and 9.31.).

- a. *Former congregation*: A small group that has dissolved as a congregation and who can no longer call a pastor, but who may continue worshiping as a chapel.
 - (1) An authorized worshiping community may be a way in which the synod may continue

¹ A temporary roster of participants is to be filed annually with the synod. The synod will use this listing in determining status as to voting rights at the Synod Assembly. Records are also to be maintained of any official pastoral acts [see item 4.b.(1) below].

to serve a group of people in an area where a congregation has dissolved or where several congregations have dissolved.

- (2) Before being identified as an authorized worshiping community, an existing congregation that may no longer be viable would have to complete the necessary steps for dissolution as a congregation.
 - (3) Subsequent to the dissolution, a new corporation would be established with the synod as the corporate member for the purposes of the chapel.
- b. *Small groups*: A small group of Lutherans may request Lutheran worship in an area where the potential for growth is limited and could not be expected to achieve a self-reliant congregation nor to call a full-time pastor. This group, however, could generate enough income to pay for worship costs and the service of a part-time pastor or other synodically authorized leader.
 - c. *Test a Field*: An opportunity may be sought to test the potential of a new development prior to the commitment of churchwide resources for development of a congregation. This may be a vehicle for experimentation to reach a specialized community of people whose population base is not sufficient to guarantee viable development of a congregation.
 - d. *Seasonal and Recreational Ministries*: In situations where recreational and vacation communities exist, seasonal worship needs might be met, even though a year-round worship schedule would not be possible.
 - e. *A Former Ministry Development*: A former ministry under development may not have developed sufficiently for formal organization as a recognized congregation. Yet a long-term commitment was found within a group of loyal “members.” They may be organized into a chapel as participants in such an authorized worshiping community.

4. LISTING OF CHAPELS AND OTHER AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES

- a. Upon acknowledgment by the Synod Council in the synod to which the chapel is related, the

synod shall report such acknowledgment to the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for recording on the list of acknowledged chapels and other authorized worshipping communities.

- (1) ~~A~~An identification number will be assigned to the authorized worshipping community by the Office of the Secretary.
 - (2) Upon filing of the required authorization, the community will be listed in the ELCA churchwide organization's next annual report to the Internal Revenue Service, to be covered by the ELCA Group Exemption Number for nonprofit status.
 - (3) Each synodically authorized worshipping community is to obtain an Employer Identification Number to be used for payment of the salary and benefits of the pastor or other leader serving the authorized worshipping community.
 - (4) A corporation is to be established for each worshipping community by the synod designating such a ministry, under the laws of a state selected by the Office of the Secretary and using standard corporate governing documents developed by the Office of the Secretary.
 - (5) This corporation is to be qualified, if necessary, as a foreign corporation in the state in which the chapel or other authorized worshipping community will be functioning.
- b. Records shall be maintained on an annual basis of the regular participants of each acknowledged chapel and of all pastoral acts conducted within each chapel, the latter retained on a permanent basis.
- (1) For retention on a permanent basis, the synod shall designate an existing congregation as a congregation of record for the recording of all pastoral acts conducted within a synod's authorized worshipping communities.
 - (2) Those participants in an authorized worshipping community who are received by affirmation of faith or adult baptism shall be recorded as members in the congregation of record (cited immediately above) for the duration of participation in the authorized worshipping community.

- (3) Those participants in an authorized worshipping community who already are members of an existing congregation shall continue to be listed as members of such an existing congregation during the period of their participation in the authorized worshipping community.

5. PROVISIONS FOR PROPERTY, FINANCES, AND INSURANCE

- a. Care must be taken to assure appropriate maintenance, insurance, management, liability protection, exemption from state and local taxes, and other matters.
- b. If title to any real property is held in the name of the synod, but leased to the community, arrangements may be developed through the ~~Division for~~Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit to provide insurance coverage.
- c. Each authorized worshipping community is to make provision for bond coverage for the handling of finances in the authorized worshipping community.

6. PROCEDURES

The authorized worshipping community:

- a. May select a steering committee from the list of participants to work with the synodically designated leader.
- b. Should develop and approve an annual spending plan, including the commitment to 15 percent of all offerings to benevolence ("mission support").
- c. Should function under a governing document that includes: fully and without alteration or amendment the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; a statement of the community's relationship to the synod; agreement to be served by leadership appointed or called by the synod; agreement to

be subject to the discipline of this church; agreement to be reviewed by the synod and the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit annually to determine the next year's status; and any definition of internal organization and decision-making.

- d. May elect representation to the Synod Assembly, if such a provision is made in the synod's constitution.

7. CHANGING STATUS

Status may be shifted from a synodically authorized worshiping community to a congregation under development or a recognized congregation:

- a. When the population of the community has sufficient potential to warrant full-time mission development, this ministry may be declared a congregation under development by the synod and the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit.
- b. When the participants of this ministry are of a sufficient number and leadership ability and when they have fulfilled the organizing steps leading to recognition and reception as a congregation, then the synod and the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit may complete the process for the recognition and reception of a congregation of this church, in accord with the churchwide constitutional provision 9.25.

8. IN EVENT OF DISCONTINUANCE OF AUTHORIZATION

- a. A plan, effective upon discontinuance of authorization, should be established for the transfer of any remaining participants to regular membership in congregations of this church.
- b. Arrangements, in consultation with the synod, should be made for the orderly disposition of any interests in real estate, other than capital items, supplies and other material, and the payment of all debts.
- c. Arrangements and historical materials of the chapel should be gathered and transferred to the synod for archival filing.
- d. The corporation of the formerly authorized community must be legally dissolved.

Revised policy adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America April 6, 2003, and updated April 14, 2007, to reflect constitutional amendments and the new churchwide structure

ELCA AUTHORIZATION FORM

*[To establish Exemption from Federal Income Tax
under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code]*

The annual filing for our exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will be made by ELCA for its worshipping communities/chapels. An ELCA authorized worshipping community/chapel is eligible for inclusion in the group exemption status provided it has: (1) authorized ELCA to include it; and (2) provided the necessary federal employer identification number ("EIN").

The EIN is the nine-digit number assigned to you by the IRS. It usually consists of two digits followed by a dash and seven more digits, e.g., 41-1234567. This number is used for payment of the salary and benefits of the pastor or other leader serving the authorized worshipping community/chapel.

While a worshipping community/chapel can have exempt status from federal income tax without being included under the ELCA Group Exemption Determination, the ELCA would not be able provide you with the necessary certification letter unless the worshipping community/chapel has provided its authorization and has been included in one of our filings. Accordingly, if you wish to be included under our group exemption determination, please complete the form below, and return it prior to **October 20** to:

Office of the Secretary - Legal Department
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago IL 60631

Worshipping Community [or]
Chapel Corporate Name _____ ELCA ID# _____
Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Preferred Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____
Federal Employer Identification Number: ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
Person Completing Form: **(Please Print)** _____ Position _____

The worshipping community/chapel identified above is affiliated with, and subject to the general supervision or control of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and authorizes Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to request that the organization be included in the Internal Revenue Service group exemption status whereby the organization will be determined to be exempt from federal income taxation pursuant to §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Date: _____ Signature: _____
(Please Sign)

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Election of the Presiding Bishop

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot (ELCA 19.31.01.a.).

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

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, a forum shall be held in which the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot are invited to respond to questions submitted by voting members. From the questions submitted by voting members, the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding officers, shall select a sample of questions and determine the process to be followed in the forum. An individual nominee may choose to respond to those questions he or she wishes to address. Each response shall be no longer than 90 seconds. The forum shall be limited to 60 minutes.

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

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

Election of the Vice President

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

previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.b.).

Prior to the third ballot for vice president, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Each of the seven nominees (plus ties) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions as determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to 90 seconds.

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

Election of the Secretary

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

Prior to the third ballot for secretary, biographical data will be distributed for the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Each of the seven nominees (plus ties) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions as determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to 90 seconds.

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

Majority Required for Election

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

Breaking Ties

On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.61.198.a.).

PART SIXTEEN: Status of Reports

Assembly Reports

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

Reports of the Presiding Bishop and Secretary of This Church

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

Status of Reports

All reports published in the *Pre-Assembly Report* shall be treated as having been received by the assembly without formal vote.

Distribution of Materials

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

PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines

August 7, 2007

10:45 A.M. Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of responses to synodical memorials
Substitute responses to synodical memorials

August 8, 2007

10:45 A.M. Amendments to the social statement
Constitutional amendments
Bylaw amendments
Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of recommended constitutional amendments

2:00 P.M. Nominations from the floor

August 9, 2007

10:45 A.M. Non-germane resolutions
2:00 P.M. First Common Ballot

August 10, 2007

8:30 A.M. Amendments to 2008-2009 Budget Proposal
6:00 P.M. Second Common Ballot

PART EIGHTEEN: Special Committees and Officials for Assembly

►Agenda: The Agenda Committee shall assist the presiding bishop in the preparation of the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly.

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

►Program and Worship: The Program and Worship Committee shall assist the presiding bishop in the preparation for the program and worship at the Churchwide Assembly.

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

Additional Appointments

Additional officials or committees (sergeants-at-arms, parliamentarians, chairs for hearings, chairs for unit lunches, tellers, pages, etc.) of the Churchwide Assembly shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

PART NINETEEN: Hearings

Certain proposals that are scheduled for assembly action or information are the subject of hearings. Voting members, advisory members, other members, resource members, official visitors, and other categories approved by the Churchwide Assembly may attend with voice. Others may attend only if space permits and shall have no voice. Hearings have no legislative authority.

The chair of the hearing shall endeavor to maintain decorum and order and may call upon the assistance of sergeants-at-arms. Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

PART TWENTY: Other Matters

College Corporation Meetings

The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly also constitute the voting members of certain college corporations that hold meetings as part of the agenda of the assembly. The assembly will recess to conduct the corporation meeting(s) and reconvene at the conclusion of the corporation meeting(s), or at the beginning of the next scheduled session of the assembly. Quorum requirements for college corporation meetings are specified in the governing documents of each college. The quorum requirement for the Churchwide Assembly does not apply to college corporation meetings.

Electronic Devices

Use of cell phones, "Blackberries," and other wireless electronic communication devices in the plenary hall during assembly sessions is precluded. Cell phones, pagers, and other such electronic devices must be turned off in the plenary hall and worship center throughout the course of the assembly.

Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly

Introduction

These “Rules of Organization and Procedure” serve several purposes. One is to bring together in one place all of the provisions of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, as well as “standing” rules that describe the composition, functions, and responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly. This may be of special assistance to voting members attending their first Churchwide Assembly.

Bylaw 12.31.09. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* specifies that parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, “unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.” Experience at prior Churchwide Assemblies has demonstrated that certain parliamentary rules of *Robert’s Rules of Order* are best modified for the expeditious conduct of business at the assembly. These modifications, as well as numerous other procedural matters not covered by *Robert’s*, are a second purpose of these rules.

A third purpose is to adopt as part of the Rules of Procedure provisions from continuing resolutions related to the assembly. Thus adopted, a two-thirds vote will be required for their amendment or suspension as pertaining to business at this assembly.

Adoption of these rules will follow the procedure required by *Robert’s Rules of Order*. The Church Council’s recommendation to adopt will be the main motion before the assembly.

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Recommended for

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Assembly Action:

To adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that already are in force):

PART ONE: Authority and Duties

Authority of the Churchwide Assembly

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

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

Any matter for which adoption by a vote of two-thirds of those voting in a prior Churchwide Assembly was required by the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall require a two-thirds vote to be amended or repealed by a subsequent Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.).

Duties of the Churchwide Assembly

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

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

Assembly Presiding Officer

The presiding bishop shall preside at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

The vice president shall serve . . . in the event the bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.31.).

Assembly Secretary

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

Notice of Meeting

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

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

Agenda

The presiding bishop shall provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

Program and Worship

The arrangements for agenda, program, and worship shall be under the supervision of the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.04.).

Arrangements

Physical arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

PART TWO: Members of Assembly

Assembly Voting Members

Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 5,800 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synodical bishop, who is *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. There shall be at least two voting members from each synod. The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect (ELCA 12.41.11.).

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

The total number of voting members at the 2007 Churchwide Assembly is 1,071.

Eligibility to Serve as Voting Member

Each voting member of the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church and shall cease to be a member of the assembly

if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. The criterion for voting membership in the congregation from which the voting member is elected shall be in effect regarding minimum age for that voting member (ELCA 12.41.13.).

Certification of Voting Members

The secretary of each synod shall submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly (ELCA 12.41.12.).

Seating of Alternate Voting Members

If a voting member elected by the Synod Assembly is unable to serve, the name of an eligible person chosen by the Synod Council shall be submitted by the secretary of the synod to the secretary of this church. If a vacancy occurs or exists within 30 days or less of the convening of the Churchwide Assembly or during the meeting of the Churchwide Assembly, the synodical bishop may submit the name of an eligible person to the secretary of this church. The individual whose name is submitted to the secretary of this church shall be registered and seated by the Credentials Committee as a voting member from the synod (ELCA 12.41.12.).

Inclusive Representation

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

The term, "persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English," shall be understood to mean African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting this church's commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work (ELCA 5.01.C00.).

Additional Voting Members Provided

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

	<i>Additional Members</i>
Synod	
Caribbean	2
<i>Stipulation:</i> Both persons must be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English (total voting members from synod would be four: two clergy, including bishop, one lay woman and one lay man)	

Alaska	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be an Alaska Native person	
Arkansas-Oklahoma	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English	
West Virginia-Western Maryland	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English	
Slovak Zion	1
<i>Stipulation:</i> Must be a lay person	

Assembly Properly Constituted

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

Advisory Members

Members of the Church Council and board chairpersons or their designees, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Executive directors of churchwide units, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.31.).

Advisory members shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.32.).

Other Members

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

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

In addition, one faculty member of each seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, appointed by the president, shall serve as a resource person with voice but not vote.

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

An individual whose term of office as a bishop of a synod either commences or expires during the course of the assembly shall have the privilege of seat and voice, but not vote, during that portion of the assembly before commencement or after termination of such term.

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

Resource Members

Resource members shall be persons recommended by the presiding bishop of this church or by the Church Council who, because of their position or expertise, can contribute to the work of the Churchwide Assembly. Resource members shall have voice only with respect to matters within their expertise, but not vote.

Official Visitors

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

Access to Seating

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

Assembly Costs

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

PART THREE: Procedure and Quorum

Parliamentary Procedure

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

(Note: the 10th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, *Newly Revised*, is, therefore, the governing parliamentary law of this church, except as otherwise provided.)

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

Proxy and Absentee Voting Precluded

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

Obtaining the Floor

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

Speeches

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to three minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.

Alternating Speeches

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

To facilitate alternating speeches, assembly members awaiting recognition at the floor microphones shall approach the appropriate microphone (marked green for those in favor of the pending matter on the floor; marked red for those opposed to the pending matter on the floor).

Purpose and Use of 'White Card'

A white card in the registration packet of voting members is to be used to identify a member who wishes to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order. Except when authorized by *Robert's Rules of Order* or these rules, voting members seeking to bring a motion shall line up at any microphone and await recognition by the chair.

Motion to Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted at This Assembly

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required to rescind or to amend something previously adopted during this Churchwide Assembly.

Suspending or Revising the Rules

After the adoption of the Rules of Organization and Procedure and any amendments thereto offered prior to the adoption of the Rules, any further amendment to, revision in, or suspension of, the Rules shall always require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

Moving the Previous Question

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

Applause

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

Departing from Agenda

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

A motion to alter the agenda shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Unfinished Business

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

Quorum

At least one-half of the persons elected as voting members must be present at a meeting to constitute a

quorum for the legal conduct of business. If such a quorum is not present, those voting members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place, provided that only those persons eligible to vote at the original meeting may vote at the adjourned meeting (ELCA 12.31.07.).

Absence of Members

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

Audit of Credentials Report

At the request of the chair of the Credentials Committee or of the assembly, the chair may order an audit of the report of the Credentials Committee. When so ordered, the Credentials Committee will provide the bishop of each synod with a list of the registered voting members from such synod. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall then make appropriate corrections on such list and certify the accuracy of the list with such corrections as may be indicated. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall promptly return the certified list to the chair of the Credentials Committee.

PART FOUR: Committees of Assembly

Mandated Committees

The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, and a Nominating Committee (ELCA 12.51.).

Reference and Counsel Committee

A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted which are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly (ELCA 12.51.11.).

Memorials Committee

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

Nominating Committee

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

The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that at least two of the voting membership of the Church Council shall have been younger than 30 years of age at the time of their election (ELCA 19.21.A98.).

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

Other Committees

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

Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

Elections Committee

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

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

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

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

Credentials Committee

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

PART FIVE: Voting Procedures

Voting by Electronic Device

Voting generally shall occur through use of an electronic device at each voting member's seat.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Division of the House

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

Various Methods of Voting

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

Each voting member's registration packet contains a ballot pad of numbered ballots. Each voting member is responsible for this pad. No replacement of ballot pads or of any numbered ballot will be made. When directed by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the ballot pad shall be used. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the ballot pad that is to be used for a particular vote. Failure to use the correctly numbered ballot will result in an invalid ballot. These ballots should not be folded and will be collected at the voting member's table in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

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

PART SIX: Relation of Assembly to Church Council and Churchwide Units

Relationship to Church Council

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

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

- a. the actions of the Church Council do not conflict with the actions of and policies established by the Churchwide Assembly; and

- b. the Church Council is not precluded by constitutional or bylaw provisions from taking action on the matter (ELCA 14.13.).

Responsibilities of Church Council

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

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

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

The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections as specified in this constitution and bylaws for churchwide units to assure conformity with established criteria (ELCA 14.21.22.).

The Church Council shall report its actions to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.08.).

Status of Church Council Recommendations

The recommendation of the Church Council with respect to any proposal by a churchwide unit or any other matter shall be treated as a motion made and seconded, unless the Church Council shall otherwise determine.

Relationship to Churchwide Units

Each unit shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the governing documents of this church and with Churchwide Assembly actions (ELCA 16.12.; see also 16.31.02., 16.41.03., 17.41.05., 17.51.03., 17.61.05., 17.61.A05.e.).

Relationship to the Board of Pensions

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve the documents governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their pension accumulations (ELCA 17.61.01.).

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

[The Board of Pensions] manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes, and

shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts (ELCA 17.61.A05.a.).

[The Board of Pensions] report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 17.61.A05.e.).

PART SEVEN: Motions and Resolutions

Written Motions Required

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

Nature of Motions

►Germane Resolutions: A resolution that is germane to the matter before the assembly may be offered by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair.

►Non-Germane Resolutions: Any resolution not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda must be submitted to the secretary of this church in writing prior to the established deadline (*see* PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*). Each resolution must be supported in writing by one other voting member. At least 24 hours must elapse before such resolution may be considered in plenary session. The secretary shall refer such resolution to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which may:

- (a) Recommend approval;
- (b) Recommend referral to a unit of this church;
- (c) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly; or
- (d) Recommend that the assembly decline the proposed resolution.

►Same or Similar Subjects: The Committee of Reference and Counsel may group together in a single recommendation resolutions on the same or similar subjects. A resolution on the same subject as a recommendation already on the agenda of the assembly, such as a memorial, will not be submitted to the assembly for separate action by the Committee of Reference and Counsel. The chair of the committee will inform the voting member of the committee's decision.

►Beyond Deadline for Submission: Any resolution not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda that might be submitted by a voting member, because of circumstances that develop during the assembly and cannot be submitted to the secretary of this church prior to the established deadline (*see* PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*) must be submitted to the secretary in writing and supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolutions to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, which may:

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

- (e) Recommend that the assembly decline the proposed resolution.

Consideration of a resolution submitted beyond the deadline will require suspension of the rules prior to presentation of the matter to voting members by the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

►On Societal Issues: In its recommendation, the Reference and Counsel Committee, following consultation with the Church in Society program unit, shall inform the Churchwide Assembly when a resolution requires action on a societal issue for which this church does not have an established social policy. Should such motion or resolution be adopted by the Churchwide Assembly, the matter shall be referred to the Church in Society unit, which shall bring to the next regular meeting of the Church Council a plan for appropriate implementation.

Substitute Motions

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted or rejected.

PART EIGHT: Memorials from Synodical Assemblies

Status of Committee's Recommendations

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the passage of a memorial considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the memorial recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the memorial(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended referral of a memorial(s), the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended that the assembly decline a memorial(s) without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or closely related subject, the memorial, if then moved by a voting member from the synod originating the memorial and seconded, shall be the main motion, and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

En Bloc Resolution in Response to Certain Memorials

The responses to the synod memorials, as recommended by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc*¹ resolutions when so proposed by the Memorials Committee.

¹Adoption of several motions by a single assembly resolution; sometimes known as an omnibus bill or resolution.

If a voting member desires the assembly to discuss a synodical memorial or the Memorials Committee's response that is proposed for *en bloc* consideration, she or he may request that it be removed from the proposed *en bloc* resolution, provided the member's request is supported by ten other voting members. Such request shall be made in accordance with the following paragraph. The assembly then will consider and vote separately on the proposed response of the Memorials Committee. After removals, the *en bloc* resolution shall be voted upon without amendments or debate.

► **Separate Consideration:** To call for such separate consideration, a voting member must submit written notification to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines below*) on the form entitled Notice Related to Recommendations of the Memorials Committee. A copy of that form is included on page three of the Report of the Memorials Committee. Additional forms will be available from the secretary's deputy.

► **Substitute Proposal:** With respect to any recommendation made by the Memorials Committee in a printed report distributed to the assembly members prior to, or at the first business session of the assembly, a voting member of the assembly may offer a substitute motion to the committee's recommendation only if such member has given written notice by the deadline. For such written notice, a voting member who desires to offer a substitute to the recommendation of the Memorials Committee must complete the form, Notice Related to Recommendations of the Memorials Committee, and submit it to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (*see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines below*). In addition, the text of the proposed substitute should be submitted on a Motion Form to the secretary or the secretary's deputy.

Consultation with at least one of the co-chairs of the Memorials Committee is required when a substitute will be moved and is recommended when any other amendment will be proposed to the response recommended by the Memorials Committee.

Recommendation on Same Matter

A voting member's motion or resolution dealing with the same or similar matter that is a subject being reported by the Memorials Committee cannot be considered prior to the Memorials Committee's recommendation and motion with respect to that matter. This rule does not apply to a motion or resolution that proposes an amendment to a constitutional provision, bylaw, or continuing resolution.

PART NINE: Recommendations of the Committee of Reference and Counsel

Status of Committee's Recommendations

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended the approval of a resolution considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the resolution recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the resolution(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended referral of a resolution(s), the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended that the assembly decline a proposed resolution without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or closely related subject, the voting member's resolution, if then moved by that voting member and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

PART TEN: Amendments to and Votes on Major Statements

Deadline for Submission

Any amendment to a major statement must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church prior to the established deadline (*see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines below*).

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

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

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

Vote to Adopt Social Statements

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

A social statement, which is developed by the appropriate churchwide unit and presented to the Churchwide Assembly as a proposed social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall require for adoption a vote of two-thirds of those voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly. The text of a proposed social statement shall be approved and recommended to the assembly by the Church Council (ELCA 12.12.01.).

Voting on Ecumenical Proposals for Church-to-Church Agreements

This church may establish official church-to-church relationships and agreements. Establishment of such official relationships and agreements shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 8.71.).

Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Task Force Reports

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to them that require amendment of a constitution or bylaw provision for implementation.

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from a task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to them that would establish for this church a new practice or policy that is contrary to an existing policy that has been adopted by the Church Council upon recommendation of a board or committee, as authorized by the constitution or bylaws of this church.

PART ELEVEN: Nominations

Nominations Desk

Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church (ELCA 19.61.B98.a.).

A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure. This form also is included in each voting member's registration materials (ELCA 19.61.B98.b.).

Information and additional forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk on Monday, August 6, 2007, from NOON to 4:30 P.M. and from 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M., on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., and on Wednesday, August 8, 2007, from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Congregational Membership

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

Term Limit

Other than elections of officers and executive directors of units, elections shall be for one six-year term, without consecutive re-election, and with one-third of the members of the Church Council and of each board, program committee, or advisory committee elected each biennium (ELCA 19.04.).

Nominations Form

The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require (ELCA 19.61.B98.c.).

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

- 1) In the case of a lay person, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership, and
- 2) In the case of an ordained minister, the synod on whose roster such ordained minister's name is maintained (ELCA 19.61.B98.d.).

Making Floor Nominations

Floor nominations for positions on a board or committee of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least ten other voting members. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other churchwide committee to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least twenty other voting members (ELCA 19.61.C05.a.).

A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure (ELCA 19.61.C05.b.).

Nominations from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, secretary) shall be made by filing the completed prescribed form with the Nominations Desk on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., or on Wednesday, August 8, 2007, from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk (ELCA 19.61.C05.c.).

For Boards and Committees:

Restrictions on Nominations

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each board or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.02.).

It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to make certain that every synod has at least one person serving on the churchwide boards or committees. Among those persons elected by the assembly, no more than two persons from any one synod shall serve on any one board or committee (ELCA 19.21.04.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on churchwide boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.D05.a.).

A former full-time or part-time employee of the churchwide organization shall not be eligible, for a minimum of six years subsequent to such employment, for nomination or election to the board or committee related to the churchwide unit in which the employee served (ELCA 19.61.J00.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met (ELCA 19.61.D05.b.).

For Church Council: Restrictions on Nominations

Each biennium the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. The Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than one member of the Church Council from a synod nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time. The Church Council shall have at least one member from each region. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected (ELCA 19.02.).

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.02.).

Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.E05.).

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the first half of the biennium preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a

rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit a replacement name from the same synod as the original nominee. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 19.21.B05.).

For Nominating Committee: Restrictions on Nominations

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.21.01.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.61.F98.a.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated (ELCA 19.61.F98.b.).

PART TWELVE: Election Procedures

Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot

The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used (ELCA 19.61.G02.a.).

In each case in which there are floor nominations, there shall be a preliminary ballot that shall include the names of the nominees presented by the Nominating

Committee or the Church Council, and the person or persons nominated from the floor. The names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the final ballot (ELCA 19.21.03.).

For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod (ELCA 19.61.G02.b.).

Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms for the second common ballot will be in the same manner as the first common ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.c.).

Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synod bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.G02.d.).

Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.e.).

A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket (ELCA 19.61.G02.f.).

Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked (ELCA 19.61.G02.g.).

Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session (ELCA 19.61.G02.h.).

Ballot forms shall not be folded (ELCA 19.61.G02.i.).

Marked ballot forms must be deposited at the designated Ballot Stations at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held (ELCA 19.61.G02.j.).

If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot (ELCA 19.61.G02.k.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure (ELCA 19.61.G02.l.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the established deadline (*see* PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*).

On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes (ELCA 19.61.G02.m.).

Unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure or as otherwise ordered by the assembly (ELCA 19.61.G02.n.).

Unless either otherwise ordered by the assembly or the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the established deadline (*see* PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*).

On the second ballot, whether by common ballot or by electronic device, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first

position on the ticket shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.G02.o.).

Majority Required for Election

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

Breaking Ties

On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for her or his vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for his or her vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted (ELCA 19.61.I98.b.).

On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.61.I98.c.).

PART THIRTEEN: Budget Proposals

Budget Procedures

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

At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget (ELCA 15.11.A04.d.).

A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and the treasurer of this church as an *ex officio* member with voice but not vote in the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer (ELCA 14.41.A05.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.05.).

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

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

Proposed amendments to the budget must be submitted to the secretary of this church in writing prior to the established deadline (*see* PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*). Each amendment must be supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Budget and Finance Committee. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly, the Budget and Finance Committee shall report on the implication of each proposed amendment.

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

The assembly may refer to the Church Council for final action any amendment to the budget that has been presented in accordance with these Rules of Organization and Procedure. Such referral shall not preclude the assembly from acting on other budget amendments or from adopting the budget.

Appropriations

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

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

New Studies or Research Proposals

Each proposal by a voting member for a study or research project shall be made as a main motion and shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposal to the Research and Evaluation section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This section, in consultation with the churchwide unit to which the proposal is directed, will seek to determine the purpose, relationship to existing studies and research projects or current

programs, potential value, overall costs including staff requirements, and availability of budget and staff. The Research and Evaluation section may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposal prior to assembly adjournment and request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation at a later time and determine whether or not the study or research project should be initiated. The findings of the Research and Evaluation section shall be submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may make its recommendation to the assembly. If the recommendation calls for a new appropriation, the matter also shall be referred at once to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration and report to the Reference and Counsel Committee. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

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

Process for Initiation or Reconsideration of Social Statements

The process for initiating the preparation of a social statement or commencing a revision or removal of a social statement adopted at a prior Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by the document, "Policy and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns," which was adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly (CA97.05.21) and revised by the Church Council in 2006 (CC06.11.51).

PART FOURTEEN: Amendments to Governing Documents

Constitutional Amendments

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

- a) The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.
- b) An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly. Adoption of such an amendment shall require passage at two successive regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting (ELCA 22.11.).

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

A proposed constitutional amendment must be submitted in

writing to the secretary of this church prior to the established deadline (see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*).

Bylaw Amendments

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

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

A proposed bylaw amendment must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church prior to the established deadline (see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*). The secretary first shall report to the assembly any bylaw amendments so submitted and the amendments then shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Any floor amendment that is to be offered to a bylaw amendment proposed by the Church Council must be submitted in accordance with the requirement for bylaw amendments that are proposed by voting members.

Continuing Resolutions

Provisions relating to the administrative functions of this church shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions. Continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council (ELCA 22.31.).

Should the board or standing committee in question disagree with the action of the Church Council in amending a continuing resolution, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 15.31.03., 16.31.04., 16.41.07., and 17.61.07.).

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

Amendments to the Constitution for Synods

The *Constitution for Synods* contains mandatory provisions that incorporate and record therein provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating constitutional provisions of this church shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments to the constitution of this church. Amendments to mandatory provisions incorporating bylaw provisions of this church and amendments to non-mandatory provisions shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments to the bylaws of this church. Non-man-

datory provisions shall not be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church (ELCA 10.13.).

An amendment to the *Constitution for Synods* may be proposed only by a main motion.

Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations

A *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be provided by this church. Amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in ELCA Chapter 22 for amendments of the bylaws of this church (ELCA 9.53.02.).

An amendment to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* may be proposed only by a main motion.

En Bloc Resolution for Amendments to Governing Documents

Amendments to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as recommended by the Church Council in a printed report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc*² resolutions when so proposed by the Church Council.

If a voting member desires the assembly to discuss a particular amendment that is included in the *en bloc* resolutions, she or he may request that the particular amendment be removed from the proposed *en bloc* resolutions, provided the member's request is supported by ten other voting members. Such request shall be made in accordance with the following paragraph. The assembly then will consider and vote separately on the particular proposed amendment. After removals, the *en bloc* resolutions shall be voted upon without amendments or debate.

To call for such separate consideration, a voting member, with the support of ten other voting members, must submit written notification to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline (see PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines *below*) on the form entitled *Notice Related to Proposed Amendment to the Governing Documents*. This form may be obtained from the secretary's deputy seated to the left of the speakers' platform.

Notice shall be given by the secretary of this church to the assembly of which constitutional provisions or bylaw proposals have been removed from the *en bloc* resolutions by specific voting members.

Reconsideration or Rescission Prohibited

After the adoption by the assembly of a constitutional or bylaw amendment, a motion for reconsideration or a motion to rescind such action is not in order.

PART FIFTEEN: Elections of Officers

Election Procedures

Set forth hereafter are the procedures for the elections of the presiding bishop, the vice president, and the secretary, whether

²Adoption of several motions by a single assembly resolution; sometimes known as an omnibus bill or resolution.

or not there will be an election at this assembly for any of these positions. Elections are required because of completion of the specified term for a position or when a vacancy otherwise occurs.

Restrictions on Nominations for Officers

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

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

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

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

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

The vice president shall serve without salary (ELCA 11.33. and 13.32.02.).

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

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

The secretary may be either an ordained minister or a lay person.

Ecclesiastical Ballot Defined

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

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

determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents (ELCA 19.61.A94.).

Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot

For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from the synod (ELCA 19.61.H98.a.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.b.).

On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, synod, residence, etc. (ELCA 19.61.H98.c.).

On the third and subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name (ELCA 19.61.H98.d.).

A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.e.).

Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so (ELCA 19.61.H98.f.).

Written ballots shall not be folded (ELCA 19.61.H98.g.).

Written ballots will be collected from the voting members in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair (ELCA 19.61.H98.h.).

When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot (ELCA 19.61.H98.i.).

Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting may be by means of electronic device (ELCA 19.61.H98.j.).

When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee (ELCA 19.61.H98.k.).

On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes (ELCA 19.61.H98.l.).

Election of the Presiding Bishop

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot (ELCA 19.31.01.a.).

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

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, a forum shall be held in which the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot are invited to respond to questions submitted by voting members. From the questions submitted by voting members, the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding officers, shall select a sample of questions and determine the process to be followed in the forum. An individual nominee may choose to the respond to those questions he or she wishes to address. Each response shall be no longer than 90 seconds. The forum shall be limited to 60 minutes.

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

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

Election of the Vice President

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

for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.31.01.b.).

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

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

Election of the Secretary

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

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

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

Majority Required for Election

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

Breaking Ties

On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.61.198.a.).

PART SIXTEEN: Status of Reports

Assembly Reports

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

Reports of the Presiding Bishop and Secretary of This Church

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

Status of Reports

All reports published in the *Pre-Assembly Report* shall be treated as having been received by the assembly without formal vote.

Distribution of Materials

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

PART SEVENTEEN: Deadlines

August 7, 2007

10:45 A.M. Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of responses to synodical memorials
Substitute responses to synodical memorials

August 8, 2007

10:45 A.M. Amendments to the social statement
Constitutional amendments
Bylaw amendments
Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of recommended constitutional amendments

2:00 P.M. Nominations from the floor

August 9, 2007

10:45 A.M. Non-germane resolutions
2:00 P.M. First Common Ballot

August 10, 2007

8:30 A.M. Amendments to 2008-2009 Budget Proposal
6:00 P.M. Second Common Ballot

PART EIGHTEEN: Special Committees and Officials for Assembly

►Agenda: The Agenda Committee shall assist the presiding bishop in the preparation of the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly.

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

►Program and Worship: The Program and Worship Committee shall assist the presiding bishop in the preparation for the program and worship at the Churchwide Assembly.

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

Additional Appointments

Additional officials or committees (sergeants-at-arms, parliamentarians, chairs for hearings, chairs for unit lunches, tellers, pages, etc.) of the Churchwide Assembly shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

PART NINETEEN: Hearings

Certain proposals that are scheduled for assembly action or information are the subject of hearings. Voting members, advisory members, other members, resource members, official visitors, and other categories approved by the Churchwide Assembly may attend with voice. Others may attend only if space permits and shall have no voice. Hearings have no legislative authority.

The chair of the hearing shall endeavor to maintain decorum and order and may call upon the assistance of sergeants-at-arms. Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

PART TWENTY: Other Matters

College Corporation Meetings

The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly also constitute the voting members of certain college corporations that hold meetings as part of the agenda of the assembly. The assembly will recess to conduct the corporation meeting(s) and reconvene at the conclusion of the corporation meeting(s), or at the beginning of the next scheduled session of the assembly. Quorum requirements for college corporation meetings are specified in the governing documents of each college. The quorum requirement for the Churchwide Assembly does not apply to college corporation meetings.

Electronic Devices

Use of cell phones, "Blackberries," and other wireless electronic communication devices in the plenary hall during assembly sessions is precluded. Cell phones, pagers, and other such electronic devices must be turned off in the plenary hall and worship center throughout the course of the assembly.

Report of the Planning and Evaluation Committee

Report of the Program and Services Committee

Social Statement on Education

Source: Church in Society

Background information: Exhibit K, Part 1

Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director for studies; Ron Duty, associate director for studies; Paul Dovre, task force co-chair

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:
To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:*

- 1. To adopt “Our Calling in Education” as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2006); and**

Faith Formation and Lifelong Learning

- 2. To embrace our legacy as a teaching and learning church with gratitude and new vigor, and to pray for God’s guidance and power to renew and live boldly our calling in education for a new century; and**
- 3. To call upon congregations and families to educate all generations in the faith and to be partners in creating and funding compelling and creative curricula and programs for all ages—children, youth, and adults—thus forming an environment of living faith; and**
- 4. To call upon members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to renew their calling in education as students, parents, educators, and citizens and to live out their baptismal vocation as lifelong learners in the faith and in their knowledge of the world; and**
- 5. To call upon the program units for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to continue and expand the provision of creative and comprehensive resources necessary to enable parents and congregations to help form the faith of all generations; and**
- 6. To call upon the Presiding Bishop, synodical bishops, and the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education units to work with Augsburg Fortress and other churchwide units persistently and persuasively to ensure that Christian education for all ages (adult, children, youth, and family ministry) is a priority in congregational life, seminary education, and synodical planning; and**
- 7. To call upon the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Vocation and Education, and Augsburg Fortress program units to work with synods, regions, congregations, rostered leaders, the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, Lutheran outdoor ministries, seminaries, and other groups and organizations to share best practices for Christian education and faith formation, and to encourage their use in congregations and other ministries; and**
- 8. To call upon ELCA seminaries and other teaching institutions of this church to continue their emphasis on preparing pastors, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, associates in ministry, and lay people for excellence in the practice of teaching Christian education and faith formation in service of lifelong learning; and**
- 9. To give thanks to God and recognize members who are educators in public, Lutheran, and other private schools at all levels of education, to encourage congregations to support them in their callings as educators, and to urge members and all expressions of this church to encourage youth and others to enter these callings; and**

Public Educational Institutions

- 10. To call upon all schools to prepare students for living in a complex and global society as persons who are capable of critical thinking, continuing personal growth and concern for others, family responsibility, civic participation, artistic appreciation, productive work, and financial responsibility; and**

11. To call upon members of this church to advocate for equitable access to an excellent education for all children and youth, to support early childhood education, their public schools, colleges, and universities, advocating for policies that provide adequate resources and their fair distribution for these educational institutions; and
12. To call upon members and congregations to develop strong connections with their public schools and to work with others to ensure high quality education for all students; and
13. To call upon this church's advocacy ministries to support legislative initiatives that improve public schools and excellent education for all students in ways that are consistent with this social statement and to support financial aid and tuition policies that provide more equitable access for low- and middle-income students to higher education; and

Lutheran Institutions

14. To recognize and affirm early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, and outdoor ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as part of this church's mission, and to call upon this church's leaders publicly and actively to support them; and
15. To call upon this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and lifelong learning partners to prepare and sustain leaders for schools and early childhood education centers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for them; to expect sponsoring congregations to ensure that their schools and early childhood education centers provide high quality Lutheran education; to encourage non-sponsoring congregations as well as synods to be in partnership with them; and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of addressing the challenges and opportunities facing ELCA schools and early childhood education centers; and
16. To call upon synods and congregations to support ELCA colleges and universities in their ministry of preparing people to fulfill their vocations in Church and world; to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to continue its support of ELCA colleges and universities through the convening of administrators and faculty; and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of furthering the respective and mutual ministries of ELCA colleges and universities and this church; and
17. To call upon synods and congregations to support campus ministries and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Lutheran campus ministry and developing a strategy to increase financial support, build new and stronger partnerships, and take such additional actions as may enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of this vital ministry; and
18. To affirm the Study of Theological Education, as approved by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, and its continuing value as a guide for the strengthening of the ELCA's theological education network; and

Social Statement Reception

19. To call upon the Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Vocation and Education units, in cooperation with other churchwide units, to provide leadership and consultation for synods, seminary clusters and networks, and congregations on the basis of this social statement; and
20. To call upon the Vocation and Education, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units, in consultation with the Church in Society unit, to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to develop educational resources to study and act upon this social statement; and
21. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to deepen the theoretical and practical understanding of our calling in education, through intellectual discourse and continued reflection; and

22. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement; and
23. To call upon the program units for Vocation and Education, Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Augsburg Fortress to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation of this social statement to the Church Council in 2009.

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible

Source: Office of the Presiding Bishop, Office of the Secretary; Vocation and Education unit
Background information: Agenda, pp. 25-29
Resource people: Mark Hanson, presiding bishop; Stan Olson, VE executive director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:
___To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:*

To rejoice with the whole Church of Jesus Christ in the revelation of God's Word conveyed to the people of every generation, declaring God's gifts of mercy and grace, forgiveness and hope, reconciliation and peace, and to confess that we often have failed to hear and heed the Word of God and to benefit from God's gifts; and

To give thanks for the Bible through which the Word of God has spoken to God's people throughout the ages; and

To remember with enduring esteem the multitudes throughout the ages who embraced the tradition received by the community of the faithful and passed to succeeding generations the glad news of God's steadfast love; and

To recall with gratitude the work of Martin Luther and that of the other reformers whose Word-inspired renewal grew from their study of Scripture; and

To acknowledge with joy the power of the Word of God in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, evident in many ways, including:

- a. The affirmations of the constitutional Confession of Faith that
 - + "Jesus Christ is the Word of God,"
 - + "The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God...,"
 - + "The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God" (provision 2.02.a, b, and c), and
 - + "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life" (provision 2.03.);
- b. The empowered proclamation, study, teaching, worship, meditation, song, community, and service through which the people of this church daily hear, share, and live the witness of Scripture;
- c. The members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, agencies, institutions, and networks of this church, and their planning and programs, including the ELCA Plan for Mission adopted in 2005, which are undergirded by the Bible and seek faithfully to express God's Word; and

To recognize that one of the six constitutionally stated purposes for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies is to nurture members "in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world" (provision 4.02.e.); and

To embrace the passion and commitment that is richly shared among people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the witness of Scripture in forming and guiding the members of this church individually and corporately in daily life; and

To express the hope and desire that—in the time leading up to the ELCA’s 25th anniversary in 2012 and to the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017—this church will be sustained and renewed by the Word of God, thereby fostering deeper and broader use and understanding of Scripture for the life of disciples; and

To recognize and give thanks that the Word of God speaks and is valued throughout Christ’s Church and that, globally and ecumenically, there are other movements and occasions for renewed attention to the authority of the Bible that will inform and enhance our own understanding, including the work already begun and anticipated in the Lutheran World Federation, the recent proposal among the U.S. Reformed churches for a Lutheran-Reformed consultation on the authority and role of the Word of God in the life of the churches, and the Roman Catholic Church’s intention to celebrate in 2015 the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II statement *Dei Verbum*; and

To acknowledge with gratitude the action of the 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly in memorializing this church to undertake a renewed study of the authority of Scripture in the life of the Church.

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

To invite and encourage all members, expressions, institutions, and partners of this church to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being formed by God’s Word; and

To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative-identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture; and

To urge that this initiative be designed and carried out in ways that affirm the Bible’s power through the work of the Holy Spirit to speak in all settings and to all ages, with attention to individual and corporate use of the Bible by members and leaders in worship, devotion, study, proclamation, teaching, moral formation, addressing social issues, and evangelizing; and

To commit the churchwide organization to substantial engagement in this initiative in extensive collaboration with synods and congregations; and

To request that the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—who “as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church” (provision 13.21.)—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the Vocation and Education unit in partnership with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, as the publishing ministry of this church, and many others; and

To anticipate the wide availability and use of a rich constellation of existing and new resources as well as the creative use of new means of communication, mindful of the global and ecumenical context in exploration of the nature and authority of Scripture in the life of individuals and the whole Church; and

To affirm funding of the churchwide organization’s share of this “Book of Faith” initiative primarily through the regular operating budget in recognition not only that this initiative is of foundational and ongoing importance, but also in confidence that support for mission will grow from congregations through synods for churchwide ministries; and

To look beyond the time and scope of the “Book of Faith” initiative to what can be built on that work and to other ways in which God’s Word will continually renew this church.

Affirmation of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Source: Worship and Liturgical Resources

Background information: Agenda, pp. 29-31

Resource person: Michael Burk, executive

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To remember with joy that one of the six primary purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to “worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service,” (ELCA constitutional provision 4.02.d); and

To applaud the 1997 statement of this church, *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, for the way that statement has contributed to the development of worship resources and continues to provide guidance for the ministry of Word and sacrament; and

To recall with gratitude the action of the Church Council in 2000 that authorized the “ELCA Next Generation of Worship Resources,” the churchwide effort that came to be known as *Renewing Worship*; and

To acknowledge the subsequent action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly regarding the ways in which the *Renewing Worship* effort:

- 1. reinforced the importance of widespread participation in the ongoing work of worship renewal;**
- 2. affirmed a collaborative approach to the development of worship resources, drawing on the wisdom of individuals, congregations, pastors, musicians, synodical bishops, teaching theologians and other leaders, institutions and agencies;**
- 3. demonstrated this church’s commitment to thorough liturgical and theological review of materials intended for use in worshipping assemblies; and**
- 4. encouraged and allowed for the completion of the new primary book of worship, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and**

To express gratitude for the widespread participation in introductory events, and to give thanks for the many individuals and synodical teams who have provided leadership in introducing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and

To convey appreciation—through the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada—to the pastors, bishops, and many individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who contributed to the development and introduction of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and

To receive with thanksgiving *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and celebrate the ways in which it:

- bears the rich tradition of Christian worship practiced among Lutherans and, at the same time, seeks to renew that tradition in response to a generation of change in the Church and in the world;**
- reflects a body of prayer and song that are worthy to hold in common, consistent with the commitment to the treasury of Christian worship affirmed in the Lutheran confessions;**
- is grounded in Lutheran convictions about the centrality of the means of grace;**
- continues to emphasize that freedom and flexibility in worship is a Lutheran inheritance, and therefore the book is designed to make more transparent the principle of fostering unity without imposing uniformity;**
- represents the gifts of the breadth of the Church of Christ, and prizes the words and songs Lutherans hold in common with other Christians, while at the same time extending the particular accents of the Lutheran heritage as gifts to the whole Church; and**
- reflects the understanding that worship is fundamentally about what God does, bringing to expression how God nourishes the people of the Church for mission and accompanies them as they bear the**

creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world; and

To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ongoing work of renewing worship, understanding that:

- **worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;**
- **each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and**
- **worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the Church is called to serve.**

Churchwide Strategy on HIV and AIDS

Source: Global Mission and Church in Society

Background information: Agenda, pp. 31-35

Resource people: Rafael Malpica Padilla and Rebecca Larson, executive directors

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

WHEREAS, 65 million people have been infected with the HIV virus, of whom 25 million have died of AIDS since the late 1980s¹; and

WHEREAS, 2.9 million people died last year from AIDS and the number of people worldwide living with HIV and AIDS increased to 39.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the AIDS epidemic is a human tragedy of massive proportion, affecting individuals and families of all races, religions, economic status, and social position on all continents; and

WHEREAS, in a rare, unanimous, international consensus, the 189 nations signing the Declaration of Commitment at the 2001 United Nations General Assembly on HIV and AIDS described AIDS as one of the greatest development crises in human history and committed themselves to act nationally and internationally to stop the epidemic; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations 2006 High-Level Review Meeting on HIV and AIDS reaffirmed the 2001 General Assembly Declaration, acknowledged the failures of the past five years, and committed governments at a national level to develop national level targets to move towards universal access to comprehensive prevention programs, treatment, care, and support by 2010; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations 2006 High-Level Review Meeting on HIV and AIDS also committed governments to undertake "comprehensive reviews in 2008 and 2011, within the annual reviews of the General Assembly, of the progress achieved in realizing the [2001] Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS"; and

WHEREAS the 2006 G8 Summit in Gleneagles made a commitment to the goal of achieving universal access to treatment by 2010; and

WHEREAS, "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise" (2005-2010) is the theme of the World AIDS Campaign, with the goal to ensure that governments and organizations, including religious organizations and leaders, keep the promises they have made to respond to AIDS effectively; and

WHEREAS, the HIV and AIDS crisis has had a disproportionate impact on Sub-Saharan Africa, as evidenced by the following facts:

- **2.1 million—70 percent of AIDS-related deaths worldwide—occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa;**
- **nine percent of children under 15 in the region—over 12 million children— have lost one or more parent to AIDS;**
- **the highest HIV incidence rates in the world are found in southern Africa, with one-fifth to one-third**

¹ Statistics in this resolution have been taken from the UN AIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, 2006.

of adult populations in some countries being HIV-positive; and

WHEREAS, significant advances have been achieved both in knowledge about HIV and AIDS and in medical options for treatment since the virus was identified in the late 1980s; and

WHEREAS, some countries have been able to reduce the incidence rate within their populations through intentional and coordinated efforts involving governments, international organizations, churches, businesses, medical institutions, and non-governmental organizations; and

WHEREAS, the economic poverty of individuals, communities, and countries has a significant impact on the spread of HIV and often limits access to life-saving and life-prolonging drugs, nutrition, and therapies²; and

WHEREAS, the spread of HIV has led to the even greater economic impoverishment of already poor communities, especially on the African continent; and

WHEREAS, the AIDS epidemic is poised to expand dramatically in other parts of the world (e.g., parts of Asia and the Caribbean) unless intentional action is taken quickly; and

WHEREAS, although progress has been made in reducing the stigmatization related to HIV and AIDS, fear and prejudice continue to cause pain and exclusion for those living with the virus and their circle of family and friends; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA, in partnership with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners, has responded to the realities of HIV and AIDS within communities and throughout this country; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has a long history of ministry with both companion churches and ecumenical, interfaith, and community-based partners in Africa and other countries, and has been deeply engaged with them in ministries to and with persons living with HIV and AIDS; and

WHEREAS, many of the ELCA's companion churches in Africa requested that the ELCA increase its efforts and "go the second mile" to walk with them as they respond to the AIDS crisis and as they seek justice for those affected by this disease; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA affirmed Stand With Africa: A Campaign of Hope in 2001 and three years later made the campaign an ongoing emphasis within the ELCA World Hunger Appeal in order to have the resources better to assist companion churches and agencies engaged in HIV and AIDS ministries in Africa, while continuing to assist companions from other continents through ongoing ELCA ministries and World Hunger support; and

WHEREAS, through companion synod relationships, knowledge among ELCA members—both of the impact of HIV and AIDS on the ministries of companion churches and the possibilities for effective common action—has grown over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands that it is called both to respond through its ministries to the 1.4 million people living with HIV on this continent and to address the global crisis, both as a member of the Lutheran World Federation and as a part of the wider ecumenical community; and

WHEREAS, twenty-five years into the AIDS epidemic, the United Nations has called on the nations of the world to transform the global response to AIDS "from an episodic, crisis management approach to a thoughtful, long-term response that emphasizes the use of evidence-based strategies and recognizes the need for long-term commitment"³; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

Express its solidarity with all people who are living with HIV and AIDS and with their families, both

² According to the UN AIDS's analysis, less than a quarter of the 4.6 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa who need anti-retroviral therapy receive it.

³ UN AIDS, Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, 2006, p. 282.

in this country and throughout the world:

- recognizing and giving thanks for the gifts, skills, and experience that people living with HIV and AIDS bring to addressing the pandemic, and committing this church to work closely with them in its response;
- rejecting categorically the stigma and discrimination that are at times associated with HIV and AIDS;
- working to ensure universal access both to compassionate care and to effective treatment and prevention;
- engaging in education to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS; and
- providing a welcome in all aspects of church and congregational life to people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS; and

Convey its deep appreciation:

- to all those who provide care and support for those living with HIV and AIDS and those who seek a cure for this disease, in particular those members of this church who live out their Christian vocation as nurses, doctors, health researchers, and care providers;
 - to ELCA pastors and congregations actively engaged in ministry with people living with HIV and AIDS as they support, counsel, and advocate with them for just and compassionate action in the church and in the wider society;
 - to all those who have provided financial support to HIV and AIDS research and care, both in this country and throughout the world;
 - to all those ELCA members whose financial gifts have enabled the ELCA to walk with companion churches in their response to the AIDS crisis, in particular through their “second mile” giving to the World Hunger Appeal’s Stand With Africa campaign and companion synod action;
 - to Lutheran social ministry organizations, hospitals, health facilities, and voluntary organizations, including the Lutheran AIDS Network (LANET), that provide assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS as well as leadership in church and society on this issue;
 - to The Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, ecumenical agencies (both domestic and global), and others with which the ELCA partners to provide care, address the impact of HIV and AIDS in communities, prevent the further spread of the disease, and advocate with governments to step up their action in addressing this epidemic; and
 - to companion churches in other countries, with which the ELCA is privileged to walk in ministry, as they respond to often overwhelming human need resulting from the spread of HIV; and
- Commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a deeper engagement in addressing the AIDS**

epidemic through the development of a churchwide strategy for action in the coming decade, which will:

- build on the experience and commitments of the past and the strength of ELCA congregations, synods, churchwide structures, institutions, and agencies;
- utilize the best thinking of ELCA experts, practitioners, congregational leaders, related institutions and agencies, and people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as ecumenical and global companions, in the development of this strategy;
- express the ELCA’s commitment to work in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, in tandem with ecumenical partners both in this country and throughout the world;
- express the ELCA’s commitment to engage proactively with others of good will in civil society and in government as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
- continue to move from crisis management to a more integrated, effective, and sustainable long-term response to the AIDS epidemic; and

Encourage ELCA members, congregations, agencies and institutions, synods, and the churchwide organization, at the same time this strategy is being developed, to:

- continue and extend their ministries among and with people living with HIV and AIDS;
- pray for people directly affected by HIV and AIDS and for churches, communities, and governments, that they may have both the will and the wisdom to act boldly and effectively to address this crisis;
- intensify their support for the second-mile Stand With Africa campaign as well as the broader World Hunger Appeal, which enable this church to assist companions throughout the world as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
- advocate with the U.S. government, urging it to:
 1. demonstrate global leadership to achieve agreed international goals including universal access to treatment, care and prevention by 2010;
 2. contribute its proportionate share to fully fund The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;
 3. abolish its extraordinary requirements that make it difficult and painful for people living with HIV to receive a visa to enter the United States for any purpose, and prohibit discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS; and

Request that the Church in Society and Global Mission program units take the lead in developing this strategy, which will be brought to the Church Council for adoption in 2008 and reported to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

World Hunger Appeal

Source: Administrative Team; Church in Society; Development Services

Background information: Agenda, pp. 35-36

Resource person: Rebecca Larson and Don Hallberg, executive directors

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval: _____*

_____ To celebrate the milestone of more than \$20 million contributed in one year during fiscal 2006 to the World Hunger Appeal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

To give thanks to God for the generosity of members in reaching for the first-time this new level in annual giving to the World Hunger Appeal; and

To remember with thanksgiving the vision and commitment of ELCA predecessor church bodies in initiating the World Hunger Appeal in 1974; and

To rejoice in the fruitful efforts of churches as well as governmental and non-governmental agencies in the battle against hunger, resulting in fewer people numerically going to bed hungry in the world today than in 1974, in spite of the substantial increase in the population of the globe; and

To express abiding appreciation to those who have used wisely and effectively the funds provided through the World Hunger Appeal this church and its predecessors throughout the past 33 years, especially:

- a. the Lutheran World Federation, the 140-member communion of churches through which the ELCA joins in coordinated international efforts to respond to crises and engage in long-term, sustainable development work;
- b. Lutheran World Relief, a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), individual and parish groups in international relief, development, advocacy, and social responsibility;
- c. missionaries of the ELCA who witness to God's grace through their service and advocacy on behalf of persons living in extreme poverty;
- d. ecumenical partners and others of good will with whom this church serves in response to God's love in meeting human needs; and

- e. **those who serve through congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, community organizations, and Lutheran agencies and institutions advocating for persons experiencing hunger and living in poverty;**
To call upon each congregation of the ELCA to participate in the World Hunger Appeal and to invite members to contribute; and
To invite renewed efforts by members and congregations to reach, as soon as possible, a goal of \$25 million in annual giving by individuals and congregations to the World Hunger Appeal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ELCA Personnel Policies

Source: Human Resources
Background information: Agenda, pp. 54; Ex. I, Part 2)
Resource people: Else Thompson, director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*
To approve the revisions to the following ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies as detailed in Exhibit I, Part 2.

Message on Immigration

Source: Church in Society
Background information: Agenda, pp. 54
Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director for studies

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*
To authorize a delay in the development of a revised message on immigration by the Church in Society program unit, in cooperation with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and
To request that the new message on immigration be brought to the ELCA Church Council for consideration in April 2008, with a preliminary draft brought to the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council in November 2007; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the Rocky Mountain, Northeastern Ohio, New Jersey, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C. synods of this action.

“Following our Shepherd to Full Communion”

[Proposed Full-Communion Agreement between the Alaska Province and the East West Indies Province of the Moravian Church in America and the ELCA]

Source: Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations
Background information: Agenda, p. 54-54.2
Resource people: Randy Lee, director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*
To continue to rejoice in the relationship of full communion between this church and the Northern Province and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America; and
To recognize that these two provinces of the Moravian Church in America do not cover all the geographical territory encompassed by this church; and
To acknowledge that by extending the relationship of full communion as outlined in “Following Our

Shepherd to Full Communion” to the Alaska Province and to the East West Indies Province more people can participate in the closer working relationship allowed by full communion; and

To rejoice in the action of the East West Indies Province, which approved a relationship of full communion with this church by adopting “Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion”;

To encourage the Alaska Province to take a similar action;

To invite the Alaska Province and the East West Indies Province to appoint members to the Lutheran-Moravian Coordinating Committee in order to live into this relationship of full communion more effectively; and

To declare that a relationship of full communion exists between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the East West Indies Province of the Moravian Church in America and between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Alaska Province of the Moravian Church in America, pending approval by the Alaska Province.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Church in Society Biennial Program of Study

Source: Church in Society

Background information: Agenda p. 56

Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director of studies

Update on Development of Protocols

Source: “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns”

Resource people: Joseph Crippen; Judy Biffle; Norma Hirsch; Sandra Schlesinger; Rebecca Larson; Roger Willer

Proposed Changes to Personnel Policies

Section 7.4

Overtime

- A. ~~Overtime, when properly authorized by the immediate supervisor or unit or section executive, will be paid to all non-exempt employees. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay or equivalent time off. All non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay at the rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for time worked in excess of 40 hours in any normal work week.~~
- B. ~~Employees eligible for overtime pay will be paid at the rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for time worked in excess of 40 hours in any normal work week. Sick leave, personal leave, vacation time, and other absences from work as described in Section 11 will not be considered as time worked. Overtime is calculated using actual hours worked. Sick leave, personal leave, vacation time, community service, holidays and other types of leave referenced in these personnel policies do not count as hours worked.~~
- ~~Non-exempt employees required or requested to work on holidays will be compensated at double their regular rate of pay (and may not be required to work for more than eight hours per holiday).~~
- C. Under limited circumstances, a non-exempt employee may be granted time off in lieu of overtime pay, if it meets the criteria for compensatory leave set forth in policy 11.15, and both the supervisor and the employee agree to the arrangement.
- D. Supervisors have the right to manage an employee into a 40-hour workweek by altering the normal weekly work schedule.

Section 9.6

Time Off for Voting

~~Any employee entitled to vote at any general or special election will be allowed up to two hours of paid time off while the polls are open for the purpose of voting in the election, but only if the employee has requested the time off prior to the day of the election. Requests for such~~

~~time off for voting should be made to the employee's immediate supervisor.~~

Any employee, who is eligible to vote in national, state or local elections, is encouraged to exercise those voting privileges. Work schedules normally permit adequate time for an employee to vote, either before or after normal working hours. However, in unusual circumstances, an employee's work schedule or work commitments may make it impossible for him/her to vote during non-working hours. In this case, the employee's immediate supervisor may approve up to two consecutive hours of paid time off for the purpose of voting in the election. (The supervisor may specify the hours during which the employee may be absent.)

This time must be requested by the employee prior to the day of the election along with a signed statement indicating the specific circumstances which require the time off, to be retained with the employee's time records for the applicable month.

If an employee otherwise will have difficulty voting, he/she may wish to inquire with the Board of Elections (or other applicable state entity) about the possibility of voting early or by absentee ballot.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

Exhibit I, Part 2

Page 2

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Report of the Program and Services Committee

Social Statement on Education

Source: Church in Society

Background information: Exhibit K, Part 1

Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director for studies; Ron Duty, associate director for studies; Paul Dovre, task force co-chair

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

1. To adopt “Our Calling in Education” as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2006); and

Faith Formation and Lifelong Learning

2. To embrace our legacy as a teaching and learning church with gratitude and new vigor, and to pray for God’s guidance and power to renew and live boldly our calling in education for a new century; and
3. To call upon congregations and families to educate all generations in the faith and to be partners in creating and funding compelling and creative curricula and programs for all ages—children, youth, and adults—thus forming an environment of living faith; and
4. To call upon members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to renew their calling in education as students, parents, educators, and citizens and to live out their baptismal vocation as lifelong learners in the faith and in their knowledge of the world; and
5. To call upon the program units for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to continue and expand the provision of creative and comprehensive resources necessary to enable parents and congregations to help form the faith of all generations; and
6. To call upon the ~~presiding~~ bishop, synodical bishops, and the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education units to work with Augsburg Fortress and other churchwide units persistently and persuasively to ensure that Christian education for all ages (adult, children, youth, and family ministry) is a priority in congregational life, seminary education, and synodical planning; and
7. To call upon the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Vocation and Education, and Augsburg Fortress program units to work with synods, regions, congregations, rostered leaders, the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, Lutheran outdoor ministries, seminaries, and other groups and organizations to share best practices for Christian education and faith formation, and to encourage their use in congregations and other ministries; and
8. To call upon ELCA seminaries and other teaching institutions of this church to continue their emphasis on preparing pastors, diaconal ministers, deaconesses,

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- associates in ministry, and lay people for excellence in the practice of teaching Christian education and faith formation in service of lifelong learning; and
9. To give thanks to God and recognize members who are educators in public, Lutheran, and other private schools at all levels of education, to encourage congregations to support them in their callings as educators, and to urge members and all expressions of this church to encourage youth and others to enter these callings; and

Public Educational Institutions

10. To call upon all schools to prepare students for living in a complex and global society as persons who are capable of critical thinking, continuing personal growth and concern for others, family responsibility, civic participation, artistic appreciation, productive work, and financial responsibility; and
11. To call upon members of this church to advocate for equitable access to an excellent education for all children and youth, to support early childhood education, their public schools, colleges, and universities, advocating for policies that provide adequate resources and their fair distribution for these educational institutions; and
12. To call upon members and congregations to develop strong connections with their public schools and to work with others to ensure high quality education for all students; and
13. To call upon this church's advocacy ministries to support legislative initiatives that improve public schools and **ensure** excellent education for all students in ways that are consistent with this social statement and to support financial aid and tuition policies that provide more equitable access for low- and middle-income students to higher education; and

Lutheran Institutions

14. To recognize and affirm early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, and outdoor ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as part of this church's mission, and to call upon this church's leaders publicly and actively to support them; and
15. To call upon this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and lifelong learning partners to prepare and sustain leaders for schools and early childhood education centers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for them; to expect sponsoring congregations to ensure that their schools and early childhood education centers provide high quality Lutheran education; to encourage non-sponsoring congregations as well as synods to be in partnership with them; and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of addressing the challenges and opportunities facing ELCA schools and early childhood education centers; and
16. To call upon synods and congregations to support ELCA colleges and universities in their ministry of preparing people to fulfill their vocations in Church and world; to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to continue its support of ELCA colleges and universities through the convening of administrators and faculty; and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of furthering the

respective and mutual ministries of ELCA colleges and universities and this church; and

17. To call upon synods and congregations to support campus ministries and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the purpose of addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Lutheran campus ministry and developing a strategy to increase financial support, build new and stronger partnerships, and take such additional actions as may enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of this vital ministry; and
18. To affirm the Study of Theological Education, as approved by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, and its continuing value as a guide for the strengthening of the ELCA's theological education network; and

Social Statement Reception

19. To call upon the Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Vocation and Education units, in cooperation with other churchwide units, to provide leadership and consultation for synods, seminary clusters and networks, and congregations on the basis of this social statement; and
20. To call upon the Vocation and Education, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units, in consultation with the Church in Society unit, to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to develop educational resources to study and act upon this social statement; and
21. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to deepen the theoretical and practical understanding of our calling in education, through intellectual discourse and continued reflection; and
22. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement; and
23. To call upon the program units for Vocation and Education, Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Augsburg Fortress to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation of this social statement to the Church Council in 2009

Recommended Action:

To approve the amendments to the Social Statement on Education as printed in Exhibit K, Part 1.

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Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible

Source: Office of the Presiding Bishop, Office of the Secretary; Vocation and Education unit

Background information: Agenda, pp. 25-29

Resource people: Mark Hanson, presiding bishop; Stan Olson, VE executive director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

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To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

To rejoice with the whole Church of Jesus Christ in the revelation of God's Word conveyed to the people of every generation, declaring God's gifts of mercy and grace, forgiveness and hope, reconciliation and peace, and to confess that we often have failed to hear and heed the Word of God and to benefit from God's gifts; and

To give thanks for the Bible through which the Word of God has spoken to God's people throughout the ages; and

To remember with enduring esteem the multitudes throughout the ages who embraced the tradition received by the community of the faithful and passed to succeeding generations the glad news of God's steadfast love; and

To recall with gratitude the work of Martin Luther and that of the other reformers whose Word-inspired renewal grew from their study of Scripture; and

To acknowledge with joy the power of the Word of God in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, evident in many ways, including:

- a. The affirmations of the constitutional Confession of Faith that
 - + "Jesus Christ is the Word of God,"
 - + "The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God...,"
 - + "The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God" (provision 2.02.a, b, and c), and
 - + "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life" (provision 2.03.);
- b. The empowered proclamation, study, teaching, worship, meditation, song, community, and service through which the people of this church daily hear, share, and live the witness of Scripture;
- c. The members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, agencies, institutions, and networks of this church, and their planning and programs, including the ELCA Plan for Mission adopted in 2005, which are undergirded by the Bible and seek faithfully to express God's Word; and

To recognize that one of the six constitutionally stated purposes for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies is to nurture members "in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world" (provision 4.02.e.); and

To embrace the passion and commitment that is richly shared among people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the witness of Scripture in forming and guiding the members of this church individually and corporately in daily life; and

To express the hope and desire that—in the time leading up to the ELCA's 25th anniversary in 2012 and to the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017—this church will be sustained and renewed by the Word of God, thereby

fostering deeper and broader use and understanding of Scripture for the life of disciples; and

To recognize and give thanks that the Word of God speaks and is valued throughout Christ's Church and that, globally and ecumenically, there are other movements and occasions for renewed attention to the authority of the Bible that will inform and enhance our own understanding, including the work already begun and anticipated in the Lutheran World Federation, the recent proposal among the U.S. Reformed churches for a Lutheran-Reformed consultation on the authority and role of the Word of God in the life of the churches, and the Roman Catholic Church's intention to celebrate in 2015 the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II statement *Dei Verbum*; and

To acknowledge with gratitude the action of the 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly in memorializing this church to undertake a renewed study of the authority of Scripture in the life of the Church.

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

To invite and encourage all members, expressions, institutions, and partners of this church to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being formed by God's Word; and

To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative-identified as "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible"—with the goal of raising to a new level this church's individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture; and

To urge that this initiative be designed and carried out in ways that affirm the Bible's power through the work of the Holy Spirit to speak in all settings and to all ages, with attention to individual and corporate use of the Bible by members and leaders in worship, devotion, study, proclamation, teaching, moral formation, addressing social issues, and evangelizing; and

To commit the churchwide organization to substantial engagement in this initiative in extensive collaboration with synods and congregations; and

To request that the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—who "as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church" (provision 13.21.)—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the Vocation and Education unit in partnership with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, as the publishing ministry of this church, and many others; and

To anticipate the wide availability and use of a rich constellation of existing and new resources as well as the creative use of new means of communication, mindful of the global and ecumenical context in exploration of the nature and authority of Scripture in the life of individuals and the whole Church; and

To affirm funding of the churchwide organization's share of this "Book of Faith" initiative primarily through the regular operating budget in recognition not

only that this initiative is of foundational and ongoing importance, but also in confidence that support for mission will grow from congregations through synods for churchwide ministries; and

To look beyond the time and scope of the “Book of Faith” initiative to what can be built on that work and to other ways in which God’s Word will continually renew this church.

Affirmation of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Source: Worship and Liturgical Resources

Background information: Agenda, pp. 29-31

Resource person: Michael Burk, executive

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

To remember with joy that one of the six primary purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to “worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service,” (ELCA constitutional provision 4.02.d); and

To applaud the 1997 statement of this church, *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, for the way that statement has contributed to the development of worship resources and continues to provide guidance for the ministry of Word and sacrament; and

To recall with gratitude the action of the Church Council in 2000 that authorized the “ELCA Next Generation of Worship Resources,” the churchwide effort that came to be known as Renewing Worship; and

To acknowledge the subsequent action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly regarding the ways in which the Renewing Worship effort:

1. reinforced the importance of widespread participation in the ongoing work of worship renewal;
2. affirmed a collaborative approach to the development of worship resources, drawing on the wisdom of individuals, congregations, pastors, musicians, synodical bishops, teaching theologians and other leaders, institutions and agencies;
3. demonstrated this church’s commitment to thorough liturgical and theological review of materials intended for use in worshiping assemblies; and
4. encouraged and allowed for the completion of the new primary book of worship, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and

To express gratitude for:

- those who provided leadership and oversight to the various facets of developing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and
- the widespread participation in introductory events, and to give thanks for the many individuals and synodical teams who have provided leadership in introducing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and

To convey appreciation—through the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada—to the pastors, bishops, and many individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who contributed to the development and introduction of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*; and

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To receive with thanksgiving *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and celebrate the ways in which it:

- bears the rich tradition of Christian worship practiced among Lutherans and, at the same time, seeks to renew that tradition in response to a generation of change in the Church and in the world;
- reflects a body of prayer and song that are worthy to hold in common, consistent with the commitment to the treasury of Christian worship affirmed in the Lutheran confessions;
- is grounded in Lutheran convictions about the centrality of the means of grace;
- continues to emphasize that freedom and flexibility in worship is a Lutheran inheritance, and therefore the book is designed to make more transparent the principle of fostering unity without imposing uniformity;
- represents the gifts of the breadth of the Church of Christ, and prizes the words and songs Lutherans hold in common with other Christians, while at the same time extending the particular accents of the Lutheran heritage as gifts to the whole Church; and
- reflects the understanding that worship is fundamentally about what God does, bringing to expression how God nourishes the people of the Church for mission and accompanies them as they bear the creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world; and

To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ongoing work of renewing worship, understanding that:

- worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;
- each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and
- worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the Church is called to serve.

Churchwide Strategy on HIV and AIDS

Source: Global Mission and Church in Society

Background information: Agenda, pp. 31-35

Resource people: Rafael Malpica Padilla and Rebecca Larson, executive directors

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, 65 million people have been infected with the HIV virus, of whom 25 million have died of AIDS since the late 1980s¹; and

WHEREAS, 2.9 million people died last year from AIDS and the number of people worldwide living with HIV and AIDS increased to 39.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the AIDS epidemic is a human tragedy of massive proportion, affecting individuals and families of all races, religions, economic status, and social position on all continents; and

WHEREAS, in a rare, unanimous, international consensus, the 189 nations signing the Declaration of Commitment at the 2001 United Nations General Assembly on HIV and AIDS described AIDS as one of the greatest development

¹ Statistics in this resolution have been taken from the UN AIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, 2006.

crises in human history and committed themselves to act nationally and internationally to stop the epidemic; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations 2006 High-Level Review Meeting on HIV and AIDS reaffirmed the 2001 General Assembly Declaration, acknowledged the failures of the past five years, and committed governments at a national level to develop national level targets to move towards universal access to comprehensive prevention programs, treatment, care, and support by 2010; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations 2006 High-Level Review Meeting on HIV and AIDS also committed governments to undertake "comprehensive reviews in 2008 and 2011, within the annual reviews of the General Assembly, of the progress achieved in realizing the [2001] Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS"; and

WHEREAS the 2006 G8 Summit in Gleneagles made a commitment to the goal of achieving universal access to treatment by 2010; and

WHEREAS, "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise" (2005-2010) is the theme of the World AIDS Campaign, with the goal to ensure that governments and organizations, including religious organizations and leaders, keep the promises they have made to respond to AIDS effectively; and

WHEREAS, the HIV and AIDS crisis has had a disproportionate impact on Sub-Saharan Africa, as evidenced by the following facts:

- 2.1 million—70 percent of AIDS-related deaths worldwide—occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- nine percent of children under 15 in the region—over 12 million children— have lost one or more parent to AIDS;
- the highest HIV incidence rates in the world are found in southern Africa, with one-fifth to one-third of adult populations in some countries being HIV-positive; and

WHEREAS, significant advances have been achieved both in knowledge about HIV and AIDS and in medical options for treatment since the virus was identified in the late 1980s; and

WHEREAS, some countries have been able to reduce the incidence rate within their populations through intentional and coordinated efforts involving governments, international organizations, churches, businesses, medical institutions, and non-governmental organizations; and

WHEREAS, the economic poverty of individuals, communities, and countries has a significant impact on the spread of HIV and often limits access to life-saving and life-prolonging drugs, nutrition, and therapies²; and

WHEREAS, the spread of HIV has led to the even greater economic impoverishment of already poor communities, especially on the African continent; and

WHEREAS, the AIDS epidemic is poised to expand dramatically in other parts of the world (e.g., parts of Asia and the Caribbean) unless intentional action is taken quickly; and

WHEREAS, although progress has been made in reducing the stigmatization related to HIV and AIDS, fear and prejudice continue to cause pain and exclusion for those living with the virus and their circle of family and friends; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA, in partnership with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners, has responded to the realities of HIV and AIDS within communities and throughout this country; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has a long history of ministry with both companion churches and ecumenical, interfaith, and community-based partners in Africa and other countries, and has been deeply engaged with them in ministries to and with persons living with HIV and AIDS; and

WHEREAS, many of the ELCA's companion churches in Africa requested that the ELCA increase its efforts and "go the second mile" to walk with them as they respond to the AIDS crisis and as they seek

² According to the UN AIDS's analysis, less than a quarter of the 4.6 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa who need anti-retroviral therapy receive it.

justice for those affected by this disease; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA affirmed Stand With Africa: A Campaign of Hope in 2001 and three years later made the campaign an ongoing emphasis within the ELCA World Hunger Appeal in order to have the resources better to assist companion churches and agencies engaged in HIV and AIDS ministries in Africa, while continuing to assist companions from other continents through ongoing ELCA ministries and World Hunger support; and

WHEREAS, through companion synod relationships, knowledge among ELCA members—both of the impact of HIV and AIDS on the ministries of companion churches and the possibilities for effective common action—has grown over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands that it is called both to respond through its ministries to the 1.4 million people living with HIV on this continent and to address the global crisis, both as a member of the Lutheran World Federation and as a part of the wider ecumenical community; and

WHEREAS, twenty-five years into the AIDS epidemic, the United Nations has called on the nations of the world to transform the global response to AIDS “from an episodic, crisis management approach to a thoughtful, long-term response that emphasizes the use of evidence-based strategies and recognizes the need for long-term commitment”³; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

Commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a deeper engagement in addressing the AIDS epidemic through the development of a churchwide strategy for action in the coming decade, which will:

- build on the experience and commitments of the past and the strength of ELCA congregations, synods, churchwide structures, institutions, and agencies;
- utilize the best thinking of ELCA experts, practitioners, congregational leaders, related institutions and agencies, and people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as ecumenical and global companions, in the development of this strategy;
- express the ELCA’s commitment to work in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, in tandem with ecumenical partners both in this country and throughout the world;
- express the ELCA’s commitment to engage proactively with others of good will in civil society and in government as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
- continue to move from crisis management to a more integrated, effective, and sustainable long-term response to the AIDS epidemic; and

Express its solidarity with all people who are living with HIV and AIDS and with their families, both in this country and throughout the world:

- recognizing and giving thanks for the gifts, skills, and experience that people living with HIV and AIDS bring to addressing the pandemic, and committing this church to work closely with them in its response;
- rejecting categorically the stigma and discrimination that are at times associated with HIV and AIDS;
- working to ensure universal access both to compassionate care and to effective treatment and prevention;
- engaging in education to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS; and
 - providing a welcome in all aspects of church and congregational life to people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS; and

³ UN AIDS, Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, 2006, p. 282.

Encourage ELCA members, congregations, agencies and institutions, synods, and the churchwide organization, at the same time this strategy is being developed, to:

- continue and extend their ministries among and with people living with HIV and AIDS;
- pray for people directly affected by HIV and AIDS and for churches, communities, and governments, that they may have both the will and the wisdom to act boldly and effectively to address this crisis;
- intensify their support for the second-mile Stand With Africa campaign as well as the broader World Hunger Appeal, which enable this church to assist companions throughout the world as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and
- advocate with the U.S. government, urging it to:
 1. demonstrate global leadership to achieve agreed international goals including universal access to treatment, care and prevention by 2010;
 2. contribute its proportionate share to fully fund The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;
 3. abolish its extraordinary requirements that make it difficult and painful for people living with HIV to receive a visa to enter the United States for any purpose, and prohibit discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS; and

Convey its deep appreciation:

- to all those who provide care and support for those living with HIV and AIDS and those who seek a cure for this disease, in particular those members of this church who live out their Christian vocation as nurses, doctors, health researchers, and care providers;
- to ELCA pastors and congregations actively engaged in ministry with people living with HIV and AIDS as they support, counsel, and advocate with them for just and compassionate action in the church and in the wider society;
- to all those who have provided financial support to HIV and AIDS research and care, both in this country and throughout the world;
- to all those ELCA members whose financial gifts have enabled the ELCA to walk with companion churches in their response to the AIDS crisis, in particular through their "second mile" giving to the World Hunger Appeal's Stand With Africa campaign and companion synod action;
- to Lutheran social ministry organizations, hospitals, health facilities, and voluntary organizations, including the Lutheran AIDS Network (LANET), that provide assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS as well as leadership in church and society on this issue;
- to The Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, ecumenical agencies (both domestic and global), and others with which the ELCA partners to provide care, address the impact of HIV and AIDS in communities, prevent the further spread of the disease, and advocate with governments to step up their action in addressing this epidemic; and
- to companion churches in other countries, with which the ELCA is privileged to walk in ministry, as they respond to often overwhelming human need resulting from the spread of HIV; and

Request that the Church in Society and Global Mission program units take the lead in developing this strategy, which will be brought to the Church Council for adoption in 2008 and reported to the 2009

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... • recognizing and giving thanks for the gifts, skills, and experience that people living with HIV and AIDS bring to addressing the pandemic, and committing this church to work closely with them in its response;¶
... • rejecting categorically the stigma and discrimination that are at times associated with HIV and AIDS;¶
... • working to ensure universal access both to compassionate care and to effective treatment and prevention; ¶
... • engaging in education to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS; and¶
... • providing a welcome in all aspects of church and congregational life to people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS; and

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... • utilize the best thinking of ELCA experts, practitioners, congregational leaders, related institutions and agencies, and people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as ecumenical and global companions, in the development of this strategy;¶
... • express the ELCA's commitment to work in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, in tandem with ecumenical partners both in this country and throughout the world;¶
... • express the ELCA's commu... [1]

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... • continue and extend their ministries among and with people living with HIV and AIDS;¶
... • pray for people directly at... [2]

Churchwide Assembly.

World Hunger Appeal

Source: Administrative Team; Church in Society; Development Services
Background information: Agenda, pp. 35-36
Resource person: Rebecca Larson and Don Hallberg, executive directors

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for approval:
To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:*

To celebrate the milestone of more than \$20 million contributed in one year during fiscal 2006 to the World Hunger Appeal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

To give thanks to God for the generosity of members in reaching for the first-time this new level in annual giving to the World Hunger Appeal; and

To remember with thanksgiving the vision and commitment of ELCA predecessor church bodies in initiating the World Hunger Appeal in 1974; and

To rejoice in the fruitful efforts of churches as well as governmental and non-governmental agencies in the battle against hunger, resulting in fewer people numerically going to bed hungry in the world today than in 1974, in spite of the substantial increase in the population of the globe; and

To express abiding appreciation to ~~the 1999 Churchwide Assembly for establishing the annual goal of \$25 million for world hunger and to~~ those who have used wisely and effectively the funds provided through the World Hunger Appeal this church and its predecessors throughout the past 33 years, especially:

- a. **the Lutheran World Federation, the 140-member communion of churches through which the ELCA joins in coordinated international efforts to respond to crises and engage in long-term, sustainable development work;**
- b. **Lutheran World Relief, a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), individual and parish groups in international relief, development, advocacy, and social responsibility;**
- c. **missionaries of the ELCA who witness to God's grace through their service and advocacy on behalf of persons living in extreme poverty;**
- d. **ecumenical partners and others of good will with whom this church serves in response to God's love in meeting human needs; and**
- e. **those who serve through congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, community organizations, and Lutheran agencies and institutions advocating for persons experiencing hunger and living in poverty;**

To call upon each congregation of the ELCA to participate in the World Hunger Appeal and to invite members to contribute; and

To invite renewed efforts by members and congregations to reach ~~and surpass the~~ \$25 million in annual giving by individuals and congregations to the World Hunger Appeal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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ELCA Personnel Policies

Source: Human Resources
Background information: Agenda, pp. 54; Ex. I, Part 2)
Resource people: Else Thompson, director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*

To approve the revisions to the following ELCA Churchwide Personnel Policies as detailed in Exhibit I, Part 2. Remove (be) in last paragraph Exhibit I, part 2, p. 1

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Message on Immigration

Source: Church in Society

Background information: Agenda, pp. 54

Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director for studies

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*

To authorize a delay in the development of a revised message on immigration by the Church in Society program unit, in cooperation with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and

To request that the new message on immigration be brought to the ELCA Church Council for consideration in April 2008, with a preliminary draft brought to the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council in November 2007; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the Rocky Mountain, Northeastern Ohio, New Jersey, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C. synods of this action.

“Following our Shepherd to Full Communion”

[Proposed Full-Communion Agreement between the Alaska Province and the East West Indies Province of the Moravian Church in America and the ELCA]

Source: Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

Background information: Agenda, p. 54-54.2

Resource people: Randy Lee, director

Recommended Action: *To transmit the following resolution to the ELCA Church Council for en bloc approval:*

To recommend adoption by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the following resolution:

To continue to rejoice in the relationship of full communion between this church and the Northern Province and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America; and

To recognize that these two provinces of the Moravian Church in America do not cover all the geographical territory encompassed by this church; and

To acknowledge that by extending the relationship of full communion as outlined in “Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion” to the Alaska Province and to the East West Indies Province more people can participate in the closer working relationship allowed by full communion; and

To rejoice in the action of the East West Indies Province, which approved a relationship of full communion with this church by adopting “Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion”;

To encourage the Alaska Province to take a similar action;

To invite the Alaska Province and the East West Indies Province to appoint members to the Lutheran-Moravian Coordinating Committee in order to live into this relationship of full communion more effectively; and

To declare that a relationship of full communion exists between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the East West Indies Province of the Moravian Church in America and between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Alaska Province of the Moravian Church in America, pending approval by the Alaska Province.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Church in Society Biennial Program of Study

Source: Church in Society

Background information: Agenda p. 56

Resource people: Rebecca Larson, executive director; Roger Willer, director of studies

Update on Development of Protocols

Source: "Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns"

Resource people: Joseph Crippen; Judy Biffle; Norma Hirsch; Sandra Schlesinger; Rebecca Larson; Roger Willer

Commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a deeper engagement in addressing the AIDS epidemic through the development of a churchwide strategy for action in the coming decade, which will:

- **build on the experience and commitments of the past and the strength of ELCA congregations, synods, churchwide structures, institutions, and agencies;**
- **utilize the best thinking of ELCA experts, practitioners, congregational leaders, related institutions and agencies, and people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as ecumenical and global companions, in the development of this strategy;**
- **express the ELCA's commitment to work in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, in tandem with ecumenical partners both in this country and throughout the world;**
- **express the ELCA's commitment to engage proactively with others of good will in civil society and in government as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and**
- **continue to move from crisis management to a more integrated, effective, and sustainable long-term response to the AIDS epidemic; and**

Encourage ELCA members, congregations, agencies and institutions, synods, and the churchwide organization, at the same time this strategy is being developed, to:

- **continue and extend their ministries among and with people living with HIV and AIDS;**
- **pray for people directly affected by HIV and AIDS and for churches, communities, and governments, that they may have both the will and the wisdom to act boldly and effectively to address this crisis;**
- **intensify their support for the second-mile Stand With Africa campaign as well as the broader World Hunger Appeal, which enable this church to assist companions throughout the world as they respond to the AIDS crisis; and**
- **advocate with the U.S. government, urging it to:**
 1. **demonstrate global leadership to achieve agreed international goals including universal access to treatment, care and prevention by 2010;**
 2. **contribute its proportionate share to fully fund The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;**
 3. **abolish its extraordinary requirements that make it difficult and painful for people living with HIV to receive a visa to enter the United States for any purpose, and prohibit discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS; and**

Summary of Activities of Program Units and Service Units of the Churchwide Organization

Program Units of the Churchwide Organization

Church in Society	page 1
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	page 3
Global Mission	page 4
Multicultural Ministries	page 6
Publishing House of the ELCA	page 7
Vocation and Education	page 9
Women's Organization	page 10

Service Units of the Churchwide Organization

Board of Pensions	page 10
Church Periodical	page 11
Communication Services	page 12
Development Services	page 14
Mission Investment Fund	page 15

Sections of the Churchwide Organization

Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations	Exhibit A, Part 1a
Human Resources	Exhibit A, Part 1a
Research and Evaluation	Exhibit A, Part 1a
Synodical Relations	Exhibit A, Part 1a
Worship and Liturgical Resources	Exhibit A, Part 1a
Information Technology	Exhibit A, Part 4a
Management Services	Exhibit A, Part 4a

Program Units

Church in Society

Submitted by Pr. Rebecca S. Larson

The Church in Society unit shall assist this church to discern, understand, and respond to the needs of human beings, communities, society, and the whole creation through direct human services and through addressing systems, structures, and policies of society, seeking to promote justice, peace, and the care of the earth (16.12.D05).

Administration

Church in Society has been working with Vocation and Education, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Multicultural Ministries units to shape strategic plans that are similar in structure and complementary in content.

In January, Chicago-based staff moved into refurbished space on the 9th floor.

Advocacy

The Advocacy Department is implementing a "ready bench" strategy-identifying and briefing bishops who will represent the ELCA before governmental bodies or as part of coordinated communications.

Considerable staff time is being given to the reauthorization of the Farm Bill through a national interfaith hunger event in June, listening posts across the country, visits to Congressional offices, and the development of a religious coalition.

Focused attention has been given to the National Interfaith Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East, a group in which Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson is playing a key leadership role.

Through ecumenical grassroots action, the ELCA played an important role in the successful passage of trade preferences for Haiti at the end of the 109th Congress.

The director for environmental education and advocacy is developing new educational materials on global warming and is working with others in the faith community to influence the coming debate on this critical issue.

Membership in the e-advocacy network has doubled in the last year to 5,000.

The Corporate Social Responsibility program has joined with other religious groups to ask hotel chains to endorse the code of conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. In February, the Lutheran Office for World Community hosted Bishop Zephaniah Kameeta of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia when he made a presentation to the U.N. Commission on Social Development.

A complete review of state public policy offices is in process to strengthen the structure and relationships of accountability. On February 16, Pr. Neil Harrison began work as director for the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania.

Poverty Ministries

The interunit staff alliance on poverty and wealth is engaged in a planning process that will impact the churchwide organization so that staff members take tangible steps to address issues of poverty and wealth.

A leadership institute for 80 participants from low income rural and urban congregations and ministries in late November focused on skill development and enhancement.

Community Development Services is becoming involved in long-term community redevelopment (e.g. housing, and jobs) in the New Orleans and the Gulf coast region.

The director for congregation-based community organizing is developing a multi-synod leadership initiative for public life training.

A proposal for an ELCA Strategy on HIV/AIDS was prepared for the CS and Global Mission program committees.

Studies

Work on a proposed education social statement, "Our Calling in Education," was completed in preparation for consideration by the CS program committee and the Church Council.

In early December, staff and the task force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality completed the third study in preparation for the writing of a human sexuality social statement. The study, "Free in Christ to Serve

the Neighbor: Lutherans Talk about Human Sexuality," was sent to rostered leaders. The Spanish version has been published on the Web and a version for youth is in process. A companion DVD undergirds the study with presentations on Paul's Letter to the Galatians and Luther's "The Freedom of the Christian."

Work on a social statement on genetics to come before the 2011 Churchwide Assembly was launched through a January consultation involving nearly two dozen specialists who helped frame an initial prescription for the work of the soon-to-be constituted task force.

The department welcomed a new director, Pr. Roger Willer, on February 1.

Social Ministry Organizations

Lutheran Services in America will mark its tenth anniversary at its annual gathering, which will take place in Baltimore. The CS program committee was invited to join with LSA in a visioning process for the future.

A consultation has been held to review and update ELCA affiliation criteria for social ministry organizations.

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) has coordinated over 20,000 volunteer experiences totaling 850,000 hours of work and the gutting or repairing of over 6,000 homes. Nine hundred college students from 35 different Lutheran colleges and campus ministries are participating in the second "What a Relief!" spring break trip to the Gulf coast. LDR has also responded to Florida tornadoes, winter storms in Oklahoma, flooding in Nebraska and Texas, and an earthquake in Hawaii.

World Hunger Ministries

Staff celebrates and gives thanks to God that for the first time in its history, general and designated giving to ELCA World Hunger has exceeded \$20 million: 2006 giving totaled \$20,052,181. The budget goal was \$17.5 million. This will lead to revising the expenditure authorization for 2007 and income proposals for 2008 and 2009.

This year, 450 requests for domestic hunger grants, totaling over \$2.5 million, have been received. The grants table has approximately \$800,000 to allocate. In addition, World Hunger funds support advocacy and hunger education ministries.

Podcasts, Web conferencing, and "Go and Do News" are new vehicles for communicating with and

strengthening the network of synod hunger leaders.

A new joint project with the Vocation and Education program unit is creating a model for engaging young adults in World Hunger work.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Lutheran World Federation, a key partner in addressing global hunger and poverty.

Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission

Submitted by Pr. Richard Magnus

The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit shall foster and facilitate the efforts of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies in reaching out in witness to the Gospel to people in all contexts and cultures within the territory of this church. It will do so by equipping existing congregations and ministries; developing new ministries and congregations; seeking to renew strategic ministries; and working with congregations and synods in programs and strategies for renewal and evangelical outreach. (16.12.A05)

In the last four months, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) has been furthering its strategic planning efforts, the continued development of several interunit efforts, consultations to strengthen various program areas, and planning and sponsoring new events in the ELCA.

In addition, EOCM moved to temporary office space in November before moving to permanent space on the ninth floor in January.

Strategic Planning

EOCM has spent significant time each month on its strategic planning efforts. The work was guided by our purpose and guiding principles (developed in 2006).

With the assistance of a consultant, we have identified the biblical basis that guides our work and that the synods are our entry point and have finalized three unit-wide goals. In working with our churchwide, synod, congregation, ethnic communities, and other partners in ministry, the EOCM goals are to: foster and enhance a culture of discipleship within the ELCA; equip leaders who multiply themselves; and build capacity to start new and renew congregations that are healthy and missional in diverse and multicultural settings. We are hoping to finalize our outcomes, means of measurement, and objectives in March.

The staff teams have begun to work on developing tactical plans that will lead to future staffing

conversations and budget development. The plans will be finalized in June.

Interunit Work

The “La Frontera” ministry review was conducted in collaboration with Multicultural Ministries, Global Mission and local synodical leadership. This review culminated in a document that has been shared with all key churchwide units currently involved and with those units recommended by the review. In addition, this ministry review will be shared with the seven synodical bishops along the border at the Conference of Bishops’ meeting in March.

The new starts process which involves several units along with the Office of the Bishop, continued its work this fall with consultation at the October Conference of Bishops’ meeting. This dialogue, with feedback from the ELCA new starts committee, requested further data and analysis on new starts from 1995 to 2005 to be conducted by the Research and Evaluation section. This data will be shared at the spring Conference of Bishops’ meeting. There is great energy and willingness in synods to increase initiatives among ethnic communities, in urban areas, and with emerging young adults. EOCM has connected with these communities and developed church planting teams in all ethnic communities and among urban leaders and emerging leader networks. New work emanates out of grassroots initiatives and institutional partnerships.

The Latino lay leadership formation project will host its second gathering which will include leaders from ELCA congregations, ELCA Latino scholars, and representatives from Lay schools of theology. This collaborative event with Vocation and Education and Multicultural Ministries hopes to identify future curricula development projects to enhance Latino leadership formation in the ELCA.

Consultations

The stewardship team in September hosted representatives from ELCA seminaries, the Stewardship of Life Institute, the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Support, and ELCA staff for conversation on improving stewardship education for ELCA seminary students, first-call pastors, and all rostered leaders.

The Christian education areas of consensus document was completed in a collaborative process guided and now approved by the Office of the Bishop. This document identifies eight areas of consensus,

involves partnership with several churchwide units and networks in the ELCA, and recommends implementation guidelines and budget implications. The document will be shared at the May gathering of the Christian education advisory team.

Events

The director of large membership congregations director, Mark Grorud, hosted a day-long event for pastors of larger congregations with Bishop Hanson. Due to the success of this event, another such opportunity is being planned for November. “Let the River Flow” is the first national ELCA gathering for large congregations and is scheduled to be held in June in Minnesota.

ELCA mission interpreters coordinators and mission partners gathered together for the first time to experience and support synods in mission interpretation. This event featured the new resource, “Stories to Tell and Gifts to Share.”

Evangelism and Christian education staff hosted “Costly Discipleship: Living into the Cross” in November, a leadership event based on the third emphasis of the evangelism strategy. Other networks attending included Lutheran Men in Mission, Latino Leaders, and the Christian education network.

For the first time, Natural Church Development and coaching were taught for credit at Wartburg Seminary, one of our seminaries. In addition, we continue to train Natural Church Development coaches in high numbers. March also marks the first regional transformational ministry event to be held in Region 1. It involves both hosting the event and working with regional staff to train them to lead future training events.

The EOCM coaching program has expanded to include a coordinator to manage the basic coaching, coaching with excellence and coach-trainer events. This program offers trained coaches for assignment to all new mission developers. Conversation has begun regarding the training of synod coaching coordinators in 2007.

The College of Developers, an event for new ELCA mission developers, was held in January in Orlando, Fla. Sixty persons shared their experiences of development, worshipped, and appreciated a time of renewal.

Resources

A new EOCM stewardship resource, “Stories to Tell, Gifts to Share” was recently published by

Augsburg Fortress for congregational use as an annual response program in two forms; one for general use and one for African Descent congregations.

“Vivimos por la gracia” is a Spanish resource produced by EOCM that provides a Lutheran foundation for Latino leaders in the church.

The EOCM Web site has been redesigned and updated to facilitate “friendlier” usage and maneuverability.

Global Mission

Submitted by Pr. Rafael Malpica-Padilla

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. (16.12.B05)

Building capacity through participation in companion churches' ministries

ELCA Global Mission accompanies companion churches by providing grants and sending mission personnel for specific tasks that have been identified by those churches. In 2006, grants totaling \$3.2 million (mission support) plus \$2.3 million (World Hunger) went to companion churches. These grants support the churches' work in evangelism and outreach, leadership development, communication, administration, health care, education, relief, and sustainable development.

ELCA missionaries work at the request and under the supervision of companion churches. Approximately 265 currently serve in 48 countries. 117 new mission personnel began service in 2006, of whom 81 were volunteers.

International service also builds the capacity of ELCA leaders to engage in mission in this country. For example, among the 2006-2007 volunteers are thirty-seven 19-to 30-year-olds who participate in the one-year Young Adults in Global Mission program, serving in church or social service ministries in eight countries. About 20-25 percent of former Young Adults in Global Mission participants, who have had significant cross-cultural experiences, attend seminary. Others serve as lay workers in church ministries, continue in other service with Global Mission, or pursue other vocational and educational opportunities. This new ELCA program was strengthened by the addition of an intentional leadership development component, with experienced ELCA leaders serving as mentors to these young people.

Building the Capacity of Companions to Meet Human Need

Global Mission receives 71.4 percent of budgeted ELCA World Hunger funds for this work-funds that total around 40 percent of GM's budget. About 60 percent of the \$12.5 million in World Hunger funds expended in 2006 went to two key partners in relief and development: Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief. The ELCA also provides bilateral support to companion churches for relief and development. Through this work, the ELCA joins other churches, agencies, and governments in a global effort to achieve the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals, which seek to cut extreme poverty and chronic hunger in half by 2015.

The 2003 Churchwide Assembly re-affirmed the ELCA's commitment to respond to the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic by making the Stand With Africa campaign, launched three years earlier, an ongoing ELCA World Hunger commitment. Stand With Africa enables Global Mission to respond to the requests of companion churches and agencies as they engage in HIV/AIDS prevention, education, care of people living with HIV/AIDS, and support for AIDS orphans, who now number 12 million in Africa. Because of Stand With Africa, Global Mission was able to provide an additional \$600,000 in 2006 to these companions. (Note: HIV/AIDS programs in Asia and Latin America receive funding through regular World Hunger grants.)

The ELCA, in partnership with companion churches in the Lutheran World Federation and with ecumenical agencies, responds to disasters within the context of a global coordinating alliance of Protestant and Orthodox churches, Action by Churches Together (ACT). Gifts to ELCA International Disaster Response enabled Global Mission to provide \$3.7 million for work in 18 countries in 2006. The following are some examples of GM's work since the last meeting of the ELCA Church Council. (For additional information, visit www.elca.org/disaster).

The ELCA responded by providing \$225,000 to respond to major flooding in Kenya, Somalia, Zambia, and Mozambique and \$150,000 to meet the emergency needs of people displaced by civil strife in Sri Lanka and Eritrea. In partnership with Lutheran World Federation, it provided \$100,000 for refugees who fled the civil war in southern Sudan, some of whom are now able to return home and are receiving assistance that will enable them to rebuild their communities.

The ELCA has also continued to respond to the massive humanitarian crisis in Darfur (the western part of Sudan), providing \$200,000 in aid that will be implemented through a unique ecumenical on-the-ground response that links Protestants (ACT) and Catholics (Caritas) in meeting emergency needs.

ELCA Global Mission allocated \$600,000 to assist communities in Indonesia to rebuild in the wake of the massive devastation that was caused by the December 26, 2004, tsunami. The ELCA also responded with financial support through ACT to flooding in India and in the Philippines.

In the Middle East, the ELCA provided \$75,000 for Palestinian refugees and an additional \$75,000 for relief and rehabilitation in the wake of the summer 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which displaced a quarter of the population of Lebanon. The implementing agency is the Middle East Council of Churches.

Increasing the Capacity of the ELCA to Engage in God's Mission

Through the companion synod program, ELCA synods and companion churches strengthen and nurture one another in their witness and service. Synods are engaged in 120 companion relationships with at least one Lutheran church or diocese in another country. Over half of all ELCA synods have two or more companion relationships. 11 synods have three or more relationships. ELCA Global Mission is currently distributing the new Companion Synods Handbook, which provides guidance for synodical and congregational participation (www.elca.org/companionsynod/index.html).

A traditional summer GME was held in Amherst, Mass. in the summer of 2006, and was co-sponsored by The Episcopal Church USA. This summer, the GME will be held in Columbus, Ohio. GM is also experimenting with different models, including: the January 2007 Global Mission Festival held in Orlando, Fla.; the February 2007 Leadership Training Event in Arizona, held in cooperation with the Grand Canyon Synod (a pilot for future GMEs); and a global emphasis within the annual "Rally in the Valley" for seniors, also in Arizona this February.

Major Directions for 2007-2008

The context for global mission is changing. Advances in communication and travel provide opportunities for exchanges that our grandparents scarcely could have imagined. With relative ease,

synods, congregations, and individuals are able to build relationships in other countries. International mission trips abound.

Many companion churches have grown large and strong. For example, the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus is approaching the ELCA in size, with over four million members. At the same time, membership in the ELCA and churches in Europe has declined. In the midst of this, the gap between rich countries and poor countries continues to widen, with environmental degradation and the HIV/AIDS pandemic contributing to human suffering.

ELCA Global Mission is responding to both the opportunities and the challenges created by this changing global context by encouraging conversation among ELCA expressions concerning the appropriate balance: between the parts and the whole; between individual projects and long-term strategic investments to leverage major change; and between individual connections and church-to-church relationships. It also will be important for this wealthy church to both hear and amplify the voices of global companions as the U.S. government sets the aid, trade, and debt policies that have a huge impact on companions and makes decisions relating to war and peace, in particular in the Middle East.

The accompaniment model for mission provides a framework for healthy discussion about the future shape of our church's global mission system—a system of interdependent relationships. Within this context, ELCA GM is:

- Undertaking with synods and companion churches a major review of the companion synods program, seeking agreement with the Conference of Bishops on the principles that will, in future years, guide this rapidly growing program;
- working with church-related and independent Lutheran entities to maximize synergy and minimize duplication, competition, and confusion vis-à-vis companion churches;
- reshaping GM's education program to reflect the changing context for mission, identify new ways the churchwide organization can "add value" to the work of congregations and in synods, and help ELCA members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and related agencies "grow into" the accompaniment model for mission; and
- participate in the Lutheran World Federation's efforts to reshape its work in the light of the changing context for mission.

Multicultural Ministries

Submitted by Pr. Sherman Hicks

The Multicultural Ministries unit shall guide the churchwide organization in the multicultural dimensions of its work. (16.12.E05)

Multicultural Ministries (MM) continues to engage the church in its continuing commitment to becoming more diverse and multicultural. The collaborative work with ELCA churchwide units continues to strengthen the ministry that we do throughout the church, in communities, and in the world.

Evangelism and Outreach

Multicultural Ministries' four ethnic ministries directors and the consultant for Arab and Middle Eastern ministries have worked with the Research and Evaluation to produce the Multicultural Ministry Strategy Report. This comprehensive review of the five ethnic strategies is a report on the progress of the ELCA with a special emphasis on implementation of these strategies. The ELCA Constituting Convention in 1987 adopted the "goal of this church that within ten years of its establishment the membership shall include at least ten percent people of color and/or primary language other than English." In order to help achieve this goal, the church developed five multicultural mission strategies. The ELCA did not achieve the ten percent goal within ten years. As of December 2005, about three percent of the baptized membership of the ELCA consisted of people of color or primary language other than English.

Leadership

The director for racial justice ministries met with the African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Latino ethnic ministries directors to plan a consultation on Internalized Racial Oppression: Healthy Leadership. The consultation will gather specific information on internalized oppression for each community involved in the project and create an ethnic resource for the communities. The resource will be a supplemental guide to be used with the resource titled *Breaking the Bonds: A Workshop on Internalized Racial Oppression*. The consultation will be held May 25-27, 2007.

A committee has been developed to review and revise programs and curricula used for leadership development in the Latino Lutheran Community. The committee includes Latino Lutheran scholars, staff from EOCM, and the Multicultural Ministries director

for Latino Ministries. The committee's January 2007 meeting was dedicated to developing online curricula.

There are currently two meetings each year among the Latino ministry staff in the ELCA, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Reformed Church in America. The meetings are designed to focus on issues related to leadership development, joint creation of resources, and other forms of mutual assistance. Future meetings will be focused on youth and young adult ministries in the three denominations.

The ethnic associations including the African American Lutheran Association, Asocacion Luterana de Ministerios Hispanos (Association of Hispanic Ministries), Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders, and the American Indian and Alaska Native Association are holding regional meetings to educate association members on the ELCA's restructuring and the important new role they now play as advisory members on the Multicultural Ministries Program Committee and the ELCA Church Council.

The fourth Annual Asian Lutheran International Conference (ALIC) was held at the Church of Christ in Bangkok, Thailand, February 6-12, 2007. The theme of the conference is "Asian Ministries in Contemporary Contexts." Fifty ELCA Asian pastors and leaders meet with their counterparts in Asia. They were joined by 50 leaders representing Korea, Japan, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Philippines, Thailand, Laos, the Hmong community, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and India. For the first time, 45 non-Asians attended the ALIC conference, including eight ELCA mission directors.

Stewardship

The "Stories to Tell and Gifts to Share: ELCA African Descent Stewardship Resource" was printed January 2007. The resource fulfills the stewardship African descent strategic goal to "produce culture specific stewardship material, ensuring compatibility with and understanding of stewardship not only as a fiscal responsibility, but also in conjunction with time and talent"

Publishing House of the ELCA

Submitted by Ms. Beth Lewis

The Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America— also known as Augsburg Fortress, Publishers—shall be responsible for the publishing,

production, and distribution of publications to be sold to accomplish the mission of this church, work in close cooperation with congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to provide a diversity of published resources, and relate to other churchwide units through resource planning groups. (16.31.A05)

As a program unit of the ELCA, Augsburg Fortress (AF) is the ministry of publishing. As a financially self-supporting unit, AF also must make sound business decisions in a competitive marketplace. AF strives to balance this ministry/business dichotomy and provide support for the ELCA strategic directions through the resources we provide for the church. Here are a few examples of resources AF has published recently that support the strategic directions:

Support congregations in their call to be faithful, welcoming, and generous, sharing the mind of Christ.

Recently published AF resources that support this strategic direction include:

- *Akaloo!* Our new web-based, intergenerational, home and church-based, life-long learning faith formation resource www.akaloo.org
 - The *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* family of resources
 - *Great Bible Reef* (VBS 2007) <http://www.thevbsplace.org>
 - *Bread for the Day 2007: Daily Bible Readings and Prayers* (in partnership with the Northeastern Iowa Synod)
 - Daubert: *Living Lutheran: Renewing Your Congregation*
 - *Stories to Tell and Gifts to Share* (new stewardship resources developed in partnership with the ELCA churchwide stewardship staff)
- Assist members, congregations, synods, and**

institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach

Recently published AF resources that support this strategic direction include:

- *Conozca Su Biblia* (Spanish language Bible commentary series)
- Bilingual English and Spanish version of Luther's *Small Catechism*
- *The Lutheran Course*
- *The Lutheran Course on Marriage*

**Step forward as a public church that witnesses
boldly to God's love for all that God has created**

Recently published AF resources that support this strategic direction include:

- Reckford: *Creating a Habitat for Humanity: No Hands but Yours*
<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/education/creatingahabitatforhumanity/>
- Rogness and Maeker: *Ending Poverty: a 2020 Vision*
- McGovern, Dole and Messer: *Ending Hunger Now: a Challenge to Persons of Faith*
www.endinghungernow.org
- Blom: *God in the Raging Waters: Stories of Love and Service Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita*
- Bouman: *Grace All Around Us: Embracing God's Promise in Tragedy and Loss*

Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical, and

interfaith relationships for the sake of God's mission

Recently published AF resources that support this strategic direction include:

- Johnson, Jung and Schweiker: *Humanity Before God: Contemporary Faces of Jewish, Christian and Islamic Ethics*
- Partnerships with other publishers on variations of *The Lutheran Handbook* including PCUSA, United Methodist, Mennonite, and Reformed for their denominations, and translations in traditional Chinese, Korean and Swedish.
- Partnerships with other denominational publishers on variations of our faith formation resources including *Akaloo* with PCUSA and Harcourt (Catholic) and *Great Bible Reef* (VBS 2007) with *Our Sunday Visitor* (Catholic) and PCUSA.

Assist this church to bring forth and support

faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world

Recently published AF resources that support this strategic direction include:

- Lathrop: *The Pastor: a Spirituality*
- Childs: *Ethics in the Community of Promise: Faith, Formation and Decision*, 2nd Edition
- Thiessen: *The Bible and Contemporary Culture*
- Franklin: *Crisis in the Village: Restoring Hope in African American Communities*

Financial Results for calendar year 2006:

	Jan.-Dec. 2006		
	Budget	Actual	Variance
Net Sales	\$40,000,000	\$44,250,000	\$4,250,000
Cost of goods sold	\$16,389,000	\$19,501,000	3,112,000
Gross margin	\$23,611,000	\$24,749,000	\$1,138,000
Operating expenses	\$23,557,000	\$24,729,000	\$1,172,000
Operating income (loss)	\$54,000	\$20,000	(\$34,000)
Non-operating income (exp) Inc	(\$12,000)	\$159,000	\$171,000
Net Income	\$42,000	\$179,000	\$137,000

Our 2006 financial performance was strong, showing operating income for the first time in almost a decade. The sale of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* resources in the United States totaled over \$6,200,000 in 2006, which greatly exceeded our forecasted sales of \$1,000,000. Our 2006 financial performance as reported included the effect of adopting an accounting rule that requires revenue deferral for our online hosted products sold on a term membership basis. We also adopted the accounting rule that required capitalization of development costs incurred for the on-line hosted products. Essentially, adoption of these two accounting rules served to reduce our operating income by approximately \$600,000, which was not anticipated when the 2006 budgets were prepared late in 2005. Revenue recognition on the one, two, and three-year memberships of *Herewestandconfirmation.org*, *Akaloo.org* and *Sundaysandseasons.com* is now prorated for recognition in the financial statements over the term of the membership, and development costs are amortized into expense over four years. Had we calculated our financial results as they were budgeted (as if these accounting changes were not adopted), net sales would have been \$45,650,000 vs. the goal of \$40,000,000 and the operating income would have been \$632,000 vs. the goal of \$42,000.

Vocation and Education

Submitted by Pr. Stan Olson

The Vocation and Education unit shall be responsible for development and support of faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in the world; and shall assist this church and its institutions in equipping people to practice their callings under the Gospel for the sake of the world. (16.12.C05)

Since November 2006, the Vocation and Education unit has continued its collective work on the development of a strategic plan for the period from June 1, 2007, through December 31, 2009. Through extensive unit-wide conversations, the unit has agreed upon three goals which are summarized as: vocation claimed, networks nurtured, and leaders equipped. We are now finishing plans for fulfillment of these goals, but the goals already are reflected in unit's work. Staff members are continually engaged in sustaining work with partner institutions and programs, primarily through convening and connecting leaders, nurturing networks, and facilitating access to resources. Below is a sample of activities since the last Church Council meeting

Youth and Young Adult Ministries Work Group

Campus Ministry in the ELCA celebrates its centennial year in 2007. The unit has been engaged in planning a celebration that will help undergird the future of this important work. ELCA campus ministry now encompasses 185 agencies across the country and nearly 400 partner congregations. Over 30,000 contacts were made with students this past year and 4,400 are regularly in campus ministry worship each week.

The director for young adult ministry, Kristen Glass, initiated and is leading the redesign of the Churchwide Assembly young adult convocation. Rather than gathering young adults for a parallel event, the convocation now will be an intentional place of connection for the seventy some young adult voting members of the Assembly. This is the largest number of young adult voting members to attend an ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Pr. Bill Bixby has joined the unit staff as director for youth ministry. He has most recently led the Lilly Endowment-funded Theological Education with Youth project at the ELCA seminaries in Philadelphia and Gettysburg.

The ELCA has signed agreements to hold the Lutheran Youth Gathering in New Orleans, July 22-26, 2009. Because of the slight decline in numbers

since a high in 2000, we have made the decision to return to a single gathering as had been the practice prior to 2003.

Leadership Work Group

Candidacy for rostered ministry is a collaborative effort among synods, seminaries and the churchwide organization. One of the unit's roles is to track the number of students in candidacy from their entrance until a call is accepted and received. Here are the latest figures with a comparison to two years earlier.

Roster	Candidates January 2005	Candidates January 2007
Associate in Ministry	318	320
Diaconal Minister	180	189
Deaconess	8	13
Pastor	2025	2051
Totals	2531	2573

These numbers fluctuate somewhat month-to-month, but long-term trends appear stable. We are seeing a trend toward somewhat younger candidates, especially in candidacy for ordained ministry.

In February 2007 Vocation and Education worked with rostered leaders to convene a consultation on vocation and service to look anew at the calling and work of the lay rosters. That consultation has called for a continued conversation to attempt to develop a consensus about and proposal regarding the public ministries of Word and service. The deaconess community of the ELCA provided a generous grant that made the consultation possible.

Educational Partnerships and Institutions Work Groups

Unit staff played a large role in planning the consultation "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible." The Church Council is receiving a proposal for a five year Book of Faith initiative to help the ELCA be renewed in its Lutheran vocation as a church of the Word. It is proposed that the Vocation and Education unit accept programmatic responsibility for this collaborative initiative. We are engaged now in preliminary planning.

Leadership transitions at our colleges and

universities occur every year. In February, Dr. John R. Sladek was inaugurated as the sixth president of California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, Calif. Texas Lutheran University announced that the Rev. Dr. Ann Svennungsen will become its new president upon the retirement of Dr. John Moline this summer. Finlandia University, Bethany College, and Midland College are at various stages in presidential transitions. Vocation and Education staff normally serve as advisory members on these search committees.

Select Multimedia Resources (formerly SELECT) has been an ELCA provider of DVD resources for lifelong learning and professional continuing education. Fisher's Net has been the online learning platform of the ELCA. As of January 1, 2007, these two organizations have joined to form a single corporation, Fisher's Net Select. This will allow efficiencies and synergies for an expanded venture in distance education.

Lutheran Partners magazine, which is sent to all ELCA rostered leaders six times a year, completed a strategic planning process with the crafting of a new purpose statement and plans to launch a re-designed print/online magazine in 2007.

Summary

In addition to these particular efforts, staff members continue their regular work of consulting with partners, gathering annual groups, participating in board meetings, and much more.

Women's Organization

Submitted by Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky

The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as the program unit for the women's organization, shall enable its members to grow through biblical study, theological reflection, and prayer, cooperate with other units of this church in advocating for the oppressed and voiceless, urging change in systems and structures that exclude and alienate, and working for peace and justice as messengers of hope, provide for development and distribution of resources for and to its members, including a magazine, facilitate local initiative in creating programs and identifying alternative structural models that encourage and support flexibility, and design and implement a leadership development program for its members, assisting its members to identify, develop, and express their gifts for ministry. (16.41.A05)

[See Exhibit page 10.1]

Service Units

Board of Pensions

Submitted by Mr. John Kapanke

The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes, and shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts. (17.61.A05)

The Board of Pensions is well on the way to achieving its three-year strategic plan that will "assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world." The following are highlights of our efforts in 2006 and those that await us in 2007, as we help people lead healthy lives and achieve financial security.

Financial well-being

While no one can predict what the financial markets will do in the future, looking back at past performance reflects our successful track record in delivering strong returns for rostered leaders and lay employees in the ELCA retirement plan. 2006 was a very good year for the capital markets, helping ELCA investment funds achieve strong returns. The majority of the funds' solid performance returns, which in most cases greatly exceeded long-term expectations, came in the second half of 2006. For example, the ELCA 60e Balanced Fund posted a 16.3 percent one-year return, which was about double its long-term expected return of 8.2 percent.

Our ability to earn attractive investment returns for plan members over the years is helped in large part from a disciplined investment strategy, experienced investment managers, and competitive fees (without the sales commissions common in the competitive marketplace). Plan members are achieving financial security through an excellent investment program—a core competency that supports this church and the Board of Pension's promise to be faithful to members' well-being.

For the most recent ELCA retirement plan performance returns and other benefits-related information, visit the Board of Pension's Web site at www.elcabop.org.

Lifetime health

On the Church Council's agenda is a request for approval of ELCA health plan amendments that were approved in principle at the Church Council meeting

in November 2006. Under the theme of “promoting lifetime health” and with the Council’s approval, the current health plan will transition from a “disease” model to a “wellness” model beginning in 2008. Promoting lifetime health is one of the more important components of the Board of Pensions’ three-year strategic plan.

Since the Board of Pensions began telling the story last fall about the health and wellness of rostered leaders and lay employees covered in the plan, the issue of leaders’ well-being has received considerable attention both within and outside the ELCA. The Board of Pensions is making inroads as a churchwide unit in supporting and advocating health and wellness among our leaders. If the ELCA is to remain vibrant and relevant in society, this church must develop healthy leaders within all aspects of well-being as depicted in the wholeness wheel. We are convinced developing healthy leaders is significant for the strategic direction of this church.

Engaging our leaders

In the nine years since the Board of Pensions began annual meetings with the 65 bishops, this year’s visits have proven the most engaging yet. In addition to their strong support for the proposed health plan changes, bishops and synod staffs are committed to helping equip their rostered leaders and lay employees to take action in using their benefits for wellness. The annual meetings with bishops are an important way to gather input, advice and counsel in shaping the ELCA’s benefits program.

Partnerships with other leaders in this church also assist in strengthening asset management services in the ELCA. Recent efforts have focused on strengthening investment management services for the ELCA, analyzing the possibility of extending a flexible health care product to social ministry organizations, increasing retirement advocacy for plan members, and promoting overall financial security. This year and 2008 will be critical in moving forward on opportunities to enhance the asset base for the ELCA.

Other notable improvements made since the Church Council meeting in November include the introduction of our newly redesigned web site to enhance our current and future online service capabilities. We outsourced the annuity, survivor, and disability payments for plan members to JPMorgan Chase, N.A. in January. We also anticipate

introducing billing statements for congregations and other sponsoring organizations in the second quarter of this year, with the goal to provide online bill viewing and payment capabilities in the future.

Enhancing the well-being of those who serve through the ELCA and other faith-based organizations is at the heart of our mission in this church. As always, I welcome your comments and questions.

Church Periodical

Submitted by Mr. Daniel Lehmann

The publishing house, in consultation with the editor, shall produce and distribute the church periodical, provide staff for circulation, promotion, subscription fulfillment, advertising solicitation, billing and collection of accounts, and other services. (17.31.A05)

1. Change in the editorial content remains a work in progress. The magazine added columns on contemporary Christian music and worship, as well as a higher education page. The latter carries a lead story or graphic on trends or news, plus a “scan” of activities among our colleges, universities, and seminaries.
2. Paid circulation as of January 2007 stood at 303,186 and complimentary copies at 19,758 (at an annual cost of \$130,400). Some \$175,000 is budgeted for circulation marketing efforts in 2007. Every congregation will receive a mailing this spring about subscription options, plus follow-up correspondence. Bishops have been asked to support an effort to have a minimal circulation of The Lutheran in every congregation, and where that is not possible, to help promote individual subscriptions.
3. The Lutheran now has congregational subscription plans in 4,561 of the denomination’s 10,389 congregations. There are 922 bulk plans (up from 300 in 2000) and 3,639 congregational plans (down from 4,997 in 2000).
4. The magazine’s budget for 2007 is \$3.48 million. Advertising revenue is projected at \$1.02 million, with subscription fulfillment pegged at \$2.43 million. A series of smaller revenue sources account for the balance. The magazine projects an operating surplus of \$1,005 in 2007. The Lutheran exceeded its projected 2006 surplus of \$2,000.
5. A two-year extension of the magazine’s contract with its printer was reached in December 2006. Reduced terms should result in low five-figure savings in 2007. Further, the magazine is now

bundled with other bulk mailings originating with the printing company, with savings at least equal to the 11 percent postal increase scheduled for this May.

6. A new product, The Little Lutheran, is being test-marketed in the Greater Milwaukee Synod in March and April. This magazine will be a monthly picture book for children ages six and under. It will help children learn about God's love for them and the world in which they live. The Little Lutheran will include simple, often rhymed text and feature colorful and engaging art. It will contain stories, prayers, puzzles, activities, and rituals that help children become aware of God's presence in and around them, and help introduce them to the knowledge that Jesus Christ is their Savior and friend. It is designed to help parents, grandparents, and the like nurture a child's spiritual awareness from a young age. If successful, The Little Lutheran has the potential of being marketed to other Lutheran bodies and retitled as The Little Christian for our ecumenical partners.
7. Use of the magazine's Website continues to grow. Some 92,000 unique visitors return three times monthly, with Web traffic boosting 470,000 page views a month. The front page of the site is refreshed with six new, free-to-all stories every Tuesday, and discussion hosts change every Tuesday. The staff blog is updated daily, as is breaking news. The site hosts 5,800 pages, with an average of 45 new articles added monthly. The home page will undergo an updating this year.
8. Annual subscription rates for The Lutheran remain at \$7.95 per subscription on the Congregational Plan and \$11.95 per subscription for the Leadership Plan. Individual subscriptions are \$15.95, still 30 percent less than the average denominational magazine. Rates were last increased in 2002.
9. The Lutheran will launch a new subscription program called the Synod Plan in early summer. It will first be offered in synods that publish a synod supplement that is bound into the middle of the magazine. Since most synods produce supplements four times a year, The Lutheran will offer to sell the magazine to congregations not already on some type of subscription plan the four times the supplements appear at a rate of \$3.95 a year.

Communication Services

Submitted by Ms. Kristi Bangert

The Communication Services unit shall interpret the work of this church, provide for this church's presence in public media, and coordinate the communication activities of this church's units. (17.21.A05)

Communication Services (CO) staff has dubbed 2007 as "the year of the message." As the ELCA begins a two-year observation of the 20th anniversary of its constituting convention, we are embarking on a campaign to articulate this church's core message, brand, and identity. The campaign's goals are to help ELCA members own and tell this church's story and, through that telling, to be instrumental in helping the ELCA grow.

CO is working with an agency to develop materials that will carry this church's message, brand, and identity to both internal (members) and external (non-members) audiences. We will conduct a pilot roll-out of this project with the Rocky Mountain Synod in the fall.

Recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) on Mission Funding, especially those specific to communication, are mirrored in the goals of the "message" campaign and in many of the goals of the churchwide organization's comprehensive communication plan. By 2008, CO staffing will reflect the churchwide organization's commitment to implementing the BRC's recommendations for communication.

Another component of the work on message, brand, and identity is the complete redevelopment of www.elca.org. A new, cohesive design, a more intuitive navigation system, and a content management system are some of the features being included in the redevelopment. We anticipate a roll-out of the new site late this year or early in 2008.

CO's public media group is working on a documentary on Northern Uganda called "Ready to Forgive: An African Story of Grace." The documentary will air on NBC network affiliate stations during December 2007 and January 2008, and on Hallmark Channel in early 2008 after the NBC contract expires. Also, Faith and Values Media has contracted with us to run our award-winning feature, "Glory to God Alone: the Life of J.S. Bach" on Hallmark Channel at least four more times over the next two years.

ELCA videos, documentaries, and other broadcast programing are finding new audiences on

www.video.google.com and www.youtube.com. On Google alone we've registered over 205,000 page views and more than 7,000 downloads since last June. Interviews with interesting guests from all walks of life are heard each week on Grace Matters, the radio ministry of the ELCA. Recently, Dr. Timothy Johnson, longtime medical editor for ABC News and an ordained minister of the Evangelical Covenant Church, was one of those guests. Pr. Peter W. Marty, Grace Matters' host, interviewed Johnson about Johnson's recent book, "Finding God in the Questions: A Personal Journey." Publicity about upcoming Grace Matters programs is delivered to listeners and radio stations via weekly e-mail "blasts" called E-notes.

News staff has been involved in organizing promotion for "What a Relief" in the Louisiana-Mississippi Gulf Coast for spring break. A staff member will travel to the area to report on the program, and visit media and congregations. A news staff person was present for the ELCA discipline committee hearing in Atlanta and responded to media questions on behalf of the churchwide organization. The staff worked with the Office of the Secretary in preparing the ELCA news story that followed the release of the committee's decision and report.

In other News news, publicity about the ELCA's participation in the annual "Souper Bowl of Caring" was organized by a news staff person working with congregations and youth groups around the country. A "mentoring" program to encourage and teach synod communicators how to build local media relationships has been established and is being directed by a news staff person. So far, three synods have participated, and two more are planned in the near future.

Expanded work on the Congregational Leadership Directory (Form B) is reflected in the 52,368 records that have been updated in Form B since June 1, 2006. While most congregations update information about their clergy and lay leaders electronically, last year 307 congregations requested paper forms. Of those, 259 paper forms were returned for entry into the leadership directory data base.

After 13 years as the ELCA's principle videographer and producer of Mosaic Television, Tim Frakes has resigned from CO to launch his own production company called, not surprisingly, Tim Frakes Productions. During his tenure, Tim has worked with hundreds of staff in the churchwide

organization, as well as with synod communicators, and clergy and lay people in congregations. His creativity, energy, and strong work ethic will be sorely missed.

In November, Tracie Watkins joined CO as a Web developer. This addition gives CO and the churchwide organization a full complement of Web developers to help manage the ever-growing Website and to prepare for the roll-out of the redeveloped site. ELCA.org has seen a steady increase in "page views," or the number of times an internet user looks at the Web site. In the last eight years of tracking Web statistics, we have seen more than a 900 percent increase of page views, resulting in over 5 million page views a month in 2007.

The ELCA's Good Gifts online giving Web site was launched on February 26 at <http://www.elca.org/scriptlib/ds/giving/>. Within ten minutes of going live, a donor gave \$100. Success!

The CO Web team is using Web 2.0 technologies, an emerging set of Internet-based tools that allows users to actively contribute to and customize their media, as an effective way to spread the ELCA's message and enlist the involvement of like-minded individuals. A newly redesigned young adult Web site is one of the applications of this technology. The site uses "Blogger" as a way to involve young adults and get their ideas out to a wider audience (<http://www.elca.org/youngadults/>).

In the same vein, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly Web site is offering a customized "widget" for users to download to their computer. When installed, the widget will continuously display the number of days until the Churchwide Assembly begins, as well as the current ELCA news headlines. Log on to <http://www.elca.org/assembly>.

The network of ELCA Resource Centers continues to serve as an ongoing channel to distribute and help members use ELCA-developed resources. This year the centers helped provide the impetus for "El Catecismo Menor de Lutero." The Association of Lutheran Resource Centers partners with Augsburg Fortress to offer a monthly conference call for resource updates for resource center directors.

Development Services

Submitted by Pr. Donald Hallberg

The Development Services unit shall oversee and direct efforts for support of the churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and coordinate the work of development for the churchwide organization. (17.41.B05)

It is working. The recommendations that came from the mission funding roundtable in 2003 by and large have been implemented and I believe are working. The roundtable recommended the creation of the Development Services unit to bring together all the major fundraising activities (outside of Sunday morning mission support) within one unit.

Accomplished. They recommended an integrated donor data system. Accomplished. Raiser's Edge is now up and running, yes with sweat and tears, but functioning and doing very well. The combined database has 295,817 entries. We are now able to do segmentation, donor research, and soon far better coordination of various donor mailings. In the period October 1, 2006, through January 31, 2007, gift processing staff added 47,954 new gifts and Development Service staff recorded 4,426 actions, including recorded visits and phone calls with donors.

The Blue Ribbon committee suggested that we add a major gift officer. Accomplished. I am pleased to say that we have a mission advancement officer for major gifts working in World Hunger with an expanded World Hunger team. The results in 2006 speak for themselves. A gift advancement officer has also been added to the ELCA Foundation, who is working with donors outside of World Hunger.

A general recommendation was given to continue to tell the story. Accomplished. DS/FO quarterly publication of *Legacies* was created specifically to tell missional stories, include an ask, and provide information on various gifting vehicles. The last issue of *Legacies* was sent to 83,000 households. With the reconfiguration of the Lutheran Center offices, those working in the general area of finance are on one floor: Office of the Treasurer, Mission Investment Fund, and Development Services/Foundation. Most importantly, gift processing staff for the Office of the Treasurer and gift processing staff for the Foundation are seated in proximity to one another.

It is working, 2006 year end. We give thanks! Many of these figures will be shared by the Treasurer as she reports on year-end financials. We rejoice and give thanks that the World Hunger and Disaster

Appeal, including Stand With Africa, received over \$20 million in 2006 nearly a 12 percent increase over the previous year. This raises the bar for us all, for as we rejoice and give thanks for the generosity of the saints of God, we still have not solved the problem of global and domestic hunger. The ELCA World Hunger Endowment also grew to just under \$5 million, which is an increase of 40 percent over year end 2005. The analysis of 2006 giving is still a work in progress. We added 4,870 new donors. A major factor, however, is the increased individual donor pool and heightened awareness of the ELCA World Hunger Appeal as a result of the overwhelming response to the 2005 disasters. Over 35,000 donors responded to the World Hunger and Disaster Appeal, with approximately 28,000 giving to World Hunger Appeal. Individual giving increased by 25 percent. We are pleased to report that we were able to renew 15 percent of the new donors who gave to the 2005 disasters.

We have had a marvelous response to both the *ELCA Good Gifts* catalog and to the new *ELCA Good Gifts online*. I urge you to go to the ELCA web page: www.elca.org and click on the "give now" button. The online giving page has been totally redesigned to more closely coordinate with the churchwide strategic plan. As of this writing, 5,841 donors have contributed to the mission of the ELCA through the catalog with 8,964 gifts totaling over \$1.5 million. The second biennial addition of the *ELCA Good Gifts* catalog will be distributed at the Churchwide Assembly. I urge you to use *ELCA Good Gifts* in your own gifting as an individual and as a family.

Vision for Mission, the annual appeal. Individuals, with some congregations, respond to the annual appeal that the ELCA calls Vision for Mission. In fiscal year 2006, 15,710 gifts were received or an increase of 23 percent over fiscal year 2005. Of that number, 3,403 were new donors. Our work as a team will be to continue to renew and upgrade these donors to the annual appeal or to move larger gifts into World Hunger, churchwide support, Fund for Leaders in Mission, and other vehicles. I especially appreciate the role of Carlos Peña in leading the Church Council and its advisors to consider a commitment to the annual appeal. In 2006 a total of 141 churchwide employees including those at Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, contributed \$93,791 to the annual fund.

Global Mission Sponsorship received over \$3.8 million toward its goal of \$4 million. Though under

the goal, it is significant in its support of Global Mission. Over \$2 million was received for special Level II projects such as partnership ministries with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, our companion churches in Africa, and Costa Rica. I give thanks for the leadership given to this ministry by Pr. David Lerseth who has served the church in Global Mission for 13 years. David has elected to retire at the end of August 2007. Thank you, David, for your leadership in this important endeavor of our ministry.

Fund for Leaders in Mission awarded its annual scholarships to Fund scholars with the entire Church Council and advisors when we last met. This is always a high point of our year. The Fund is now in transition as Cindy Halverson becomes the executive director of Development Services and president of the ELCA Foundation. Pr. Paul Hanson, from the South Dakota Synod, will assume leadership of the Fund for Leaders in Mission on April 2, 2007. It is our goal to announce at the Churchwide Assembly a new challenge grant under the theme "The Challenge that Matters." We have already visited with several donors who have made cash commitments totaling nearly \$1 million. We hope to raise the match goal to a \$1.5 million with a dollar given for every two dollars donated.

The ongoing emphasis of Foundation field staff is to conduct *Leave a Legacy for Ministry* seminars, which emphasize the importance of estate planning and life-long stewardship by remembering ministries supported in life as well as in death. Gifts to and through the ELCA Foundation totaled over \$33.5 million in 2006.

The Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, the investment pool for ELCA endowments, funds functioning as endowments, and also the investment vehicle for other ministries of this church, now totals \$320 million. Initial deposits to new accounts this year account for \$19.6 million, with additional deposits totaling \$9 million.

It has been a joy and a privilege for me to serve this church over the course of the past decade. I forever will be grateful for the opportunity afforded me to serve. I have been privileged to meet donors across this church, people who love and care dearly for our various ministries and who share significantly of their assets. I have also seen the church at work with our companion colleagues throughout the world. We are a privileged people in the United States. We are a privileged church. We are a church and people of

abundance. We must, I believe, continue to keep both the stories of mission and the challenge to share of our abundance before the saints of God in the ELCA. Thank you for your support. Thank you for sharing of your gifts. Thanks for the privilege of serving and being among you!

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

Submitted by Ms. Eva Roby

The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have primary responsibility for the development, administration, and promotion of Mission Investments. (17.51.A05)

Partnership

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) has participated in wide conversations with churchwide units and the Conference of Bishops on strategies for new starts. MIF also continues its work with the executives of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit (EOCM) to identify ways to enhance support for our mission congregations. The two units expect to conduct jointly at least two synod consultations during 2007 focused on collaborative efforts to support new and developing congregations within synods.

MIF is in dialogue with the Moravian Church in America relative to their interest in receiving loans, consulting, and investment services from MIF for their congregations. The MIF Board of Trustees and the ELCA Church Council have approved an enabling constitutional change that would allow for the expansion of current participants to include ecumenical partners. While this change would also make possible arrangements for service to other ecumenical partnerships, currently the only request has come from the Moravian Church. The proposal for changes in the constitution will be presented to the Churchwide Assembly for action in August 2007. MIF awaits official word from Northern Province president David Wickmann about the outcome of the most recent Provincial Elders Conference discussion regarding participation with MIF.

The Mission Investment Fund continues to work with the ELCA Foundation in their development of additional endowment fund pools, including an MIF fixed income product.

Finances

MIF continues to grow and maintain financial stability and good liquidity. At the end of its fiscal

year on December 31, 2006, there were 708 loans with outstanding balances of \$382.6 million, a growth of 75 loans and \$46.5 million from December 31, 2005.

This is a 73 percent or \$161 million increase in loans over the past three years. In addition to loans, MIF holds \$17.4 million in real estate for congregations.

A major source of new funds to meet loan demand is the sale of mission investment obligations. As of December 2006, total investment obligations were \$326.6 million, with almost 20,000 accounts for over 11,000 investors. This represents a growth of 667 investors and \$8.9 million since December 31, 2005. There are 3,965 congregations and institutions investing with MIF with a combined balance of \$232.1 million, which is 71 percent of total investment obligations. Individual investors number 7,175 and their investments total \$94.5 million. The balance of the loan growth was funded primarily by a decrease of \$36.1 million in our investment portfolio.

Operations

MIF has been in the process of developing a Health Savings Account (HSA) offering and expects to introduce this new product to customers by July 1, 2007. While some of the details of the product design are still being finalized, it is known that the account will offer checking and debit card features. In addition, MIF will offer a Web-based service center that will include interactive forms to assist customers in opening an HSA.

With the introduction of the HSA service center, MIF will also launch a Web-based Individual Retirement Account (IRA) service center. MIF customers will be able to make an online request for information or complete an online IRA application. In addition, they will have access to a repository of frequently asked questions, investment tutorials, and monthly news articles that are focused on timely, consumer oriented topics.

Strategic Planning

In November 2006, the MIF Board of Trustees approved the strategic plan for 2007-2009. The strategic priorities of this plan are as follows:

- Enhance key partnerships with members, congregations, synods, churchwide units, and other ELCA-related ministries;
- Make strategic adjustments to products and services offered by MIF;
- Create a sales and service culture focused on ministry needs; and

- Provide enhanced support to congregations throughout their development life cycle.

The MIF 2007-2009 strategic plan places emphasis on partnership and ministry growth. We believe that focusing on new ways to partner across this church to support ministry, particularly the support of congregational growth and development, will be critical to achieving our mission. With the approval of the strategic plan, MIF staff has begun developing the underlying outcomes and targets for each of the priorities.

Real Estate

For the period ending December 31, 2006, the Mission Investment Fund purchased three properties at a total cost of \$0.8 million. Land was purchased for Hope Lutheran Church in Columbus, Neb.; Risen Lord Lutheran Church in Pine, Colo.; and Christ the King Lutheran Church in Lapeer, Mich. In addition, three properties with a total cost of \$1.5 million were placed under contract in 2006 and are scheduled to close in 2007. In 2006, MIF liquidated five properties for a total sale amount of \$2.1 million.

Unit Recommendations for Church Council Action

Board of Pensions

Submitted by: Mr. John G. Kapanke, President

Category I: Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.

- Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan to allow the Board of Pensions to roll certain terminated member's small accounts to IRAs.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to reflect minor and technical changes and clarify current practices.
- Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to allow a part-time student to participate in the plan if his or her qualified health care provider verifies that the child is only able to attend school part-time due to health reasons.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to reflect the removal of Standard Benefits Coverage.
- Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to reflect increased preventive services benefits designed to encourage optimal utilization and earlier identification of medical conditions.
- Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to reflect the 2008 plan design, which features deductibles based on coverage option elected (e.g., member only, member and spouse, member plus children, and member plus spouse plus children).
- Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to give flexibility to implement the PPO vendor's transition rules due to 2008 changes.
- Approved amendments to the Appendix of the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to set the deductibles and copayments in the 2008 plan design.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved an amendment to the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan to allow the Board of Pensions to roll certain terminated member's small accounts to IRAs.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan for the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society to allow the Board of Pensions to roll certain terminated member's small accounts to IRAs.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan for the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Continuation of the ALC and LCA Minimum and Non-Contributory Pension Plans to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.
- Approved amendment to the ELCA Supplemental Retirement Plan for Government Chaplains to modify and simplify the plan amendment approval process.

Category II: Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.

- Approved a resolution eliminating and deleting the "Investment Policy and Guidelines All Funds" document from the Investment Policy Documents Book because it no longer served a useful purpose.
- Approved a resolution to re-elect John G. Kapanke as President of the Board of Pensions for the period October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2011.

Category III. Other procedures and board actions.

- Approved a resolution acknowledging the resignation of Board Trustee, David A. Swartling.

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Our Calling in Education

Proposed Social Statement

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Our Calling in Education

Prologue: Education and Vocation

Our calling in education is closely tied to a Lutheran understanding of vocation. While many understand vocation as a job or career or as the call to be a pastor or priest, Lutherans understand vocation as a calling from God that encompasses all of life for all the faithful.

Vocation involves God's saving call to us in baptism and life lived in joyful response to this call. In Jesus Christ we are loved by a gracious God who frees us to love our neighbor and promote the common good; in gratitude for God's love, we live out our vocation in our places of responsibility in daily life—home, congregation, work place, neighborhood, nation, and global society.

Education belongs to our baptismal vocation. Our particular calling in education is two-fold: to educate people in the Christian faith for their vocation and to strive with others to ensure that all have access to high quality education that develops personal gifts and abilities and serves the common good. This calling embraces all people in both Church and society.

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America express gratitude for homes and congregations that carry out this calling in education. We give thanks to God for other institutions and individuals in all of education's varied settings: for public, Lutheran, and other private early childhood education centers, schools, colleges, and universities; for outdoor ministries and for campus ministries; and for all who live out their vocation as

1 students, parents, pastors, lay professionals, teachers, administrators, staff members,
2 directors, board members, and trustees in these educational settings.

3
4 In our calling in education, we recognize our special responsibility and accountability in
5 certain specific areas:

- 6 • We affirm the essential role of parents and congregations in the faith formation of
7 young people and urge revitalization of the baptismal commitment to educate in
8 the faith for vocation, a commitment that continues throughout life.
- 9 • In light of the essential role of public education in serving the common good of
10 the society and in the face of continuing concern for the effectiveness of some
11 public schools, the lack of equitable access for many students to high quality
12 schools, and the often inadequate provision of financial resources, we affirm and
13 advocate for the equitable, sufficient, and effective funding of public schools.
- 14 • In view of the expanding role of ELCA early childhood education centers and
15 schools in providing outreach and distinctive religious educational opportunities
16 to growing numbers of children, we affirm these schools and encourage synods,
17 pastors, congregations, and members to claim and support this unique mission
18 opportunity.
- 19 • In gratitude for the extraordinary work of ELCA colleges and universities in
20 preparing students for vocation in the Church and world and for ELCA seminaries
21 in their preparation of leaders for our church, we affirm the role of these
22 institutions and encourage them to sustain and strengthen those elements that
23 distinguish the Lutheran tradition in higher education and theological education.
- 24 • In gratitude for public higher education and the vital role of ELCA campus
25 ministries in public and private universities and in recognition of the special
26 cultural, missional, and financial challenges they face, we affirm these ministries
27 and urge new and creative collaborative efforts in their support.
- 28 • In recognition of the growing costs of Lutheran, public, and private higher
29 education, which limit access for many students, we affirm foundations,

1 corporations, congregations, institutions, and individuals who provide financial
2 assistance to students and urge both state and federal governments to expand grant
3 funding for low- and middle-income students who need it.

4

5

6

7

8

1. What Does God Have to Do with Education?

9

10 Education, as understood in this social statement, refers in a broad sense to learning,
11 teaching, and knowing as a dimension of human life. It is a lifelong activity that
12 permeates all that we do. In a narrower sense, education refers to intentional activity in
13 which we engage one another in learning. We create institutions and situations whose
14 purposes are to encourage, transmit, and advance human learning and to shape and equip
15 new generations. Through education we are formed as persons, acquiring knowledge,
16 wisdom, attitudes, beliefs, skills, and abilities to think, feel, and act in particular ways.

17

18 When the Christian church talks about education, it does so in the light of its faith in God:
19 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christians believe that God creates human beings with
20 ability to learn, teach, and know and that God is active in and through education. God's
21 creative activity encompasses all people and their education, and the redeeming gospel of
22 Jesus Christ gives the Church a distinctive mandate in education.

23

Our Lutheran Legacy

25 From the time of the Reformation, the Lutheran church has been a teaching and learning
26 church. Martin Luther, a university professor, pursued the reform of education on all
27 levels as an integral part of his reform of Church and society. With his teaching on
28 vocation, Luther understood the Christian life to be one of service to God and neighbor in
29 one's everyday places of responsibility; education equipped Christians for this vocation.
30 He taught that education served the common good of Church and society: In a move

1 unusual for his day, he taught that schools for all—both those who were wealthy and
2 those who were poor, both boys and girls—were necessary so that the Church would
3 have learned and faithful pastors and the civil community would have wise and good
4 rulers.¹ He insisted that Christians learn to read, understand, and interpret the Bible and
5 know the content of their faith. He stressed the importance of teaching faith and love in
6 the home by word and example, writing “The Small Catechism” to assist parents in this
7 task.²

8
9 Lutherans in North America and the Caribbean followed Luther’s call to educate in
10 home, Church, and society. They prayed and held devotions in the home, taught the faith
11 in Sunday school and through catechetical instruction, founded schools, colleges, and
12 seminaries of all sorts, and established campus ministries and outdoor ministries. They
13 strongly supported public education, and many Lutherans have carried out their calling as
14 educators in a wide array of educational institutions. This legacy lives on in the
15 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as one of its defining characteristics.

16
17 **The God Who Calls Us**

18 In baptism we are called to live in faith and hope in God and in love to neighbor in the
19 ordinary relationships of daily life. God’s wondrous and awesome call to us gives joy,
20 confidence, seriousness, and purpose to all of life. It holds together faith and love, God
21 and neighbor, the individual and community, and a person’s gifts and the needs of others
22 and of the earth. In our places of responsibility in family, work, society, and Church,
23 God’s living call comes to us to serve others, seek justice, promote the common good,
24 and care for creation competently and creatively with our gifts and abilities. This
25 Lutheran understanding of vocation is especially important for our approach to education
26 today.

27
28 Our faith in the God who calls us provides a critical and constructive perspective to guide
29 us in our calling in education today.³

1 ***The God Who Calls Us Is “the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth”***

2 God’s good creation with its amazing variety and diversity presents the context for
3 vocation. A patterned and structured reality that is reliable and knowable, creation is also
4 changing, open, and inexhaustible in what it discloses to human knowledge. Dependent
5 on the one who calls it into existence out of nothing (cf. Romans 4:17), creation’s
6 purpose is to glorify and be in communion with the triune God. Education belongs to the
7 goodness of creation through which we praise the Creator.

8
9 Education depends on and should reflect who we are as creatures of God. Humanity is
10 one, and all are of equal worth before God. Education is always to respect the dignity we
11 receive in being created in “the image of God.” The Creator gives us responsibility for
12 the life and education of new generations and for making the earth a fitting home for
13 human beings and other creatures (Genesis 1:26-28). To carry out these divine mandates
14 we are enabled to learn, teach, and know in a world that can be known, at least in part.

15
16 Because God creates us as embodied minds and spirits, education involves us as whole
17 persons. Our affections, will, and intellect interact in our learning and teaching. We
18 come to know in a variety of ways. We are limited creatures, subject to death, who learn,
19 teach, and know with particular perspectives, assumptions, and commitments. Our
20 knowledge is always partial and we cannot know everything, so we are always compelled
21 to select what we should learn and teach. As social beings who rely on other people, we
22 are created for living in love with God and others and for caring for the earth on which
23 we depend. We accept personal responsibility to learn and know throughout our lives
24 with and for others.

25
26 The necessity, capacity, love, and delight to learn, teach, and know come from God. We
27 are blessed with the gifts of memory, self-consciousness, and anticipation. We marvel at
28 the divinely given abilities to communicate, reason, explore new realities, discover
29 meaning and truth, create art, technology, and complex societies, enjoy beauty, and

1 discern what is right and good. We approach education with awe, wonder, and gratitude
2 to the triune God.

3
4 The God who calls us continues to preserve and bless a good but fallen creation. The
5 Bible identifies the root of what corrupts creation as human sin, the rupture in our
6 relationship with God. Instead of loving God with all our being, we turn away from our
7 Creator and center our lives on ourselves, consistently loving ourselves more than we do
8 God and our neighbor. Sin profoundly disrupts and distorts human community,
9 penetrating the heart of individuals and entangling human institutions.

10
11 Sin's power persistently warps and corrupts human learning and educational institutions.
12 Our lives are marked by ignorance—the opposite of knowledge—and by folly—the
13 opposite of wisdom. In a society of inequalities, our school systems often reinforce
14 privilege, denying equitable access to a high quality education for all. In pride we claim
15 too much for our limited grasp of intellectual or moral truth, and in despair we think that
16 there is no truth and no right and wrong. We use knowledge to dominate or harm others,
17 to deny them their humanity, and to ravish the earth rather than to serve the neighbor.
18 We put our trust in our knowledge or wisdom to justify our existence before God.

19
20 Although creation is bound in sin and death, God continues to preserve, create, bless, and
21 govern the world, bringing forth ever-new wonders. People and institutions are “masks
22 of God,” in Luther's phrase. That is, God provides for the health and well-being of the
23 earth and its creatures through the actions of people and the working of human
24 institutions, as well as by the processes of nature. At the same time, God holds all people
25 accountable to act responsibly in human affairs and enables them to strive for and achieve
26 degrees of “civil righteousness,” that is, a peace and justice necessary and possible in a
27 sinful world.⁴

28
29 All people share the need and responsibility to be educated in civil righteousness and the
30 matters of earthly life. We see God at work when people dedicate themselves to this

responsibility and in the good they accomplish through their efforts. God's continuing creative activity calls us to support governments and other institutions that enact just educational policies and create schools that foster human flourishing, serve the common good, and care for creation.

The God Who Calls Us Is "Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord"

Through the gospel, the saving news of God's love in Jesus Christ for sinners, we are freed to care for education as an arena for service to the neighbor. The gospel forgives us, liberates us from the power of sin, death, and evil, and empowers us to amend our lives to love the neighbor, seek justice, and care for the earth. Education is not a means to secure our personal salvation but a way to benefit the neighbor.

Justified before God by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Jesus Christ alone, we do not look to human learning, teaching, and knowing as means to reconcile us with God. Our lives do not receive ultimate meaning by how much learning or academic recognition we have. The gospel frees us from judging our human worth and that of others by their education or any other accomplishment.

We live the paradox of being sinners and saints at the same time, struggling with the realities of imperfection, ambiguity, and evil in and around us; yet we are people on the way, constantly transformed by God's grace and awaiting the resurrection of the dead and the fulfillment of the whole creation in God's eternal reign. Confident of the gospel's promise of God's final victory, we live out our calling in education now under the cross as forgiven sinners, turning daily to God to confess our sin and receive forgiveness and new life.

The one who saves us is also our teacher. By his life and teachings, Jesus of Nazareth teaches us what it means to be truly human, living and dying for others. He teaches us to love God with our whole being—including with all our mind—and our neighbor as

1 ourselves (Luke 10:27). He bids us to care for “the least of these who are members of my
2 family” (Matthew 25:31-46; 40).

3
4 ***The God Who Calls Is “the Holy Spirit”***

5 By means of the gospel the Holy Spirit calls us into the Church, the community of
6 believers that gathers around Word and Sacrament. The risen Lord Jesus instructs his
7 followers to “go . . . make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the
8 Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching* them to obey everything that I
9 have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20; italics added). We teach and learn in the
10 Church so that we will not be conformed to the world but instead be disciples who are
11 transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2).

12
13 The Church has been given the distinctive mandate to educate in the faith for vocation—
14 to instruct, form, and bring forth faithful, courageous, and wise disciples to live out their
15 baptismal vocation in Church and world. In baptism, we are buried with Christ into
16 death and freed to “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4), to a new way of being in the
17 world marked by faith, hope, and love.

18
19 In educating for our vocation given in baptism, we rely on the Holy Spirit to work
20 through us to shape our character and to produce “the fruit of the Spirit [:] love, joy,
21 peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”
22 (Galatians 5:22-23). The same Spirit gives us varieties of gifts “for the common good” (1
23 Corinthians 12:4-7). Sharing one hope, “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and
24 Father of all,” we members of the body contribute in different ways “to equip the saints
25 for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:5, 12). We
26 build up life in community by discerning and nurturing members’ gifts, receiving them in
27 gratitude, and sharing our gifts joyfully.

28
29 Dependent on the Holy Spirit, education in the Church centers in worship—in Word and
30 Sacrament—and permeates all of congregational life and mission. It addresses us as

1 whole persons in our relationships, shaping the way we think, feel, and act. It strengthens
2 our trust in the gospel, cultivates the gifts of the Spirit, and teaches us what is true about
3 God's relationship with creation on the basis of the Bible and the Church's doctrines. It
4 encourages us to understand and affirm the content of our faith in ways that invite us into
5 the wondrous mystery of God's love for the world that passes all understanding.

6
7 The Church in education confesses and gives voice to God's ultimate truth for
8 humankind and creation revealed in the gospel. In seeking to discern and understand
9 God's truth and its meaning for life, the Church teaches the knowledge of faith boldly
10 and in a spirit of humility, knowing we "now we see in a mirror, dimly" (1 Corinthians
11 13:12). At the same time the Church in education learns from and is challenged by
12 knowledge and insight coming from all people. Instead of dismissing this learning in the
13 name of faith or faith in the name of such learning, we say, "yes" both to faith and its
14 knowledge and to God's gift of reason. Confident that the God revealed in Jesus Christ is
15 the source of all truth, we affirm and value the discovery and transmission of true
16 knowledge wherever and however it occurs. Paul's admonition voices our open,
17 discerning attitude toward human learning: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable,
18 whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if
19 there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things"
20 (Philippians 4:8).

21
22 Our calling in education energetically pursues excellent education in our church and
23 society. If we neglect teaching the faith for vocation, we betray our distinctive mandate
24 and are unprepared to serve our neighbor in the world. If we neglect our responsibilities
25 for the education of all people in earthly matters and civil righteousness, we close our
26 eyes to God's continuous creating activity and fall short in loving our neighbor and
27 serving the common good. Education in both society and Church is God-pleasing, for
28 the God who calls us in vocation is both creator and preserver and redeemer and
29 sanctifier.

Our Calling in Education Today

We live our calling in education today in a world that is increasingly interconnected and in a society that is becoming more pluralistic. Contemporary culture brings new marvels yet also conveys messages that hinder learning and clash with the Church's beliefs. Science and technology continuously re-shape our world, bringing new benefits as well as new dangers and creating new moral dilemmas and theological challenges. Many voices point to the crucial significance of early childhood education as well as to the need for and the possibilities of lifelong learning. Millions of men, women, and children in our affluent society live in poverty, and most young people who live in poverty do not have fair access to good schools. Recognizing how essential formal education is for living in today's world, our society has developed an elaborate array of public and private schools from pre-school through post-graduate. Yet performance of educational institutions in our society is often criticized, and many reform proposals are advanced.

Within this complex, changing, and challenging context we of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America claim and aspire to renew our calling in education. We are grateful for and challenged by the legacy we have received, and we are aware that we too often fall short in our calling. We pledge to sustain, renew, and where need be, reform our calling in education for our time and place so that we will be a stronger, livelier, and more faithful teaching and learning church.

Our calling in education belongs to our entire church. Individuals, families, congregations, early childhood education centers and schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, outdoor ministries, campus ministries, lifelong learning centers, publishing ministry, social ministry organizations, synods, and the churchwide organization all participate in this calling. It involves lifelong learning in formal and non-formal settings. It includes our pastors and bishops as teachers of the faith who speak to heart and mind and who address public issues of education. In our calling in education we learn from our ecumenical partners, other churches, and the Church throughout the world and ages

as well as from other religions and secular knowledge. We honor and support parents, pastors, students, educators, citizens, and all who carry out their callings in education.

This social statement calls our church in light of our faith to engage, deliberate, and act with respect to four contexts: home and congregation, public education, our church's own educational institutions, and public colleges and universities. Our calling in education is to:

- communicate the faith to children and youth with power and conviction in home and congregation where lifelong learning in the faith is expected and encouraged;
- advocate equitable access to excellent education for all young people;
- sustain and strengthen our early childhood education centers, schools, colleges and universities, and seminaries as an integral and integrated part of our church's mission in education; and
- support public higher education to serve the common good and rejoice in the faithful presence of our campus ministry in public colleges and universities.

2. What Faith Will Our Children Have?

Faith Formation from Generation to Generation

Luther taught us, "Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God."⁵ All have faith in something; the question is: Is it trust in the living God or in something else? Will our children be nurtured and transformed by the faith and community that trusts and confesses the God who calls us?

Few questions are more urgent and significant for our church's life and mission. The answers will depend in large part on whether or not we nurture our children and encourage adults to grow in faith throughout their entire lives. Children brought to the baptismal font often become distant from the community of faith as they move toward

1 becoming adults. Many adults do not consider their own ongoing and intentional faith
2 formation to be vital to their lives as Christians.

3
4 Each generation faces its own challenges in maintaining, nurturing, and passing on the
5 faith. In our time these challenges are profound and pervasive. Attempts to
6 communicate the faith face the demands and the fragmentation of modern life, numerous
7 religions and ideologies competing for our loyalty, and the ever-present messages that tell
8 us that success and happiness come from consuming goods and pursuing individual
9 desires and pleasures. The disconnect between home and congregation, our hesitance to
10 witness to the gospel, and our lack of commitment to be lifelong learners impair
11 continued faith formation.

12 13 **Lifelong Learning**

14 Faith formation begins at baptism and continues throughout life. That truth shapes our
15 understanding and practice of educating in the faith for vocation. A teaching and
16 learning church invites the baptized of all ages—from infants to older adults—into a
17 continuous discipline of learning and faith formation.

18
19 As Christians mature in their knowledge and experience in the world, their faith should
20 also deepen and mature. If our knowledge of the faith fails to keep up with our
21 knowledge of the world, then our understanding of God will be affected. As we grow
22 older, a changing world presents new questions and dilemmas to us, and based on our
23 continuing life experience, we raise new questions about our world and our faith.
24 Continued growth and learning in the faith enable us to see how our faith gives direction
25 and sheds light on our changing lives.

26
27 Because learning and being formed in the faith is a lifelong opportunity and task, we urge
28 Christians throughout their lives to assume personal responsibility to grow in their faith
29 by:

- 30 • deepening their relationship with God through worship and prayer;

- 1 • maturing in their knowledge of the Bible and the Church's doctrines;
- 2 • learning by doing, practicing their faith in daily living, service, and justice;
- 3 • learning and using the art and skills of speaking the truth in love and discerning
- 4 together the gospel's meaning for life;⁶ and
- 5 • connecting their baptismal vocation and their specific callings in daily life.

6
7 Where adults are vigorous learners in the faith, children and young people will have
8 models and companions for their own learning, adults will learn from children and young
9 people, and all generations will grow together in their faith.

10
11 **“Let the little children come to me.”**

12 While adults are responsible for their own lifelong learning, they also bear a particular
13 responsibility to nurture the faith of the next generation. The Bible communicates a keen
14 sense of how generations are bound together in networks of mutual obligation. The elder
15 generation is to transmit its knowledge, wisdom, and faith, and the younger generation is
16 to honor the blessings it receives. “Train children in the right way, and when old, they
17 will not stray” (Proverbs 22:6). The Bible as well as church history testifies to the
18 significance of educating children in the faith. Experience and contemporary studies
19 confirm the importance of early childhood education. Passing on the faith to a new
20 generation begins in infancy and continues through adulthood.

21
22 Jesus invited the children (Mark 10:13-16; cf., Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17), and
23 so we are to welcome children, teaching and learning from them in ways that recognize
24 their dignity and complexity. The Church's traditions on children help us to understand
25 children from different perspectives and to hold these diverse ways together in tension.⁷

26
27 For example, children are both:

- 1 • *gifts of God.* God entrusts parents, the Church, and society to welcome and care
2 for children as full participants of their communities. As gifts of God, children
3 are sources of hope, joy, delight, and also obligation.
- 4 • *and sinful creatures and moral agents.* Children, “re-born” in baptism, share in
5 the solidarity and equality of sin common to all (Romans 3:10). Furthermore,
6 children are moral agents who have growing degrees of responsibility for what
7 they do and who may act in ways that are self-centered and harmful to themselves
8 and others. Recognizing that children are sinful is never a warrant to abuse and
9 treat them inhumanely; rather it is a caution against an idealistic view of children
10 as primarily innocent beings who automatically love God and others. Children,
11 therefore, need to be formed for their vocation and that with gentleness and love.

12
13 Children are both:

- 14 • *fully human and made in the image of God.* Children therefore are worthy of the
15 dignity and respect due to all human beings. Jesus reinforced the dignity of all
16 children by welcoming and blessing them and saying that to them belongs the
17 kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:14, 15).
- 18 • *and developing beings who need instruction and guidance.* Children require
19 nurture and guidance to develop into intellectually, morally, and spiritually
20 mature adults.

21
22
23 Children are both:

- 24 • *models and teachers of faith.* In striking ways, Jesus held up children as teachers
25 of adults. “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will
26 never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is
27 the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3, 4).
- 28 • *and orphans, neighbors, and strangers in need of justice and compassion.* The
29 Bible also reminds us that children may be among the most vulnerable members

1 of society. Many are impoverished, neglected, abandoned, and abused. They
2 need protection, justice, and compassion. Children are our neighbors whom we
3 are called to love.

4
5 We enrich our welcoming of children to a life of faith by holding together these diverse
6 perspectives on who they are. Because they are gifts of God, for example, we will
7 respect their dignity and bring joy, laughter, and a sense of obligation into teaching and
8 forming them in home and congregation. Because they—like all the baptized—are
9 sinners as well as saints and in need of instruction, we will emphasize the vital role of
10 families in instilling the habits and practices of faithful living, and we will develop
11 substantial congregational programs of faith formation. We will introduce them to good
12 examples, mentors, and stories of faith and service and help them discern their callings.
13 Remembering that Jesus saw children as teachers of the faith, we will listen attentively to
14 them, honor their insights and questions, and learn from them. We will give special
15 attention to children who are most vulnerable and those who have been wounded, and we
16 will become stronger advocates for them.

17

18 **A Mutual Environment of Living Faith**

19

20 Both home and congregation are responsible for passing on the faith to children and
21 youth. Where each carries out its responsibility faithfully and is engaged in a fruitful
22 partnership with the other—trusting in the Holy Spirit to bless their faithfulness—
23 children and youth are baptized, grow, and dwell in an environment of living faith.

24

25 In such an environment, both home and congregation anchor their teaching in the Bible
26 and in Luther's "The Small Catechism." They nurture in children and youth faith, hope,
27 and love. They teach and discuss the Church's doctrines, creeds, the liturgy, and moral
28 beliefs. They live out together Christian practices, such as praying, worshiping, singing,
29 visiting people who are sick, seeking justice with people who experience poverty or
30 discrimination, and caring for the earth.

1
2 Many children and youth, however, do not experience a mutually supportive environment
3 in home and congregation. Most baptized children grow up in homes where faith
4 formation is not part of everyday living, even among families who are active in
5 congregational life.⁸ Adolescent youth who identify themselves as Christian often have
6 great difficulty explaining what they believe. Many have a vague concept of God and
7 view religion as merely an instrument to make them happy and morally good.⁹ After
8 catechetical instruction many young people begin to lose interest in participating in
9 congregational life. Parents and other caregivers often do not educate their children in
10 the faith for vocation, and congregations often do little to encourage and assist them. We
11 dare not ignore the seriousness of this state of affairs.

12
13 Reform begins at baptism, where congregations and sponsors and home meet. At
14 baptism, through which God grants us new life, parents and sponsors commit themselves
15 before God and the congregation to educate children in the faith.¹⁰ Pastors, associates in
16 ministry, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, and the community of faith need to remind
17 parents, caregivers, and sponsors of their pledge and help them fulfill it, and parents need
18 to remind pastors and the community of faith to help them.

19
20 Parents nurture and instruct in the faith by offering a good example to their children.
21 They do so by modeling prayer, hymn singing, Bible study, and private devotional
22 reading; attending worship and Sunday school with their children and participating in the
23 life of the congregation; serving the poor and caring for creation, and witnessing to the
24 gospel and faithfully living out their callings. Providing a good example, however, is not
25 enough. Parents' awesome responsibility also includes encouraging their children to pray
26 publicly and privately, read devotions, witness to their faith, deepen their knowledge of
27 their faith, and take part in activities of generosity, service, and justice. Families have
28 unique opportunities to talk together about matters of faith and vocation. As parents

1 teach the faith, they learn from their children and are themselves more deeply formed in
2 the faith. The home itself is to be a domestic church for the whole family.

3
4 Parents cannot undertake this important task unsupported. In baptizing children,
5 congregations also accept responsibility for forming children and youth in the faith.
6 Equipping parents for their vocation as parents belongs among a congregation's chief
7 priorities. This begins by teaching persistently and boldly that it is the calling and
8 obligation as well as the delight of parents to educate their young people in the faith.
9 Where parents are not involved in educating in the faith, congregations have heightened
10 responsibility to take on this challenge.

11
12 Congregations' responsibility includes providing strong programs of faith formation for
13 children and youth that involve parents and other adults. Through classes, parenting
14 groups and mentoring programs, congregations provide opportunities to study the
15 Scriptures, to discuss fears and hopes, to learn new ideas, and to become acquainted with
16 resources to support those responsible for the task of forming children in the faith.

17
18 Congregations should welcome children and youth of all ages in worship, Sunday school,
19 catechetical instruction, and youth ministry and be attentive to the changes going on in
20 young peoples' lives. They will give special attention to engaging post-confirmation
21 youth in the congregation's life.

22
23 Congregations can also strengthen the faith formation of children, youth, and adults by
24 encouraging them to take part in our church's outdoor ministries. Numerous conference
25 centers, camps, and retreat centers positively shape the faith and lives of people of all
26 ages. Many young people, families, and leaders of our church testify to the important
27 role of these outdoor ministries in their faith formation and spiritual development.¹¹

28
29 ELCA seminaries provide important support for those involved in the faith formation of
30 all ages. Our tradition has long valued the teaching role in the congregation of those

1 trained in theological education, and we look to pastors, deaconesses, diaconal ministers,
2 associates in ministry, and lay leaders to work with congregations and parents in the
3 crucial task of forming the faith of all generations. We therefore expect seminaries to
4 take seriously the importance of Christian education and youth and family ministry and to
5 educate all students for excellence in leadership in these areas.

6
7 We also call upon the ELCA to continue and expand the provision of creative and
8 comprehensive resources necessary to enable parents and congregations to help form the
9 faith of all generations.

11 **Equipping Faithful and Discerning Students**

12 During their formative years, young people face the challenge of learning to discern and
13 pursue what is good and right amid conflicting ideas and enticing alternative ways of
14 living. An environment of living faith equips them to grow and mature in their baptismal
15 calling in a pluralistic culture that exhibits both God's goodness and sin's corruption. In
16 such an environment parents willingly accept their obligation for their children, create the
17 structure and climate for children to grow in freedom, and set parameters on how the
18 culture will be allowed to influence their children.

19
20 Especially important during these formative years is their schooling experience. Parents
21 as well as congregations will teach their children and young people that being a student is
22 a calling—a way to serve God and others. They will convey to them a love for learning
23 that opens youthful minds to the exciting quest for knowledge. Faith inspires us to
24 understand God's world and to delight in the discovery of truth. Students are called to
25 take the wonderful opportunity and demanding responsibility of learning with utmost
26 seriousness, showing diligence, discipline, lively interest, honesty, creativity, and respect
27 for their teachers.

1 In fulfilling their baptismal pledge, parents will carefully consider where their children
2 attend school and the education they receive. Whether they send their children to a
3 public school, a Lutheran school, other Christian school, private school, or home school
4 them, parents will be concerned that their children receive a high quality education and
5 develop a vibrant faith active in love. Parents weigh many factors in selecting a school.
6 Some of these factors are the gifts and needs of the child, the schooling options available,
7 the desire or not for a faith-based education, and the cost. Pastors, other rostered leaders,
8 and other congregational members can help parents think through their possibilities, and
9 congregations can support them in their options.

10
11 Schools rightly expose their students to a wide variety of ideas, beliefs, and values but
12 often find it difficult to provide a basis on which to evaluate moral and belief systems.
13 When schools do not teach about religion, students may conclude that religion is not
14 important for “real life” or that what is right and wrong is only a “matter of opinion.”
15 Some schools, including religious ones, may promote beliefs and attitudes that denigrate
16 certain racial, ethnic, religious, or other groups of people.

17
18 Attentive to what their children are learning in school, home and congregation will seek
19 to deepen their young people’s understanding of their faith and vocation. Pastors, other
20 educational leaders, and parents will seize opportunities to listen carefully to their
21 questions, to explore openly their struggles and concerns, to help them make sense of
22 their faith and learning, and to discern what is good and true in a contested world.

24 **Guidelines for Our Ministry of Faith Formation**

25
26 How congregations carry out their educational responsibilities for children, youth, and
27 adults of all ages takes many forms. The following guidelines are designed to help
28 congregations focus intentionally on faith formation:

- 29
30 • Educational ministries will:

- 1 ○ rely on the Holy Spirit to work through education to form, guide, and
- 2 enlighten learners in the faith;
- 3 ○ inspire, inform, and challenge children, youth, and adults with faithful,
- 4 interesting, and effective teaching and learning;
- 5 ○ implement educational materials and programs that are rooted in the triune
- 6 God, the Bible, and the Lutheran Confessions;
- 7 ○ intentionally plan and assure that the education ministry of the
- 8 congregation is centered in and flows out of worship;
- 9 ○ encourage Christians to be lifelong learners in the faith, providing
- 10 opportunities for all to grow in their faith and to be equipped for their
- 11 vocation in the Church and the world;
- 12 ○ provide opportunities for discussing and studying social issues, ethics,
- 13 science, and other religions in light of faith;
- 14 ○ incorporate the best teaching and learning methods available with a
- 15 willingness to try new approaches; and
- 16 ○ incorporate educational programs and practices appropriate to the age,
- 17 interest, learning abilities, and other characteristics of the people for whom
- 18 they are intended.
- 19
- 20 • Children, youth, and family ministries will:
- 21 ○ welcome and educate children and youth in ways that recognize their
- 22 wonderful complexity and dignity;
- 23 ○ give priority to the ministries of children, youth, and families through
- 24 trained leadership, finances, and resources; and
- 25 ○ work to strengthen the family and to create an intentional partnership
- 26 between the congregation and the home.
- 27
- 28 • Educational ministry leadership will:

- support the pastors and other leaders who are called to be teachers of the faith;
- provide for the ongoing education of teachers;¹² and
- draw on the resources and people available in our church including ELCA program units and take advantage of opportunities offered by our seminaries, colleges, and lifelong learning centers.¹³

A vibrant congregational ministry in education for children, youth, and adults carries out the biblical mandate “to equip the saints” (Ephesians 4:12) and prepares them for their vocation in daily life. It gives us hope that all of the generations will have a living faith in the God who calls us.

3. Will All Children and Youth Have Access to High Quality Education?

Schools for All

“A city’s best and greatest welfare, safety, and strength consist in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable, and well-educated citizens.”¹⁴ So wrote Luther in his appeal to city governments to establish schools. Then as now effective schools are a blessing to society, preparing students for their future callings and responsibilities. In order that students will be prepared for their callings and responsibilities, we expect all schools—public, private, Lutheran, other religious or home schools—to fulfill at least four purposes for students in age-appropriate ways. Schools should:

- 1) prepare students academically;
- 2) encourage their personal flourishing, developing their knowledge and wisdom and instilling a delight in learning;
- 3) prepare students for productive work and financial responsibility; and
- 4) equip them to live and serve in a complex, diverse, and interdependent global society and to be responsible and civil citizens.

High quality schools excel in accomplishing these purposes.

1
2 While public, religious and private schools as well as home schooling contribute to the
3 common good of our society, public schools remain the principal educational institutions
4 for children and youth from kindergarten through high school. Most students in our
5 society—nearly 90 percent—are enrolled in public schools. These government-run and
6 tax-supported schools represent the most significant public commitment to provide
7 formal education for all young people.

8
9 Our society rightly places high expectations on public schools. In providing access to
10 education for all, public schools are to generate a more equitable society. By bringing
11 together students from all sectors of society, they are to help nurture shared values,
12 cultural understanding, and social harmony. By developing the potential of each student,
13 they are to prepare students for work, family life, and citizenship and thereby promote
14 economic well-being and the common good. Some also expect public schools to help
15 solve pressing social issues such as poor health, violence, and poverty. Yet resources to
16 support these expectations compete with the demands of other public responsibilities
17 such as health, human services, and public safety.

18
19 While public schools have historically enjoyed widespread public support, in recent
20 decades public discourse about them has often been shaped by criticism and discontent.
21 We reaffirm our commitment to the concept and work of public schools, and we join with
22 others in seeking change where they do not live up to expectations. Especially do we call
23 for public attention and action on behalf of those children and youth who are not
24 receiving a good education. We urgently press the question: Will all children and youth
25 have access to high quality education?

26
27 **Our Commitment to Public Schools**

28 Public schools vary in size, culture, and quality. The challenges and opportunities they
29 face differ according to their context, and people's experiences with them vary.
30 Recognizing both this diversity and what is common about public schools, and drawing

1 upon our theology, we set out certain attitudes, guidelines, and expectations to inform our
2 commitment to public schools.

3
4 We view public schools with *gratitude*. We are grateful for the educational achievements
5 of public schools in the past and present. We rejoice in the opportunity for education that
6 public schools offer to all children, including children who suffer the effects of poverty
7 and discrimination and to children with special learning needs. We recognize how public
8 schools in various situations bring together children and youth from many different
9 social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds—including those from new immigrant
10 populations—for a common education in a spirit of civic equality. We are thankful for
11 all who teach and work in and for public schools with dedication, ability, and care.

12
13 We view public schools with *realism, hope, and wisdom*. Because we recognize human
14 limitations and the power of sin, we are prepared to be critical where public schools fall
15 short, and we seek to be conscious of our own limitations and how our self-interest may
16 influence and distort our views. Our faith in God keeps alive our hope to seek workable
17 solutions to seemingly insolvable problems, including those in public education. This is
18 a tough hope that calls for sustained effort, not easy answers. It treasures wisdom and
19 knowledge in discerning what actions best serve the education of children and youth.

20
21 We understand the education of young people to be *a shared responsibility*. Parents and
22 schools as well as religious bodies and community all share this responsibility. A
23 responsibility requires a corresponding right or authority to fulfill it. Parents have
24 primary, but not exclusive, responsibility for the education of their children. This
25 responsibility obligates them to be involved in their children's education in home, school,
26 and congregation. It also gives parents the right to select whether to send their children
27 to public, religious, or private schools or to home school them.

28
29 Because children are God's gifts to society and the Church as well as to parents, society
30 through government also has responsibility and authority to provide for young people's

1 education. This responsibility and right are derived both from parents' consent and from
2 government's mandate to provide for the common good and the well-being of those in its
3 jurisdiction. This responsibility gives government the right to levy taxes for education,
4 enact compulsory attendance laws, set educational standards, and operate public schools.
5 The shared responsibility between parents and public schools and their teachers should be
6 one of partnership.

7
8 ***Our Expectations for Public Schools***

9 We expect schools to be *communities of learning and teaching*. Schools—all schools—
10 should above all strive to be communities in which people with distinct roles join
11 together in mutual respect around the common concern for learning, teaching, and
12 knowing. Communities of learning and teaching ought to be places of thoughtful and
13 civil, instruction and dialogue. In addressing social needs (to reduce poverty or improve
14 health, for example), schools should do so principally as an educational community, as
15 occasions for learning and teaching. When public schools perform other social functions
16 for the best interest of children (for example, providing breakfast or caring for children
17 after school), government should ensure they have adequate resources in addition to
18 resources supporting their primary educational purpose. Their extracurricular
19 opportunities in sports, the arts, and forensics should develop healthy leadership and
20 encourage strong academic performance. School organization should facilitate schools'
21 identity as communities of learning and teaching.

22
23 In a community of learning students should learn to think and read critically, write and
24 speak clearly, and understand math and science competently. They will know how to
25 analyze, reformulate, synthesize, and solve problems. They will become acquainted with
26 a wide variety of humanistic, scientific, artistic, and practical subject matters. They will
27 be introduced to both the broadly accepted content of different disciplines and the
28 processes and methods by which these disciplines arrive at their conclusions. They will
29 come to think on their own, to ask questions, and to be creative in their learning. They
30 will learn to care for their health and how to stay physically fit.

1
2 To prepare their students, schools require competent leadership from principals and
3 boards, good teachers and counselors, research-based teaching methods and curricula,
4 adequate facilities and resources; parental and community support and involvement; and
5 students eager to learn. When public schools are not adequately accomplishing these
6 purposes, citizens have a responsibility to work to improve them. Public attention to
7 social and economic influences on student readiness is also essential so that students are
8 not hungry, in ill health, or victims of violence or abuse.

9
10 We expect communities of learning and teaching to be safe places. We recognize that
11 school safety is an issue for all students, staff, and teachers. Unfortunately, incidents of
12 bullying, intimidation and other forms of violence are not unusual. We affirm that
13 personal safety and security are essential for optimal teaching and learning.

14
15 We affirm that public schools have a role in *teaching and forming students to live*
16 *morally in society*, what Lutherans call “civil righteousness.” This task raises many
17 dilemmas in our pluralistic society. Yet no education is morally neutral, and public
18 schools do communicate moral beliefs and values. Public schools therefore ought to
19 teach the principles and virtues of living together in responsible freedom in a democratic
20 society, which includes respect for the diverse cultures and beliefs of their students.
21 Moral education suited for public schools will draw upon what the community holds in
22 common and teach in a fair and impartial way on those issues on which the community is
23 divided.¹⁵

24
25 We expect public schools *to teach about religion* as a vital part of human life and culture.
26 When they do not teach about religion, public schools leave students with a distorted
27 picture of the world. Public schools as government institutions should not sponsor
28 religious exercises such as prayer or devotional reading of religious texts nor advocate for
29 or against any particular religion.¹⁶ They should, however, help their students
30 understand the importance of religion for individuals, history, and contemporary life by

1 teaching about the beliefs, practices, and history of different religions in fair and
2 informative ways. This will require competent teachers and good curricula.

3
4 We affirm the search for truth and meaning in its many different forms. Public schools
5 should therefore address the full scope of human knowing, including the arts, humanities,
6 social and natural sciences, mathematics, and technology. The curricula should present
7 the best current knowledge and method in each discipline. *In teaching the natural and*
8 *physical sciences*, we expect public schools *to acknowledge the distinctions between them*
9 *and religion*. Both ways of knowing have their own integrity and limits in method and
10 purpose. While religion and faith provide subject matter and methods to speak of God's
11 role in the origin and purpose of creation, we do not claim that they provide a scientific
12 account of how the natural world functions. While the natural and physical sciences have
13 tested methods to describe and explain the natural world and we learn from them, we do
14 not look to science to answer religious questions. Schools and teachers should respect
15 the distinct approaches to truth and knowledge in the natural and physical sciences and
16 religion, explore the philosophical issues in their relationship, and recognize moral
17 questions that may arise from them and various proposed answers to these questions.

18 19 ***Expectations of Our Church***

20 We encourage our congregations and pastors *to develop strong connections with their*
21 *public schools* for the sake of the children in their communities. While respecting the
22 other's purpose and character, congregations and public schools should understand
23 themselves to be allies in serving children and youth.

- 24 • Congregations can join with public schools in affirming the importance of
25 education and countering views that devalue or denigrate education.
- 26 • Congregations can ask their public schools how they can assist students and
27 provide space and volunteers for after-school activities such as tutoring.
- 28 • Pastors and other rostered leaders can make themselves available as resource
29 persons in teaching about religion, and they and Lutheran social ministry

1 organizations can be of assistance when schools experience a crisis where
2 counseling and support are needed.

- 3 • In communities with release-time programs, congregations and public schools
4 have special opportunities to work together in providing religious instruction
5 for those families who want it.
- 6 • Congregations should encourage members to be involved in their schools,
7 willing to serve in volunteer and elected positions, and support teachers and
8 students in their calling.
- 9 • Congregations and public school officials can meet to discuss scheduling of
10 activities and events and other issues of mutual interest.
- 11 • Lutheran and public schools can enter into mutually beneficial relationships.
- 12 • Congregations and public schools can cooperate in instructing teachers and
13 students about how students may appropriately exercise their religious
14 freedom in public schools, including the right of equal access for student-led
15 religious groups. Public schools are not a “religion-free zone”; voluntary and
16 non-disruptive religious expressions by students are permissible.¹⁷

18 **Equitable Access to High Quality Education for All**

19 Because all are created in God’s image, all have equal worth and dignity and should be
20 treated accordingly. This belief stands behind our strong support for our society’s
21 expectation that all young people have equitable access to high quality schools. All
22 students are entitled to good schools, and when they receive a high quality education,
23 society benefits. In educating millions, public schools continue to achieve notable
24 successes in fulfilling this expectation.

25
26 Public schools have provided a widespread, high level of education as the country’s
27 scientific, technological, cultural, and economic leadership demonstrates. Researchers
28 differ, however, on the quality of public school education. Some argue that given the
29 nature of public support and the resources provided, public schools do well when

1 compared to public education systems in other countries. Others argue that public
2 schools are not meeting the challenges of an increasingly complex and competitive global
3 economy.¹⁸ All agree that public schools face the enormous task of offering high-quality
4 education to prepare citizens and workers for today's knowledge-based global world.

5
6 Our commitment to equitable access for all calls us to attend to the glaring inequities in
7 our country's schooling. The disturbing reality persists that too many young people do
8 not have access to good public schools. This reality is most pervasive in poor
9 communities, especially where poverty is intertwined with a history of racism and
10 discrimination. More than a half-century after the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of*
11 *Education* decision, many schools remain racially separate and unequal,¹⁹ often in
12 connection with residential segregation. Schools where a substantial majority of their
13 students live in poverty consistently represent schools with the fewest resources and some
14 of the lowest performances.²⁰ Federal, state, and district funding often shortchange
15 schools that serve students who need the most support from their schools.²¹

16
17 The connection between persistent poverty along with discrimination and lack of
18 equitable access to high quality schools means that many factors contribute to our
19 society's failure to educate all young people. People who are poor face daily a vast
20 assortment of interlocking hardships related to low-paying jobs, poor housing in
21 dangerous and unhealthy environments, poor health and physical disabilities, disrupted
22 families, language barriers, unwise personal choices, as well as inadequate schools. One
23 of our society's greatest challenges is to attend to all the factors that contribute to
24 poverty. Good schools alone cannot break the cycle of generational poverty, yet they
25 have an indispensable role in doing so. Our society has an obligation to do all it can to
26 realize the dreams of children and youth who live in poverty that education will improve
27 their lives.

28
29 We therefore commit ourselves to work with others for public policies that boldly and
30 consistently push toward ensuring that all students have equitable access to high quality

1 schools. We oppose all forms of invidious or harmful discrimination. We affirm that
2 public schools and their teachers should set high expectations for all students, challenge
3 them all to achieve these expectations, and have the means to meet these expectations.
4 Commitment to equitable access to high quality schools for all along with commitment to
5 combat poverty in all its dimensions has great potential to improve the academic
6 performance of students who do not now have opportunity to benefit from good
7 education.²²

8
9 As a church body, we have the calling to focus public attention on the vast inequities in
10 our educational system, to voice the hope and obligation of achieving equitable access to
11 high quality schools for all students, and to help create conditions to deliberate about and
12 act on that calling. As individual Christians in our calling as citizens, we have
13 responsibility and competence to determine what specific measures will most improve
14 equitable access for all students to high quality schools in our communities, states, and
15 nation.

16 17 **Evaluating Educational Reforms**

18 Citizens, political officeholders, educators, and researchers representing a wide range of
19 attitudes toward public schools recognize that public schools should and can do better in
20 improving the performance of their students. When they are considering any proposed
21 school reform, we encourage all citizens to evaluate it in terms of its appropriateness,
22 effectiveness, and cost. They should ask of a proposal:

- 23 • Does it improve educational quality for all students?
- 24 • Is it effective in enhancing student learning?
- 25 • Does it assist educators in their work?
- 26 • Is it affordable and sustainable?
- 27 • Does it protect students from invidious discrimination?
- 28 • Is it supported by reliable research?

- Is there a means to evaluate the results of the program and decide if the program should be continued, modified, or ended?

Moving Toward Equitable Access

We call on members to consider the following measures:

Countering the Negative Effects of Poverty and Discrimination

Because poverty and discrimination have such a large and negative impact on student learning, we call for public policies that give top priority to children and youth who do not have equitable access to good education, both in large cities and rural areas. This requires compensatory measures for children and young people who are encumbered by social disadvantages to increase their chances of equal opportunity for a good education.

This includes:

- providing resources and opportunities to overcome the negative effects of poverty and of injustice;
- broadening the tax base and funding strategies to achieve adequate funding for every school;
- expanding and funding good early childhood education for children in poverty, which increases the possibilities of later educational success. Such education is a model for developing other programs for students who live in poverty and suffer discrimination;
- creating incentives to attract high quality teachers, administrators, and staff to schools where most students live in poverty. Such incentives will go beyond higher salaries to include providing a supportive climate for teachers to innovate and be more effective in their instruction;
- involving parents and care givers in their children's education through parental classes and other means; and
- creating opportunities for education that cross ethnic, social, economic, and jurisdictional lines.

1 *Equity in Funding*

2 Large discrepancies in per pupil funding in school districts within the same state are a
3 major barrier to equitable access to high quality schools for all students. While increased
4 funds by themselves do not ensure better educational results, their strategic investment
5 can make a difference.²³ Moreover, equity in funding among school districts is a matter
6 of justice and is mandated in most state constitutions. In states where per pupil funding is
7 vastly unequal (usually where school districts rely on local property taxes for their
8 revenue), citizens should work actively to reform the funding system and tie such reforms
9 to measurable outcomes.²⁴

10
11
12
13 *School Choice*

14 A growing number of school districts and states seek to increase the range of schools
15 students can attend through policies that establish magnet schools, open enrollment,
16 charter schools, tax credits, and vouchers. Research on this whole range of options
17 continues.²⁵ Many families and communities are encouraged by the experiences of their
18 children with these options, particularly in urban neighborhoods. Increasing school
19 options appeals to the idea that parents and students can choose among schools and to the
20 belief that competition among schools improves educational quality. It also recognizes
21 that there are diverse ways to educate young people. Others argue that some of these
22 options will increase racial segregation, weaken public schools, benefit principally the
23 privileged sectors of society, and leave too many students in poor-performing schools.
24 The effects of each of these policies—or proposed policies—need to be evaluated in the
25 local context with special focus on whether or not the option improves educational
26 quality and offers greater opportunities for children and youth living in poverty. ELCA
27 members considering these choice options are encouraged to study the ELCA's 2001
28 social policy resolution on school vouchers as well as to use the questions listed above
29 under "Evaluating Education Reforms."²⁶

1 *Accountability*

2 Public schools should be held accountable for educating all their students, but how to do
3 so is a source of ongoing contention. What should the standards be? Who should set
4 them? What is their impact on student learning? What should be the consequences for
5 schools that fail to meet them? What policies and funding exist to improve schools that
6 do not reach standards? Intended to spur academic achievement, federal and state
7 legislation holds public schools accountable by means of standards and regular testing
8 and by requiring change in low-performing schools. The effects of such laws require
9 continuing assessment. Policies to implement accountability therefore should address the
10 whole education agenda, including to:

- 11 • provide for appropriate periodic adjustment in outcome goals;
- 12 • evaluate academic progress with both qualitative and quantitative measures;
- 13 • take into account the individual situation of students, especially those who are
- 14 negatively affected by language, disabilities, or social disadvantages;
- 15 • provide, where indicated, adequate resources to implement remediation and
- 16 improve the quality of education in the schools where students attend;
- 17 • offer, as a last resort, adequate alternatives for students attending schools that
- 18 consistently do not meet performance standards; and
- 19 • give careful and comprehensive assessment to measure the impact on student
- 20 learning.

21
22 *Improving Educational Quality*

23 In addition to the above-mentioned reforms, efforts to improve educational quality focus
24 on every other aspect of public schools. Proposals include:

- 25 • changing who controls public schools
- 26 • restructuring school administration and organization
- 27 • creating smaller schools in urban areas or consolidating smaller schools in rural
- 28 areas
- 29 • reducing class size

- 1 • extending school calendars or school hours
- 2 • improving teacher and administrator education and development
- 3 • introducing merit pay
- 4 • improving teaching methods and classroom environments
- 5 • changing curricula

6 What these and other reform proposals may mean varies from context to context. In each
7 context citizens will ask of them basic questions such as those suggested above in
8 “Evaluating Education Reforms.”

9

10 **Counsel to Parents**

11 In some circumstances parents may be able to choose from among a number of options to
12 meet the educational needs of their children, including public, magnet, private, charter,
13 religious schools, and home schooling. In these cases we urge parents to be aware of the
14 options and to consider:

- 15 • the special needs and gifts of their child;
- 16 • whether or not they desire a faith-based education for their child;
- 17 • how well each option will achieve the purposes of education (see page 21);
- 18 • how well the options prepare the student for life with and for service to others in
- 19 a complex, diverse, global society; and
- 20 • the affordability of each option.

21 Because education is a shared responsibility, we encourage parents to consult with others
22 who may be of assistance in making their decision.

23

24 **4. Will Our Church Have Schools and Colleges? Will Our Schools and Colleges** 25 **Have a Church?**

26

27 **Our Commitment to Lutheran Educational Institutions**

28 In a living tradition devoted to educating in the faith for vocation in the Church and
29 world, it is not surprising to find that institutions of learning and teaching have been

1 integral and vital to its life and mission. “When schools flourish,” Luther was recorded
2 as saying, “then things go well and the church is secure. Let us have learned citizens and
3 teachers. The youth furnish recruits for the church; they are the source of its wellbeing.
4 If there were no schools, who would there be to take our place when we die? In the
5 church we are forced to have schools. God has preserved the church through schools;
6 they are its conservatories.”²⁷ Since the Reformation Lutherans have taken on the
7 demanding task of establishing and maintaining educational institutions in hope and
8 commitment to equip a new generation to witness to the gospel and carry out their
9 vocation in society.

10
11 A steward of this tradition, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has an extensive
12 network of educational institutions to benefit Church and society. In 2006, ELCA
13 congregations owned and operated 267 elementary schools, 18 high schools, and 1722
14 early childhood centers, involving more than 225,000 students.²⁸ Twenty-eight colleges
15 and universities are affiliated with our church, which enrolled nearly 58,000 students in
16 2007.²⁹ There are eight ELCA seminaries, and dozens of centers and programs for
17 continuing education.³⁰ Under the auspices of the three seminary clusters, other
18 educational programs and institutions of the ELCA are joining as interdependent lifelong
19 learning partners with the seminaries to expand access to lifelong learning in the faith for
20 all the baptized by building a theological education network. The ELCA’s study of
21 theological education, adopted by the churchwide assembly in 1995, guides the building
22 of this new network.³¹

23
24 What are our hopes for and commitment to the future of our schools (early childhood
25 education centers through high school) and our colleges and universities? All are highly
26 prized by the constituencies that directly support and benefit from them, yet they are too
27 often not well-known or appreciated by many ELCA members. For the most part all
28 must find their own financial support. Yet we face an opportune moment: The number of
29 schools is growing, and many colleges and universities are reclaiming their Lutheran
30 connections. This situation provokes the question: Will our schools and colleges and

1 universities have a church—laity, pastors, bishops, congregations, synods, seminaries,
2 and churchwide organization—that affirms and supports them?

3
4 Our fervent hope is that it be so. We affirm anew our historic commitment to Lutheran
5 schools and colleges and universities and encourage its deepening and extension. If we
6 follow through on this commitment, then, yes, our church will have vibrant schools and
7 colleges and universities, benefiting both Church and society and valued as indispensable
8 educational arms of our church's mission.

9
10 **Lutheran Schools and Centers**

11 ELCA congregations are becoming increasingly involved in offering pre-school,
12 elementary, and secondary education to their surrounding neighborhoods. From 1995 to
13 2006 the number of schools and centers grew by 15 percent, and many congregations
14 continue to express interest in beginning a school or center.³² This remarkable
15 development means that today nearly one of every five ELCA congregations operates
16 some type of school.

17
18 Through their schools and centers, congregations aim to offer a strong academic
19 education in a caring Christian environment. By word and example, teachers,
20 administrators, and pastors seek to motivate students to learn and nurture their gifts in
21 service to others in response to God's love for them. Students learn in a setting where
22 they pray, sing, and worship, and where they study the Bible, the Church's beliefs, and
23 Christian moral teachings. Families who send their children to Lutheran schools and
24 centers take on an extra financial burden. Often families desire that their children be
25 firmly educated in the faith to prepare them for engaging aspects of a culture that they
26 perceive to be indifferent to or in conflict with the Christian faith.

27
28 Lutheran schools and centers enroll students of different religious, ethnic, cultural, and
29 economic backgrounds. At least 17 percent of children who attended Lutheran schools in
30 2005 were people of color other than white, a percentage more than five times higher

1 than ELCA congregations as a whole.³³ Students and teachers are especially diverse in
2 urban settings. Through the care and witness of faculty, staff, pastor, and congregational
3 members, Lutheran schools and centers offer students and their families opportunity to
4 hear the gospel and, if desired, to become part of the congregation. In so doing they have
5 proven to be a significant means of evangelizing unchurched families. They have also
6 been important in educating many children who later became leaders in our church and in
7 society.

8
9 Lutheran schools and centers face many challenges in offering excellent education in a
10 caring Christian environment. They work, for example, to maintain low tuition while
11 providing fair and adequate salaries for their staffs, to find rightly qualified teachers and
12 administrators, and to develop a wholesome relationship between congregation and
13 school or center. Schools and centers serving the poorest neighborhoods are often the
14 most fragile, under resourced, and in need of the most improvement.

15
16 We view Lutheran centers and schools as a significant part of our church's mission;
17 commend congregations that sponsor them; and honor the teachers, administrators, staff,
18 and pastors who work in them. Wherever they exist, Lutheran schools and centers
19 should be an integral part of a congregation's witness to the gospel and public service to
20 the community. Congregations should fulfill their responsibility to provide oversight,
21 support, and direction for their educational institutions.

22
23 ***Expectations of Lutheran Centers and Schools***

24 We expect our early childhood education centers and schools to continue serving our
25 church's mission by:

- 26 • promoting academic excellence in age-appropriate ways according to accepted
27 standards;
28 • reaching out to others with the good news of Jesus Christ;
29 • educating in the faith for vocation; and

- serving their community.

Lutheran schools and centers will offer a secure, welcoming, and caring learning environment for children of all cultural, ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds. They will provide scholarships for low-income students and involve families in their children's education. Lutheran schools and centers will offer service education and prepare students to be responsible citizens and productive members of society. They will work in partnership with other schools in their community.

Expectations of Our Church

In order to provide a more supportive climate for enacting this vision, we call for renewed efforts to assist schools and centers in areas that include:

- expecting churchwide and synodical leadership and ELCA publications to promote Lutheran centers and schools;
- encouraging members to consider sending their children to Lutheran centers and schools;
- preparing pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for service in congregations with centers and schools;
- encouraging our seminaries, colleges, and universities to prepare teachers, principals, pastors, and other staff for Lutheran centers and schools both in their degree programs and through in-service training;
- encouraging alliances for financial support for struggling centers and schools, such as pairing congregations in affluent areas with congregations in low-income areas;
- providing seed money to ensure that Lutheran centers and schools have a good foundation in areas of defining purpose, education, faith formation, governance, administration, and finance;
- strengthening the network among Lutheran schools to meet common opportunities and needs; and

- disseminating information on and ensuring equity in public funding for all children as laws require and the United States Constitution permits.

Lutheran Colleges and Universities

A Tradition of Academic Excellence and Service

“A Christian cobbler makes good shoes, not poor shoes with little crosses on them,” Luther was reported to have said.³⁴ Likewise, Lutherans, out of commitment to the common good, have insisted that their colleges and universities have a first duty to be excellent schools. This has been and continues to be the case. Following the example of Luther’s and Philip Melanchthon’s leadership at the time of the Reformation, Lutheran colleges and universities have conceived of education in holistic terms and shaped their academic programs in the liberal arts tradition. Today they appear regularly in lists of the best regional and national colleges.

ELCA colleges and universities perform valuable service to Church and society. At their best, they offer an excellent curriculum that aims at educating the whole person. Their emphasis on broad and integrated learning and critical thinking equips students for a whole life. Within this liberal arts context they prepare students for professions in education, health care, science, technology, social work, the arts, business, law, and other specific callings, and they provide many future pastors and other future leaders in our church with a well-rounded education.

Furthermore, ELCA colleges and universities find excellent ways to introduce their students to the essential questions of meaning and purpose. Many prominently feature the Lutheran teaching on vocation—that the purpose of life is to serve God and the neighbor in one’s callings in everyday life. More specifically, many ELCA colleges and universities also educate students in the faith by offering—and often requiring—courses in Bible, theology, church history, and ethics. They help students engage the intellectual claims of the faith with the claims of other disciplines.³⁵ They sustain strong programs of

1 service to the neighbor in both local and global settings. They offer opportunities for
2 worship, Bible study, mentoring, and participation in strong music programs that praise
3 God. When they take their heritage seriously, they impart a vision of the world in which
4 Christian faith plays the central integrating role. Graduates testify and a comprehensive
5 national survey confirms that Lutheran colleges and universities have a positive and
6 lasting impact on students in matters related to academic quality, faith, ethics, civic
7 engagement, and church affiliation and leadership.³⁶

The Changing Context

10 In the history of higher education in the United States, many church-founded institutions
11 of higher learning have disengaged from their sponsoring churches—some totally, some
12 partially. Nearly all church-related colleges have experienced some measure of
13 disengagement from both the institutional church and from the religious heritage that
14 once influenced nearly every facet of the college's life. ELCA colleges and universities
15 represent a broad range on the spectrum of engagement. Most have maintained a
16 significant connection with their Lutheran heritage, and many are giving renewed
17 attention to their Christian identity in a world of many faiths and cultures.

19 ELCA colleges and universities persist in their mission as church-related colleges in the
20 midst of a sharply changing environment that brings both opportunity and challenge. The
21 major opportunity is that they will continue to be excellent schools that bring the
22 Lutheran voice to bear in an increasingly global, ecumenical, diverse, and competitive
23 educational scene. Our colleges and universities can continue to embody in a vastly new
24 environment a persuasive vision of Christian higher education that is embedded in the
25 Lutheran tradition. Especially encouraging are the vigorous global outreach programs on
26 many campuses, the affirmation of Lutheran distinctiveness in a changing and sometimes
27 hostile culture, and the growing cultural and ethnic diversity in many settings. Among
28 the challenges are that our colleges and universities might lose their connection with the
29 Christian heritage completely, that they may lose their academic vitality due to

1 inadequate resources, that their costs might exceed the financial resources of most
2 Lutherans, or that they may not achieve the diversity they seek.

3
4 ***Life in Relationship***

5 A strong and vibrant relationship between our church and its institutions of higher
6 learning assumes mutual commitments. In shaping the future of that relationship, our
7 church may ask whether or not its colleges and universities are authentically and
8 recognizably Christian in the Lutheran tradition, urging them to manifest that identity.
9 Conversely, colleges and universities that are faithful to their Christian character may ask
10 whether or not our church vigorously supports them: Will congregations encourage
11 students to consider an ELCA college or university? Will pastors and bishops promote
12 them? Will ELCA high school graduates attend our colleges and universities? In these
13 matters our church will need to manifest its commitment to our colleges and universities.

14
15 Due to shrinking resources and competing priorities, there has been a forty-year decline
16 in churchwide and synodical financial support for colleges and universities. We are
17 grateful that Lutheran colleges and universities have developed alternative sources of
18 financial support, and many individual Lutherans are generous and faithful benefactors.
19 The ELCA has provided advocacy and support, maintained a strong network among
20 college leaders, provided leadership development opportunities for faculty and staff,
21 nurtured the conversation between faith and learning, and provided valuable research to
22 assist the colleges and universities in their mission. Fortress Press, the academic arm of
23 our church's publishing ministry, continues to publish texts in biblical studies, theology,
24 ethics, and pastoral care that are widely used in our colleges and universities as well as in
25 our seminaries.

26
27 In the future as in the past, the survival and flourishing of our colleges and universities
28 will depend on a delicate ecology of school, church, and family. Where the colleges and
29 universities live out their calling as significant ventures in Lutheran education, churches
30 and families demonstrate interest and confidence in those institutions. Without the

1 churches and families that give important support to Lutheran ventures in education, the
2 colleges and universities may re-define themselves and their missions for people who will
3 support them. The ecology that once made Lutheran colleges, churches, and families a
4 viable interdependent organism must be shaped in ways that respond to these new
5 realities and opportunities.

6
7 We therefore urge our colleges and universities and our church in all its expressions to
8 maintain their connections where they are strong, strengthen them where they are weak,
9 and rebuild them where they are lacking. We call for mutually beneficial relationships
10 built on trust, commitment, and collaboration.

11
12 *Expectations of Our Colleges and Universities*

13 In such a relationship we expect that our colleges and universities will:

- 14 • reaffirm their commitment to maintain a living connection with the Christian
15 faith;
- 16 • offer excellent, broad education in service to Church and society in a setting of
17 academic freedom;
- 18 • educate in the faith with courses in Bible, Lutheran theology, church history, and
19 ethics;
- 20 • serve as incubators for the discovery of knowledge, preserve it in scholarly
21 collections, and communicate it through scholarly publications;
- 22 • nurture an ongoing dialogue between the claims of the Christian faith and the
23 claims of the many academic disciplines as well as explore issues at the
24 crossroads of life;
- 25 • feature prominently the Lutheran teaching on vocation;
- 26 • embody important elements—worship, music and the arts, service, personal moral
27 standards, international education—as part of the ongoing Lutheran ethos;
- 28 • maintain programs that serve as a liaison between the college or university and
29 the various expressions of our church; and

- continue to attempt to make it financially possible for qualified students—especially Lutheran students—who desire to attend a Lutheran college or university to do so.

Expectations of Our Church

To make the relationship a mutual one, we also expect that:

- the Presiding Bishop, synodical bishops, and the churchwide organization will persistently and persuasively voice their commitment to our colleges and universities;
- the churchwide organization will continue its consultative and informative roles with our colleges and universities and foster contact and collaboration among them;
- synods will support colleges and universities on their territory through intentional and visible ways;
- colleges and universities, seminaries, synods, schools, and other ELCA institutions and ministries will initiate and welcome partnerships with one another;
- congregations will support colleges in helping them recruit students and in aiding students financially who attend ELCA colleges and universities;
- ELCA youth and their parents will give careful consideration to Lutheran colleges and universities; and
- advocacy ministries will call on lawmakers to find means of public support for students to attend private and religious colleges and universities and urge lawmakers in those states that make grants to students going to private colleges to maintain them at the highest level possible.

Our church individually and corporately should give our schools, colleges, and universities its full loyalty and support so that they faithfully and competently exercise their calling in education.

Supporting Lifelong Learning

Education is a lifelong process and takes a variety of forms, involving non-formal learning experiences as well as each person's own more formal discipline and study. This ongoing learning may occur in museums, art galleries, planetariums, aquariums, theaters, concert halls, zoos, botanical gardens, nature preserves, book clubs, travel programs, and lecture series. We value and support these non-formal institutions and activities. We also affirm the more formal role of public universities, colleges, and other educational institutions in providing a broad range of extension and continuing education programs that serve an increasingly diverse adult population. We welcome the opportunities for learning provided by new forms of electronic communication.

Just as many congregations offer quality educational experiences for people of all ages to continue to grow in their faith, our Lutheran colleges and universities, seminaries, lifelong learning partners, and outdoor ministries also offer opportunities for lifelong learning in knowledge of the faith as well as in knowledge of the world. We commend Lutheran colleges and universities for expanding their academic programs to serve the needs of non-traditional students for both graduate and undergraduate studies. We also commend our seminaries and other study centers of our church for responding to the learning needs of both lay and rostered leaders in congregations as well as to the desire of adults of all ages for personal growth in faith and knowledge through lifelong learning.

We urge the churchwide organization to continue to provide leadership and support to the institutions and agencies of the church that provide these essential educational services and to encourage them to deepen their interdependent partnership in a network that educates for vocation. In order that lifelong learning be encouraged and well-resourced, the full range of teaching institutions and programs in our church should continue their progress toward fulfillment of the vision of the ELCA's Study of Theological Education, deepening their emerging partnerships with the three seminary clusters to form an

interdependent network of education providers throughout this church. Only such a network for lifelong learning is adequate both to our calling in education and the callings of all learners.

5. Will Public Higher Education Serve the Common Good?

Our Expectations for Public Universities and Colleges

Higher education in the United States embraces a broad range of religious, private, and public colleges and universities. These academic institutions vary in their philosophy of education, history, culture, quality, specialties, cost, size, and status. This variety gives vitality to higher education, making it one of our country's strongest assets.

Public institutions are the most numerous institutions of higher education and serve the most students. Public four-year colleges and universities, public community colleges, and technical colleges provide the primary access point to higher education for millions of people of all economic classes and every racial and ethnic group, including thousands of international students. As public institutions, we as citizens share responsibility for them. Their future is vital to the common good, which we are to serve and promote as part of our vocation.

Institutions providing technical education make important contributions to the common good by preparing skilled professionals for careers in a wide range of trades and professions. Individuals prepared for these occupations are enabled to make their way in society and to serve their neighbors in practical ways.

We look to all colleges and universities to transmit knowledge through teaching, advance knowledge through research, preserve knowledge in scholarly collections, and communicate knowledge through publications.³⁷ They thereby contribute to the common good by connecting their knowledge to the world in which we live. Public universities and colleges do these things across a wide spectrum of disciplines. They teach

1 undergraduate students the humanities, arts, languages, and sciences; and their post-
2 graduate programs educate professors and other professions such as doctors, lawyers, and
3 scientists. Public universities along with many private universities are centers of basic
4 scientific research and technological development. Their libraries and Internet resources
5 make vast learning available, and publications by their professors profoundly influence
6 our culture. They also sponsor continuing education for adults who have concluded
7 formal degree programs but wish to continue learning throughout their lives.

9 **Our Commitment to Public Higher Education**

10 Lutherans have long had a commitment to public higher education. We are grateful for
11 the role public universities and colleges play in preparing people—including most
12 Lutherans who attend college—to act competently in their callings and responsibilities.
13 Because knowledge of how the world functions and learning how to learn continue to
14 benefit both individuals and society, we encourage vigorous public support for the many
15 institutions of higher learning. As our society's expectation increases about how many
16 years of schooling people should have, so does the importance of public universities and
17 colleges.

19 We honor and support the broad network of community and technical colleges and their
20 students, faculties, and staffs. These institutions of higher education provide strategic
21 opportunities for many students who wish to continue their education and obtain training
22 in sought-for practical skills. In addition to preparing students for their careers, these
23 educational institutions often invigorate the economies of their communities.

25 We expect all universities and colleges to be places of free inquiry that exhibit
26 intellectual honesty, the disciplined search for knowledge and truth, and civility. We
27 support the academic freedom of public higher education and oppose its restriction for
28 ideological or political reasons. We expect that the diversity of perspectives among
29 professors will enable public universities and colleges to be settings for genuine dialog on
30 the major ideas and values that shape and often create controversy in our society.

Universities and colleges are charged to engage in ongoing discussion about what counts as knowledge in contrast to ignorance and misunderstanding. The boundaries and shape of this discussion change as new discoveries are made. This has led to new areas of inquiry such as the history of religion. It has also led to the study of peoples and cultures that may have been ignored or excluded, in the past. We challenge and encourage public universities and colleges to take up the full range of religious traditions and their intellectual content as legitimate participants in their search for knowledge and truth.

The extraordinary growth of higher education since World War II is closely tied to the increased emphasis it gives to occupational education.³⁸ College and university education has become the principal—almost exclusive—way for people to gain access to higher earnings and occupational or professional status. Most students today look to their college education chiefly as a means for them to become well-off financially.³⁹ The danger is that occupational purposes will overwhelm moral, civic, and intellectual goals.

Concern for the purpose of life, justice and neighbor, and the common good are central to nearly all religions and intrinsic to our civic values. We therefore commend and encourage renewal of disciplines in which these matters are examined, such as the humanities, the arts, and the social sciences. We commend efforts in higher education to engage students in service learning, and we applaud student-led groups that struggle with questions of life's purpose and society's good. On campuses where many students ask such questions,⁴⁰ Lutheran campus ministry takes on special significance.

Our Church's Presence and Campus Ministry

Our church is present in public universities and colleges, as well as private ones, through students, professors, administrators, and staff living out their calling in these institutions. More Lutherans teach at public and non-Lutheran private universities and colleges than do at Lutheran institutions. Many of them not only perform their callings with excellence but also provide models of Christian teaching and the engagement of faith and learning.

1 All have opportunities to witness to their faith. We celebrate those who carry on these
2 tasks and encourage our church to support them.

3
4
5
6
7 ***Lutheran Campus Ministry***

8 Our church is also present in these institutions of learning through campus ministries.
9 Lutherans launched their first forays into intentional ministry on public campuses in 1907
10 at the University of Wisconsin—Madison Campus. A century later there are nearly 200
11 recognized ELCA campus ministries that receive either churchwide and/or synodical
12 annual operating grants. In addition, over 400 Cooperating Congregations in Campus
13 Ministry carry on some form of outreach to a nearby campus.⁴¹ In some places this
14 ministry is ecumenical and carried on in partnership with other denominations.

15
16 Campus ministry in our church “invites people in academic settings more deeply into
17 Jesus Christ and the community that bears his name, so that they discover and fulfill their
18 vocation as disciples.”⁴² This ministry gives young adults on campus opportunity to
19 participate in the life of the Church and deepen their faith during an important time of
20 their lives when they are experiencing change, growth, and challenge.

21
22 ***Expectations of Campus Ministry***

23 Lutheran campus ministry is an integral part of our calling in education. Many former
24 students testify to ways in which campus ministry helped them grow in their
25 understanding of their faith and vocation as they gained new knowledge. As it has done
26 for decades, this ministry continues to provide leaders for Church and society. We expect
27 our campus ministries to:

- 28 • be worshiping communities that proclaim the gospel and celebrate the sacraments;

- 1 • educate in the faith, teaching the Bible and Christian doctrine, exploring
- 2 Christian perspectives on ultimate questions, and creating settings for students,
- 3 staff, and professors to ask questions and to discuss their concerns;
- 4 • call students to live out their baptismal vocation, challenging them to regard their
- 5 learning itself as a worthy calling and providing them with theological wisdom to
- 6 accompany their growing learning and technical competence;
- 7 • engage faith and learning, showing how faith and its knowledge deepen and
- 8 enliven learning in the classroom, library, and laboratory and how that learning
- 9 deepens and enlivens faith and its knowledge;
- 10 • model thoughtful and respectful dialogue on controversial issues;
- 11 • provide opportunities for service in Church and society; and
- 12 • offer opportunities for friendships, fun, and community life.

13

14 Campus ministries face the challenge of both nurturing Lutheran students and reaching

15 out to seekers. On campuses where other ministries attract more students than Lutheran

16 ones, our ministries will ask why and explore their own relevance and vitality. Campus

17 ministries sometimes face the tension of addressing controversial issues on campus while

18 being communities that welcome individuals with different viewpoints. While some

19 students may consider a certain attitude as prophetic, others who disagree may feel

20 unwelcome, perceiving that promoting the issue has come to define the ministry more

21 than the gospel that unites them. Limited resources may often mean campus ministries

22 are unable to meet the diverse expectations and opportunities presented to them.

23

24 *Expectations of Our Church*

25 Lack of financial support threatens campus ministries in many places. Most depend

26 almost entirely on funds from outside sources, primarily from synods and the churchwide

27 organization, which have been in a forty-year decline. Let us be fully aware of the

28 growing crisis in our church's ministry to a large, influential segment of young adults

29 living and studying at public (and private) universities and colleges. In reaffirming our

1 ministry on these campuses, we call for creative action to support our campus ministry
2 that takes into account opportunities, challenges, and resource constraints. This action
3 includes:

- 4 • calling upon the Presiding Bishop, synodical bishops, pastors, and other leaders to
5 support our church's campus ministry;
- 6 • urging congregations to alert their students on non-Lutheran campuses about
7 Lutheran campus ministry;
- 8 • encouraging congregations near colleges and universities to reach out to
9 professors, students, and staff of these institutions; and
- 10 • thinking in new ways about how we establish and maintain campus ministries
11 which may involve new models of ministry, of partnership, and of staffing and
12 support.

13 14 **Will Students Have Access to Higher Education?**

15 Higher education in the United States has long been seen as the portal of opportunity to
16 upward mobility and the realization of the American dream. Following World War II,
17 the GI Bill provided educational opportunity for millions of veterans and fueled a
18 vigorous postwar economy and a growing middle class. Higher education, then and now,
19 enables individuals to transcend the boundaries of class and race and contributes to the
20 economic and civic well being of the nation.

21
22 The high cost borne by students and their families, however, is limiting access to higher
23 education, depriving many individuals of opportunity and depriving society of highly
24 educated citizens. The cost of higher education has grown substantially in recent years,
25 significantly outpacing inflation in the rest of the economy. This cost is funded from four
26 sources:

- 27 • tuition paid by students and their families;
- 28 • charitable contributions of individuals, corporations, and foundations;
- 29 • financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, and work; and

- in the case of public education, direct appropriations from state or local government.

In recent years financial assistance and direct appropriations have declined in relationship to the growth in the cost of education, and charitable contributions have not made up the difference. As a result, the burden upon students and their families has grown. This high and growing cost to students prevents many, including people who live in poverty, from pursuing a college degree.⁴³

In spite of the general acknowledgement that educated citizens are a key to our country's economic vitality and that more needs to be done to provide equitable access for all, public investment in higher education has been declining for some time relative to its rising cost. Funding for federal and state grants to students lags behind increases in educational costs, and state subsidies to public colleges and universities fail to keep pace with increased costs.⁴⁴ In addition, college and university funded aid has increased for middle- and upper-income students at the expense of students from low-income families.⁴⁵

The consequences of this trend limit equitable access and jeopardize academic quality. Specifically:

- Students are carrying increasingly larger debt loads and requiring more time to complete their education.⁴⁶
- While college completion rates have improved among all income groups over the past thirty years, the gaps in completion rates between students who are affluent and those who are poor have increased.⁴⁷

Although the growth of community colleges is a promising development, lack of funding weakens our country's leadership in higher education and compromises our capacity to meet the educational requirements of an increasingly knowledge-based world. Colleges

1 and universities are being stretched thin in their capacity to provide high quality
2 education, and, most importantly, equity in educational opportunity.

3
4 ELCA colleges and universities have responded to this situation with a variety of
5 scholarship and grant programs of their own, several with considerable success as seen in
6 the relatively strong enrollment of persons of color and from low- and middle-income
7 families. For most colleges and universities, however, it is impossible to close the
8 opportunity gap created by inadequate state and federal funding for student financial aid.
9 As a consequence, many low- and middle-income families find it difficult if not
10 impossible to access our colleges, and our colleges struggle to extend financial aid while
11 maintaining academic quality and financial viability.

12
13 In light of this situation, we call upon our church's advocacy ministry to support adequate
14 funding for higher education to increase equitable access, and we urge our members as
15 citizens to consider how public policy can improve equitable access to higher education.
16 We urge the following public policy remedies:

- 17 • increase state and federal funds for need-based financial assistance;
18 • support targeted incentive programs for low-income and underrepresented groups;
19 • increase state subsidies to public institutions as a way of ameliorating tuition
20 increases; and
21 • increase efficiency wherever feasible.

22
23 We also:

- 24 • urge ELCA colleges and universities to continue to seek ways to help redress the
25 growing opportunity gap;
26 • encourage members to help fund scholarships for low-income students and
27 congregations to provide scholarship assistance to their students who attend
28 ELCA colleges;

- 1 • affirm our church's practice of providing financial assistance to our colleges and
- 2 universities as a sign of our continuing commitment to them; and
- 3 • call on the churchwide organization to work with synods to expand scholarships
- 4 for United States and international students who need assistance.

6 **Living Our Calling**

7 We give thanks to God whose gracious gift of new life in baptism frees us for the
8 vocation to love our neighbor and contribute to the common good in our places of
9 responsibility in daily life. We are grateful that God, who has created humans with
10 ability to learn, teach, and know, blesses human life through education. We pray that the
11 Holy Spirit will sustain, renew, and transform us as we live our calling in education in
12 our church and society with its many amazing opportunities and daunting challenges.
13 May we in our calling exhibit the character of our new life in Christ, to which St. Paul
14 summons us: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of
15 your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and
16 acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). May we faithfully and boldly be a teaching and
17 learning church, educating in the faith for vocation and striving with others so that all
18 have equitable access to a high quality education.

21 **Implementing Resolutions**

23 Resolved:

- 25 1. To adopt "Our Calling in Education" as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran
26 Church in America, in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical
27 Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns" (2006);

29 **Faith Formation and Lifelong Learning**

- 31 2. To embrace our legacy as a teaching and learning church with gratitude and new
32 vigor, and to pray for God's guidance and power to renew and live boldly our calling in
33 education for a new century;

3. To call upon congregations and families to educate all generations in the faith and to be partners in creating and funding compelling and creative curricula and programs for all ages—children, youth, and adults—thus forming an environment of living faith;
4. To call upon members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to renew their calling in education as students, parents, educators, and citizens and to live out their baptismal vocation as lifelong learners in the faith and in their knowledge of the world;
5. To call upon the program units for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to continue and expand the provision of creative and comprehensive resources necessary to enable parents and congregations to help form the faith of all generations;
6. To call upon the Presiding Bishop, synodical bishops, and the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Vocation and Education units to work with Augsburg Fortress and other churchwide units persistently and persuasively to ensure that Christian education for all ages (adult, children, youth, and family ministry) is a priority in congregational life, seminary education, and synodical planning;
7. To call upon the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Vocation and Education, and Augsburg Fortress program units to work with synods, regions, congregations, rostered leaders, the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators, Lutheran outdoor ministries, seminaries, and other groups and organizations to share best practices for Christian education and faith formation, and to encourage their use in congregations and other ministries;
8. To call upon ELCA seminaries and other teaching institutions of this church to continue their emphasis on preparing pastors, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, associates in ministry, and lay people for excellence in the practice of teaching Christian education and faith formation in service of lifelong learning;
9. To give thanks to God and recognize members who are educators in public, Lutheran, and other private schools at all levels of education, to encourage congregations to support them in their callings as educators, and to urge members and all expressions of this church to encourage youth and others to enter these callings;

Public Educational Institutions

10. To call upon all schools to prepare students for living in a complex and global society as persons who are capable of critical thinking, continuing personal growth and concern for others, family responsibility, civic participation, artistic appreciation, productive work, and financial responsibility;

1 11. To call upon members of this church to advocate for equitable access to an excellent
2 education for all children and youth, to support early childhood education, their public
3 schools, colleges, and universities, advocating for policies that provide adequate
4 resources and their fair distribution for these educational institutions;
5

6 12. To call upon members and congregations to develop strong connections with their
7 public schools and to work with others to ensure high quality education for all students;
8

9 13. To call upon this church's advocacy ministries to support legislative initiatives that
10 improve public schools and excellent education for all students in ways that are
11 consistent with this social statement and to support financial aid and tuition policies that
12 provide more equitable access for low- and middle-income students to higher education;
13

14 **Lutheran Institutions**
15

16 14. To recognize and affirm early childhood education centers, elementary and
17 secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, and outdoor
18 ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as part of this church's
19 mission, and to call upon this church's leaders publicly and actively to support them;
20

21 15. To call upon this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and lifelong learning
22 partners to prepare and sustain leaders for schools and early childhood education centers
23 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to provide ongoing professional
24 development opportunities for them; to expect sponsoring congregations to ensure that
25 their schools and early childhood education centers provide high quality Lutheran
26 education; to encourage non-sponsoring congregations as well as synods to be in
27 partnership with them; and to call upon the Vocation and Education unit to convene
28 consultations throughout this church for the purpose of addressing the challenges and
29 opportunities facing ELCA schools and early childhood education centers;
30

31 16. To call upon synods and congregations to support ELCA colleges and universities in
32 their ministry of preparing people to fulfill their vocations in Church and world; to call
33 upon the Vocation and Education unit to continue its support of ELCA colleges and
34 universities through the convening of administrators and faculty; and to call upon the
35 Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the
36 purpose of furthering the respective and mutual ministries of ELCA colleges and
37 universities and this church;
38

39 17. To call upon synods and congregations to support campus ministries and to call upon
40 the Vocation and Education unit to convene consultations throughout this church for the
41 purpose of addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Lutheran campus ministry
42 and developing a strategy to increase financial support, build new and stronger
43 partnerships, and take such additional actions as may enhance the effectiveness and
44 sustainability of this vital ministry;

18. To affirm the Study of Theological Education, as approved by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, and its continuing value as a guide for the strengthening of the ELCA's theological education network;

Social Statement Reception

19. To call upon the Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Vocation and Education units, in cooperation with other churchwide units, to provide leadership and consultation for synods, seminary clusters and networks, and congregations on the basis of this social statement;

20. To call upon the Vocation and Education, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units, in consultation with the Church in Society unit, to collaborate with Augsburg Fortress to develop educational resources to study and act upon this social statement;

21. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to deepen the theoretical and practical understanding of our calling in education, through intellectual discourse and continued reflection; and

22. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement.

23. To call upon the program units for Vocation and Education, Church in Society, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and Augsburg Fortress to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation of this social statement to the Church Council in 2009.

Endnotes

¹ "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," 1524, ed. Walther I. Brandt, *Luther's Works*, 45 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 339-378. See also, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," 1530, ed. Robert C. Schultz, *Luther's Works*, 46 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1967), 207-258.

² *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 345-375.

³ The quotations in the text are from the Apostles' Creed, *Book of Concord*, 21-22. The social statement follows the Apostles' Creed and Luther's explanations of this creed in his catechisms in connecting one of the persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—with a particular work of God: creation, redemption, and sanctification. The Christian tradition also teaches that the whole Trinity and all three persons of the Trinity in communion with one another are agents of creation, redemption, and sanctification.

⁴ See "The Augsburg Confession," Article XVI, for how the Lutheran confessions affirm civil affairs and distinguish the justice and goodness of civil affairs from "the eternal righteousness of the heart" transmitted by the gospel. *The Book of Concord*, 49. In the *Apology to the Augsburg Confession*, Philip Melancthon speaks often of civil righteousness in distinction from the righteousness before God given in the gospel. "Civil righteousness that reason understands" deals with "the commandments of the second table" of the Ten Commandments. *Ibid.*, 125.

⁵ "The Large Catechism," *The Book of Concord*, 386.

⁶ *Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective*, the first ELCA social statement, called on our church to be "a community of moral deliberation," 5-6, 7-8. That social statement was adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. The seven subsequent social statements adopted by the ELCA as well as the 11 messages adopted by the ELCA Church Council provide resources and guidance on various societal topics that are often the subject of education in our church. This social statement assumes what these social statements and messages say on topics related to education, such as economic justice, care for creation, racism, and health care. ELCA social statements and messages are online (www.elca.org/socialstatements).

⁷ For a more complete development of the following six themes on which the text depends, see Marcia J. Bunge, "Rediscovering the Dignity and Complexity of Children: Resources from the Christian Tradition," *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* 4, 1 (January 2004). Online at www.elca.org/socialstatements/education or at www.elca.org/jle. These major themes were published in Bunge's articles, "The Child, Religion, and the Academy: Developing Robust Theological and Religious Understandings of Children and Childhood," *Journal of Religion* 84, 4 (October 2006), and "A More Vibrant Theology of Childhood," *Christian Reflection* 8 (2003), 11-19.

⁸ See Merton P. Strommen and Richard Hardel, *Passing on the Faith: A Radical New Model for Youth and Family Ministry* (Winona, Minn.: St Mary's Press, 2000), 14. According to one survey of youth and adults cited in the book, for example, "only 9 percent reported holding family devotions with any degree of regularity."

⁹ In studying the religious lives of teenagers, Christian Smith concludes that at the level of consciousness, "adolescent religious and spiritual understanding and concern seem to be generally very weak. Most U.S. teens have a difficult to impossible time explaining what they believe, what it means, and what the implications of their beliefs are for their lives" (262). Most Protestant teens in effect discard the belief of salvation by grace and faith alone to voice the idea that they are saved by living a morally good life (136). Smith suggests that the dominant religion among contemporary teens is what he calls "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism" (162ff). Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford Press, 2005).

¹⁰ In the liturgy for Holy Baptism, parents and sponsors pledge that they will "faithfully bring [their children] to the services of God's house, and teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. As they grow in years, you should place in their hands the Holy Scriptures and provide

for their instruction in the Christian faith, that, living in the covenant of their Baptism and in communion with the Church, they may lead godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ.” *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978), 121.

¹¹ For information about ELCA Outdoor Ministry see www.elca.org/camps.

¹² Visit the Christian Education page on the Web site of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit for resources and support for congregational teachers (www.elca.org/christianeducation). See also the book written by Christian education professors in our seminaries: *The Ministry of Children’s Education: Foundations, Contexts, and Practices*, with an Introduction by Margaret A. Krych (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004).

¹³ For more information on these resources and opportunities, visit the ELCA Web page (www.elca.org) and the Web page of the ELCA Publishing House (www.augsburgfortress.org). For information on lifelong learning and links to ELCA colleges and seminaries, go to (www.elca.org/vocationeducation).

¹⁴ “To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools,” *Luther’s Works*, 45, 356.

¹⁵ Among other possibilities, the character education movement offers various models for consideration (see www.character.org).

¹⁶ We reaffirm the position of the social statements of the Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church that supported the U.S. Supreme Court’s decisions in 1962 and 1963 declaring it unconstitutional for states to require religious exercises in public schools and permitting public schools to teach about religion. See *Prayer and Bible Reading in the Public Schools*, social statement of the Lutheran Church in America (1964), and *Church-State Relations in the USA*, social statement of The American Lutheran Church (1966). They are online at the Web site of *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* (www.elca.org/jle).

¹⁷ The Web site of The First Amendment Center (www.fac.org/rel_liberty/publicschools/Index.aspx) provides helpful resources on religious liberty in public schools. It includes the important consensus document developed by individuals representing very different views, “Public Schools and Religious Communities.”

¹⁸ For those who argue that public schools are doing well compared to other countries, see Gerald W. Bracey, *The War Against America’s Public Schools: Privatizing Schools, Commercializing Education* (Needham Heights, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, 2002) and Bruce J. Biddle and Lawrence J. Saha, *The Untested Accusation: Principals, Research Knowledge, and Policy Making in Schools* (Westport, Conn.: Ablex Publishing, 2002). Those who do not think that public schools are meeting today’s challenges argue: “Having reviewed trends in the United States and abroad, the committee is deeply concerned that the scientific and technical building blocks of our economic leadership are eroding at a time when many other nations are gathering strength.” *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future*, Committee on Prospering in the Global Economy, created by the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, “Executive Summary” (2005), 4 (www.nap.edu/execsumm_pdf/11463.pdf). Among the “worrisome indicators” the committee noted are: “US 12th graders recently performed below the international average for 21 countries on a test of general knowledge in mathematics and science.” And “In 1999, only 41% of US 8th grade students received instruction from a mathematics teacher who specialized in mathematics, considerably lower than the international average of 71%.”

¹⁹ “One-sixth of the country’s black students now attend virtually all non-white schools, many of which are impoverished, and only one-seventh of the whites attend multiracial schools, defined as those with 10

percent or more minority enrollment.” David K. Shipler, *The Working Poor: Invisible in America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 294.

²⁰ For example, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics’ publication “Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001”: “In 2001, students living in low-income families were six times more likely than their peers in high-income families to drop out of high school over the one-year period of October 2000 to 2001 (table 1). (Low income is defined as the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes, while high income refers to the top 20 percent of income distribution.)” While the national dropout rate from high school is 10.7 percent, more than 25 percent of young people in virtually every large city leave high school without graduating (www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/dropout2001).

²¹ A new study, *Funding Gaps 2006*, documents how school financial policy at the federal, state, and district levels systematically stacks the decks against schools that serve low-income students and students of color. The study was prepared by The Education Trust (www2.edtrust.org).

²² See the 1999 ELCA social statement *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* for a comprehensive perspective for combating poverty. For the ELCA’s stance against racism, see the 1993 social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*.

²³ See Eric A. Hanushek, “The Alchemy of ‘Costing Out’ an Adequate Education.” Unpublished paper, 2005, Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University. This paper can be found on the author’s Web site (www.hanushek.net) under “Articles in progress.”

²⁴ “In 2005 funding systems had been challenged in 36 states on the basis that inter-district funding was *inequitable*. Increasingly, cases are focusing on the *inadequacy* of funding in achieving learning goals.” *Education Next*, 21 (Winter, 2007). (Online at www.educationnext.org)

²⁵ Examples of different perspectives and research on these options may be found online (www.educationnext.org, www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg, www.aft.org/pubs-reports, www.nea.org).

²⁶ In its Churchwide Assembly in 2001, the ELCA adopted a social policy resolution on school vouchers. This resolution neither favors nor opposes all voucher proposals, but sets out a number of goals by which to evaluate specific legislative proposals. These goals, set forth as questions, ask to what degree proposals:

- provide public schools the support and resources necessary to fulfill their tasks?
- increase equal access to high quality education for all, especially for children and youth who live in poverty or are otherwise disadvantaged?
- enhance the ability of families—especially families living in poverty and other situations of hardship—to select the right high quality education for their children?
- allow participating schools, including religious ones, to maintain their distinctive character and mission?
- protect against all forms of invidious discrimination against students?
- ensure just, equitable, and long-term viable sources of funding?
- provide eligible families sufficient and accurate information of students in participating schools?
- ensure ways for measuring the educational achievements of students in participating schools?
- establish means to evaluate the positive and negative results of the program and in light of these results to consider if the program should be continued, modified, or ended?

The complete text of the resolution is online (www.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions).

²⁷ *Conversations with Luther*, translated and edited by Preserved Smith and H.P. Gallinger (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1915), 96. Quoted from *A Compend of Luther’s Theology*, edited by Hugh T. Kerr (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), 192-193.

²⁸ These statistics were provided by Donna Braband, director for Schools and Early Childhood Centers, Vocation and Education. They are for the 2005-2006 school year. For more information on ELCA centers and schools see the Web page of the ELCA Schools and Early Childhood Ministries of the Vocation and Education unit (www.elca.org/schools).

²⁹ Information on ELCA colleges and universities is found on the Web page of ELCA Colleges and Universities of the Vocation and Education unit (www.elca.org/colleges). At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, there were 50,088 full-time undergraduate students, 2,271 full-time graduate students, 3,892 part-time undergraduate students, 1,670 part-time graduate students, for a total head count of 57,921 and a full-time equivalent of 55,224 in ELCA colleges and universities. Dr. Arne Selbyg, director for Colleges and Universities, Vocation and Education, provided these figures.

³⁰ ELCA seminaries are an integral part of our church's network of educational institutions, and references are made to them in relation to our schools and colleges and universities. The 1995 Churchwide Assembly adopted a report on them and theological education. See "Faithful Leaders for a Changing World: Theological Education for Mission in the ELCA. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Study of Theological Education. Report to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly." Available from the ELCA's Vocation and Education unit.

³¹ "Lifelong learning partners" refers to education programs for lifelong learning in theology that have joined in a collaborative association with the Vocation and Education unit to form the ELCA Lifelong Theological Education Partnership. This partnership is an association for planning, programming, and advocacy for lifelong theological education for ministry, including ministry in daily life. As of January 2007 34 programs are members of the partnership. Lifelong learning partners include programs sponsored by a variety of accredited and non-accredited institutions, including colleges, conference centers, seminaries, synods, congregations, and other institutes and organizations.

³² Web page of the ELCA Schools and Early Childhood Ministries (www.elca.org/schools). The Web page reports that during the last year 100 congregations had expressed interest in beginning a school or center.

³³ For data on the diverse ethnic and racial composition of ELCA schools and centers, see "Summary: ELCA Schools and ECE Centers Survey 2004-2005" (www.elca.org/education/survey).

³⁴ This statement is widely attributed to Luther although scholars seem unable to locate where he said it. For one effort to track down its source in Luther, see William A. Decker, "In Search of Quotes," *Lutheran Partners* 20, 2 (March/April 2004). (Online at www.elca.org/lp)

³⁵ Robert Benne, Marcia Bunge, Tom Christenson, Paul Dovre, Mark Edwards, Darrell Jodock, DeAne Lagerquist, Mark Schwehn, and Ernest Simmons are among ELCA scholars who have been particularly active in thinking through Lutheran approaches to the engagement of faith and learning.

³⁶ A recent survey compared a large sample of Lutheran graduates from Lutheran colleges and universities and from public flagship universities on a number of key issues. Compared to Lutheran alumni of flagship public universities, for example, Lutheran alumni of Lutheran colleges and universities:

- said their colleges placed more emphasis on personal values and ethics (90% to 41%)
- discovered more opportunities to develop spiritually (87% to 20%)
- experienced more help in integrating faith into other aspects of life (72% to 11%)
- were more likely to have been engaged in church or religious activities (74% to 31%)
- felt there was a greater sense of community among students (88% to 57%)
- found more faculty who were interested in students personally and academically (85% to 41%)

- reported that their colleges were more effective in developing moral principles for careers and leadership (90% to 36%)
- were more likely to be “completely satisfied” with the quality of education they received (59% to 35%)

The survey was done under the auspices of the Lutheran Education Conference of North America in 2005 (www.lutherancolleges.org). The alumni who were surveyed had graduated between 1991-1999.

³⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 16-17.

³⁸ “In 1900 only 2.3 percent of those aged eighteen to twenty-four went to college; in 2000, 36 percent of this group attended college. In 1940, only 4.5 percent of the entire population had completed four years of college; by the end of the century it was 25.2 percent” (56). About two-thirds of graduating students in 2000 received their college degrees in occupational or professional fields (57). The authors argue for the following point: “As higher education became a mass institution by exalting its public purposes—its benefits to the nation’s economy, the protection of national defense, the creation of new knowledge, and the promise of equal educational opportunity—its private benefits in helping individuals gain access to professional status and earnings became its dominant rationale” (56). They claim that “the ethos of a moral and civic purpose to higher education has never disappeared, but it has become a minority view in the world of scholarly research and in the vocational preparation of students” (61). W. Norton Grubb and Marvin Lazerson, *The Education Gospel: The Economic Power of Schooling* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004).

³⁹ “While the post-World War II expansion drew on a rhetoric of public purposes, students attended college because of the possibilities for individual gain. One measure of advancing vocationalism was the attitude of students, reflected in an annual survey of freshmen. In the late 1960s, developing a meaningful philosophy of life was the most important goal of freshmen, rated “essential” or “very important” by 80 percent of respondents, while fewer than 45 percent thought it important to be well-off financially. At the end of the century these two values had traded places: developing a meaningful philosophy was most important for only 42 percent of freshmen, while 74 percent cited being well-off financially.” *Ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁰ See “The Spiritual Life of College Students: A National Study of College Students’ Search for Meaning and Purpose,” Higher Education Research Institute (Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, 2005). This extensive survey of first-year students at colleges and universities across the country found high levels of interest in spiritual and religious questions. For example, more than three-fourths of students say that they are “searching for meaning/purpose in life.” Pages 4-5. While this report seems to differ from the one referred to in the previous endnote, it may indicate the complexity of contemporary students, or perhaps differences in methodologies between the two studies.

⁴¹ For more information visit the Web site of ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry in the Vocation and Education unit (www.elca.org/campusministry).

⁴² “Policies and Procedures for Campus Ministries,” approved by the ELCA Church Council (November 15, 2003), 4 (www.elca.org/campusministry/policies).

⁴³ “Pervasively dismal grades in affordability show that for most American families college is less affordable now than it was a decade ago. The rising cost of attending college has outpaced the growth of family income. Although financial aid has increased, it has not kept pace with the cost of attendance. Every state should reexamine college tuition and financial aid policies, and each should formally link future tuition increases to gains in family income. In the meantime, the conclusion from *Measuring Up 2004* is clear: The vast majority of states have failed to keep college affordable for most families” (8). “The

nation's gap in college participation between affluent and poor students has widened. The college-going gap between white, African-American, and Latinos persists" (10). *Measuring Up 2004*, The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2004), 8 (<http://measuringup.highereducation.org/survey.cfm>). The report evaluates and grades the 50 states in their higher education performance in four categories: preparation, participation, affordability, and completion.

⁴⁴ The federal Higher Education Act of 1965 carried the hope and promise of ensuring access to higher education for low- and middle-income students. It created the Pell grants, which enabled millions of students to receive a higher education who would not otherwise have received one. In addition, several states initiated grant and scholarship programs with similar objectives. Funding for these federal and state grants, however, has fallen behind educational costs. "For example, in 1975 the average Pell grant covered 84% of the cost of college and in 2006 it covers only 36% of the cost." Kati Haycock, "Promise Abandoned" (www2.edtrust.org).

⁴⁵ Kati Haycock, "Promise Abandoned" (www2.edtrust.org).

⁴⁶ National Conference on State Legislatures, *Transforming Higher Education: National Imperative—State Responsibility*, 2006 (www.ncls.org) documents both the heavier debt load and the more time required to complete students' education. "For every 100 ninth graders who enter high school, only 18 finish college within six years."

⁴⁷ "For example, in 1975 40% of students in the top income quartile completed college by age 24 compared to 6% of the lower quartile students. By 2003 the completion rates were 75% and 9% for the two groups." Haycock.

Proposed Amendments to Social Statement on Education

Minor stylistic changes

Location	Proposed Change
p. 10:13	Delete comma after “we say”-unnecessary punctuation.
p. 25:13	Delete comma after “civil”-unnecessary punctuation.
p. 26:5	Replace “students eager to learn” with “eager students”-to complete parallel construction.
p. 26:5-6	Reword as follows: “When public schools are not accomplishing these purposes adequately, . . .”-improves readability.
p. 26: 22	Substitute “about” for “on”-clearer usage.
p. 27:29	Substitute “people” for “persons.”
p. 28:26	Substitute “this” for “the.”
p. 29:12	Delete “their”-unnecessary.
p. 31:14	Delete “of”-to improve readability.
p. 35:21	Capitalize “churchwide assembly”-ELCA style guidelines
p. 35:28	Replace “opportune moment: The number of . . .” with “opportune moment; the number of . . .”
pp. 43:7, 50:4 & 54:14	Put “Presiding Bishop” in lower case-ELCA style guideline.
p. 43:7-9	Reword as follows: “the presiding bishop and synodical bishops will persistently and persuasively voice their commitment to ELCA colleges and universities;” Add bullet as follows: “the churchwide organization will also persistently and persuasively demonstrate its commitment to this church’s colleges and universities;”-more appropriate use of

personal pronoun

p. 43:13 Replace “through” with “in”-usage

p. 48:10 Delete “Campus”-unnecessary

p. 55:10 Insert “ensure” before “excellent education” to add missing verb

Changes in the use of the personal pronoun “our” and “we”

Note: With the exception of the title of the social statement, references to it within the document, and major section headings, the language of the social statement will incorporate standard language for the official documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Some use of the personal pronoun “we” is retained to enhance engagement and readability for the user, but such uses are qualified by references that specify who “we” refers to on those contexts. (See example of *Contents* page and textual excerpt, which illustrate how these uses will be handled in final editing of the text to be transmitted to Churchwide Assembly on the following pages.)

Justice for Women Report

Introduction

The work of justice for women in church and society is assigned to the Church in Society program unit. The pertinent continuing resolution reads, in part:

16.12.D05. Church in Society Unit

The Church in Society unit shall assist this church to discern, understand, and respond to the needs of human beings, communities, society, and the whole creation through direct human services and through addressing systems, structures, and policies of society, seeking to promote justice, peace, and the care of the earth. To fulfill these responsibilities, this program unit shall: . . .

- d. work to enable this church to realize the full participation of women; to create equal opportunity for women of all cultures; to foster partnership between men and women; to assist this church to address sexism; and to advocate justice for women in this church and society. In so doing, this program unit shall:*
- 1) present a program plan annually to the Church Council and biennially to the Churchwide Assembly on these efforts; and*
 - 2) convene a consulting committee related to this task.*

The program for justice for women falls under all of the strategic directions of the churchwide organization's Plan for Mission and most specifically assists in implementing the organization's guidance to be a public church, to cultivate strong ecumenical and interfaith relationships, and to assist in leadership development across the church. Even more specifically, the justice for women program represents this church's organizational commitment to "confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence."

Mary Streufert, director for justice for women in church and society, began her tenure on May 16, 2006. At the end of July she began an eight-week maternity leave.

Priorities of Work

Theology is the core of the work for justice for women. Without theological articulation, what this church works for in relation to justice for women may either appear to be without roots in the Lutheran

tradition or indeed function without theological basis. No program or policy will effect the desired change toward justice for women desired unless it addresses how people understand themselves, others, and God. Lutherans act out of the grace received from God through Jesus Christ, revealed in Word and Sacrament. This church, therefore, hopes, believes, and argues that its actions are grounded in the gospel of grace, as Luther argued in his treatise "The Freedom of a Christian." What this means for members of this church is that they are invited to return to the theology of the Word that can shape their hearts and ground their actions. While policy guidelines are important in defining appropriate behavior and actions, no policy on justice for women alone can change the reality of sexism; hearts and minds must be transformed. Members of this church are also challenged to act. This is also an argument Luther made: that because of God's grace, a living faith means Christians act as Christ towards others.

Nevertheless, any action occurs in a paradoxical state of being, in which humans are *simul justus et peccator* (simultaneously justified and guilty). Anything this church and its members do to end sexism, racism, classism, or any other form of oppression relies upon reformation in the body of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The roots of a theology of justice for women are creational and baptismal, for humans are lovingly formed by God's love in the divine image and claimed and redeemed by God's grace through the waters of baptism. Nevertheless, human brokenness interrupts (but does not ultimately conquer) the possibility of living the *imago dei* of creation and the *imitatio christi* of baptism. A theology of justice for women dwells within the eschatological hope—the promise of God's horizon or future in the very present—found in the cross.

The concern and desire to integrate justice for women into the work of the ELCA is a committed and serious address of "the scandalous realities" of the multiple forms of oppression, including sexism, that infuse daily life and is rooted in the stark realization that justice for women in church and in society does not prevail. Violence against women occurs in every minute of time in every corner of the globe.

What makes violence against women in its many forms possible is the objectification of women. To see females as the object of the male self or male society is inherently a power issue. In order to invite this church

into a transformation of how to see the world and act in it, the first goal of the justice for women program in the ELCA is education.

Guiding questions include:

- How are women and girls objectified, especially in ways that are invisible to us because the patterns are so normative to our society and to our religion?
- What are the power dynamics of various situations in which there is a lack of justice for women?
- How do our church beliefs (theology) and church (ecclesial) practices serve either as a hindrance or as a benefit to justice for women in church and in society?
- How do our social policies and practices function either as a hindrance or as a benefit to justice for women in church and in society?
- How are justice for women issues or problems around the world interrelated? Why is it important to understand the relationship, for example, between child marriage in Africa and the Hooters billboard in Chicago that reads, "Liquor in Hooters"?
- What does this church have to say about its own complicity in sexism?
- How can this church be prophetic in the world—in both church and in society—in acting against injustice based upon biology?

Addressing sexism in church and in society is a challenge for this church. Truly seeing and feeling the causes and effects of sexism is painful, but it is not a journey made alone. As the priesthood of all believers, God calls members of this church to minister to each other through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which includes discernment, analysis, and transformation to a new way of being. Every member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is called to address the scandalous realities of sexism and other forms of oppression. To this end, members of the ELCA are freed to take on the challenges of confronting sexism in church and society *at the same time* that staff of the churchwide organization works on justice for women.

The objectives of the ELCA invitation to action for justice for women, as proposed by the director for justice for women, are to educate, advocate, and lead. In order to allow great creativity, freedom, and contextualization specific to local communities and congregations, the invitation to action for this entire church is conceived through these three specific action verbs, through and under which ELCA leaders and members may form their own plans for tactics.

Invitation to Action for Justice for Women in Church and Society

Purpose Statement

The justice for women program of the Church in Society unit challenges and works with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in all its expressions, to eradicate sexism in this church and to promote gender justice in society at large.

Goals

To help the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understand, challenge, and respond faithfully to sexism through a transformation of how its members see, think, feel and act.

Working definition of "justice for women"

Justice for women occurs when the ways in which women and girls are objectified are rejected and the imago dei of women and girls is affirmed through both theology and policy, in church and in society.

1. ELCA members understand justice for women and girls as a church issue.
2. ELCA members have theological ability to analyze church and society in terms of justice for women and girls.
3. ELCA members are equipped to challenge societal, theological, and ecclesial practices and beliefs that are unjust to women and girls.
4. ELCA members are able to advocate for changes in church practice and belief, as well as social policy and practice, that bring about and reflect justice for women and girls.

The assumption of the director for justice for women is that there is a multiplicity of ways in which females express themselves and live their lives.

Objectives: Educate, Advocate, Lead

Educate for justice

- educate people about the nexus of theology and culture and how this affects women
- equip people with basic theological tools
- promote understanding and analysis of power systems from a Christian perspective
- establish feminist, womanist, mujerista, and Asian theologies as mainstream theology in the church

Advocate for change

- create forums within church to discuss and promote theological, ecclesial, and social renewal away from sexism
- build capacity for action on issues related to justice for women: commercial sexual exploitation, health

and access to healthcare, abuse, public and private authority

Lead into the future

- promote the ELCA's prophetic voice for justice for women in the ecumenical and public spheres through multiple partners

How objectives are being addressed

Education

- Justice for Women Strategic Alliance: See below.
- Justice for Women Consulting Committee: The consulting committee is a mutually educating group of women and men. Meetings regularly give time and attention to discussion on a text and ideas pertinent to the work of justice for women.
- Justice for Women Web site: The justice for women Web site is a key educational tool of the justice for women program. As such, it will continue to develop with the input of key collaborators in the work of the program. As of early March, the site was launched in its infancy. (See <http://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen/index.html>.) There will be drop down menus under "Educate," "Advocate," and "Lead," as well as a sidebar for quick links to events, contact information, and other information. The Web site will include the three-point ELCA invitation to action.
- Relationships: Education is successful when people have secure and responsive relationships. Therefore, the director has spent considerable time meeting with staff and ecumenical partners in order to foster good relationships that allow for mutual support in addressing the scandalous realities of systemic oppression, reciprocal learning, and renewed ministry within the ELCA.
- Women's History Month events: In conjunction with staff from Women of the ELCA and Global Mission, justice for women staff have planned and held educational events on women in history and women around the globe.
- Research and Reports: The director continues research on the theological and biblical issues of sexism, especially those that pertain to the interface of culture and theology and an understanding of power and authority from a theological perspective. This research is critical to the proposal to "educate, advocate, and lead" that grounds the reports to Church Council and to the Churchwide Assembly.

Advocacy

Advocacy work in the justice for women program is currently focused upon four justice for women issues: commercial sexual exploitation, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, and leadership.

1. *Commercial Sexual Exploitation*

As an umbrella term, commercial sexual exploitation generally refers to the ways in which women's bodies are used commercially. Specifically, commercial sexual exploitation includes, for example, a range represented from the sexual use of women's bodies to sell products to the trafficking of women and girls for sexual slavery. Specific actions include:

- network building with LWF, ELCIC, and Evangelical Lutheran Women (Canada); denominational executives of women's organizations; National Council of Churches Justice for Women Working Group; Cherish Our Children executive director;
- shared leadership with Women of the ELCA representative to convene in-house *ad hoc* working group, including informational brown bag lunch; letter sent to manufacturers of feminine hygiene products, requesting their involvement to end human trafficking by listing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 888 telephone number for observers and victims of trafficking on their packaging; mutual support, action, and conversation with Church in Society's director for corporate responsibility; and theological sidebar for May issue of *Café*, the WELCA online e-zine for young adults.

2. *HIV and AIDS*

- The director for justice for women will attend the International YWCA's International Women's Conference on young women's leadership on HIV/AIDS in Nairobi, July 2007.
- Two justice for women consulting committee members, Ms. Jessica M. McKee and Ms. Mikka McCracken, also will attend, sponsored by the program.
- The experience and findings, especially as they pertain to gender, Bible, and theology, will be communicated to other churchwide staff.

3. *Domestic Violence*

- The director for justice for women met with the consultant for misconduct prevention in Vocation and Education, the director for rural

networking and resourcing in Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, and the general counsel in the Office of the Secretary.

- The director for justice for women partially reviewed domestic violence materials remaining from the Commission for Women.

4. *Leadership*

- The director for justice for women meets regularly with the director for ministry leadership—candidacy and deployment in Vocation and Education to explore venues for developing women's leadership and ideas for women and men working together in ministry.
- The director for justice for women will cultivate opportunities for young women to develop leadership in the ELCA through the justice for women consulting committee.
- The director for justice for women took opportunities to develop ecumenical relationships in order to work towards shared leadership.

Consulting Committee

The Justice for Women Consulting Committee is a resource for advice and discussion on ideas, themes, and issues related to the work of justice for women in church and society. The committee is composed of six at-large ELCA members, who were nominated by various leaders in the church, as well as representatives from several churchwide units. The consulting committee includes Charles S. Miller, executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop; David A. Donges, bishop of the South Carolina Synod; Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Jessica M. McKee, member of the Church Council; Joyce Schoule, member of the program committee for Church in Society; Susan Candea of Loveland, Colorado; Antonia Clemente of Brooklyn, New York, a community and social worker; Kristen Kvam of Prairie Village, Kansas, a professor of systematic theology; Agnes McClain of Los Angeles, California, assistant to the synodical bishop and community organizer; Mikka McCracken of Bemidji, Minnesota, student and leader in the Lutheran Youth Organization; Jaime Weller-Lafavor of Las Vegas, Nevada, an executive with a social ministry organization. *Ex-officio* members are Rebecca S. Larson, executive director for Church in Society, and Mary Streufert, the director for justice for women in church and society. Juli Bey, the Justice for Women

administrative assistant, serves as secretary and administrative assistant to the committee. The membership of the committee represents a wide range of work and life experience, geographical location, ethnic communities, and age.

The committee has met twice, in October 2006 and March 2007. The committee will convene twice a year, either in person or by conference call, as the work dictates. Thus far, the committee has established a baseline of knowledge about the work of the churchwide organization as it relates to the work of synods, congregations, and the international Lutheran community and has familiarized itself with the churchwide organization's new structure and the intent and purpose in the creation of the program for Justice for Women. At the most recent meeting, among other agenda items, the committee considered the merit of pursuing broader and deeper research on gender justice in this church, the concept of leadership and the ways in which women and men could be served by leadership development; the content, images, and format of the justice for women Web site; and, most important, the proposed invitation to action for justice for women. The committee also discussed the critical importance of grounding this work theologically and the need for a social statement on gender justice. The next meeting of the Justice for Women Consulting Committee is scheduled for September 2007.

Justice for Women Strategic Alliance

The 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted [CA05.04.09], in part, that "[t]he important work of the Commission [for Women] will now be the responsibility of the interunit alliance and be coordinated by the director for justice for women." Although full responsibility for the programmatic function of justice for women resides with the Church in Society program unit, the justice for women strategic alliance functions as a group of churchwide staff members focused upon challenging the culture of sexism. As stated in the Plan for Mission, the ELCA is committed to addressing sexism and other forms of institutional oppression. Insofar as this is the case, then every person's work of programmatic or administrative ministry within the churchwide organization's structure is affected positively when she or he is able to redress sexism not only in specific policies or habits of the churchwide organization, but also within one's own world view. In other words, a shift in how an individual understands self, others, world, and

God provides a shift in action that influences ministry away from sexism.

Members of the justice for women interunit strategic alliance include the following: Charles S. Miller, Office of the Presiding Bishop; Eileen Heffner, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs; Barbara Whalen, Human Resources; Rebecca Sims, Research and Evaluation; Marcia Johnson, Synodical Relations; Michael L. Burk, Worship and Liturgical Resources; Deborah Myers, Office of the Secretary; Lisa Sanchez, Office of the Treasurer; LaRue R. Unglaube, Information Technology; Jewel Berg, Management Services; Gloria Bengtson, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers; Mary Streufert, Church in Society; Kathryn I. Love, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission; Barbara J. Lund, Global Mission; Raquel E. Rodriguez, Global Mission; Christine May, Multicultural Ministries; Kim L. Beckmann, Vocation and Education; Paul D. Edison-Swift, Communication Services; Dawn Hansen, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Sonia Solomonson, *The Lutheran* magazine; Laura L. Knitt, Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Joy Sourou, Mission Investment Fund.

During the first two meetings in the fall of 2006, members of the justice for women strategic alliance acquainted themselves with the role and function of the strategic alliances within the churchwide organization and began discussions grounded in biblical and theological understandings of justice. Because social change does not rely solely upon policies, but must be met by personal and communal transformation of the heart and mind, the alliance members committed themselves to cultural transformation by beginning with themselves. Members agreed to three consecutive months of biblical and theological reflection on justice for women in 2007. As the convener of the alliance, the goals of the director for justice for women are to draw members into thoughtful analysis and reflection upon matters of justice for women in church and in society; to create an atmosphere of trust and integrity in which to discuss matters of gender justice in this church; to promote greater abilities to identify sexist habits and beliefs; to afford members with basic theological foundations for gender justice; and to allow a process of discernment in accord with the educational goals to determine program- and unit-specific means of accountability as alliance members grow into what it means to build commitment to cultural change grounded in the Lutheran faith and tradition. Models of shared

leading, open discussion, and mutual discernment ground the work of the justice for women alliance.

Research

The initial months of the justice for women program were filled largely with building relationships with staff members of the churchwide organization. At the same time, a group of persons from Church in Society, Research and Evaluation, and Women of the ELCA gave careful attention to initiating and crafting an interview process on gender justice in the ELCA. The purpose of the research was to find out how sexism affects women and girls in the ELCA in order to assist in guiding the work of the justice for women program. To carry out the study as quickly as possible, the *ad hoc* group of advisors decided to use existing databases to access ELCA women quickly and to carry out the research by telephone interviews. Telephone interviewers included staff from Women of the ELCA, Research and Evaluation, Church in Society, and the justice for women strategic alliance. For full summary and evaluation, please refer to Appendix 1.

Important highlights of the narrative results include the following. Three issues surfaced in the study. First, gender specific expectations continue to determine what is expected of women in churches (p. 1, para. 3). Second, women stated that their voices were often either silenced or disregarded (p. 2, para. 3) and third, women reported that they were treated as if they held no authority (p. 2, para. 4). Women have the ability to speak and the power to speak. Silencing or disregarding women's voices is related to the question of authority, which was asked about directly. Authority relates to power, but whereas power has to do with the ability to do or to act, authority concerns the response to someone's power. Authority is influence commanding respect. These three notable results (gendered expectations, power, and authority) point to important areas of work for the justice for women program, all of which emphasize the programmatic need for education in social and theological analysis.

One important effect of the interview process itself was that the interviewers, who came from a variety of programs and units throughout the churchwide organization, were able to learn more about sexism and its effect in church and society through the process of talking with interviewees. One serious shortfall of the research was the lack of ethnic diversity in the interviewees. Using existing databases contributed

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Exhibit K, Part 2

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greatly to this problem; sufficient attention to the problem would be given in any future study.

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Summary of Interviews on Justice for Women in the ELCA

Research and Evaluation

Rebecca Sims

December 2006

Overview

Research and Evaluation collaborated with the ELCA Alliance for Justice for Women to conduct an initial research project exploring issues of justice for women in the ELCA. In order to set the course for a future, larger study and to listen to what the concerns of women in the ELCA are, we interviewed 37 women from various contexts across the church. These groups included Lutheran Woman Today subscribers (2), Young Women's Affinity Group members (3), Lutheran Services in America executives (4), church council members (4), synod bishops (3), at-large members (4), campus ministry students (3), synod vice presidents (7), seminary faculty (2) and seminary students (5). Potential participants were identified in a variety of ways, some randomly selected from lists, and others recommended or nominated to participate. We sent letters to 92 women asking if they would be willing to participate in the study. Forty-six women responded to the invitation, resulting in a 50 percent response rate. Nine women who initially responded were not able to be contacted. Interviewers were recruited from various units of the ELCA churchwide organization, including Women of the ELCA staff, Research and Evaluation staff, and members of the Alliance for Justice for Women¹. Fifteen interviewers were trained and assigned to conduct three interviews over the phone. Each interview lasted approximately one hour.

Characteristics of Participants

We attempted to cover a wide range of age and experience when choosing the groups to be included in this study. Some participants are members of an ELCA congregation, while others are more involved in the wider church organization at the synod or churchwide level. We also attempted to include both younger women and older women, and we asked for participants' age in decades at the beginning of each interview. Nine participants are in their 20s or 30s, 17 participants are in their 40s or 50s, and 11 participants are 60 or older. We analyzed the responses by age group to look for possible differences in experience due to age.

Participants' Experiences

Participants were first asked if they had ever been

prevented from or expected to participate in any church work or function because they were female. Most of the participants said they had never been prevented from doing certain duties, but many had been expected to perform certain functions because of their gender. These expectations were typically working in the kitchen or providing food, teaching Sunday school and working in the nursery. A couple female pastors felt they were treated differently, and two of the synod vice presidents noted that the vice president in their synod is typically the opposite gender of the synod bishop. Some of the participants in their 40s and 50s mentioned that in the past, girls could not be pastors or acolytes. Some of the participants who are 60 or older recalled not being allowed to count money or usher in the past because they were female. One participant said there was also a distinction made between single and married women in the church concerning what functions they were allowed to perform.

The second question asked about experiencing sexual harassment. Sexual harassment was defined as "any repeated, unwanted behavior of a sexual nature perpetrated upon one individual by another. Sexual harassment may be verbal, visual, written, or physical. It can occur between people of different genders or those of the same sex. Harassing behaviors may occur in a variety of relationships including those among peers, and those where there is an imbalance of power between two individuals." About half of the participants in their 20s and 30s and half of the participants 60 or older reported they had never experienced sexual harassment. Only about one-third of the participants in their 40s and 50s reported they had never experienced sexual harassment. For those who had experienced sexual harassment, the incidents varied greatly in severity and duration. Many of the participants described verbal harassment such as inappropriate comments or dirty jokes. Some were isolated incidents and others were repeated. A couple participants described more severe sexual harassment such as being propositioned or being psychologically abused. Only one participant reported pursuing legal action due to sexual harassment. The majority of the incidents were not ongoing and had occurred in the past.

Participants were next asked if they had ever had trouble getting their voice heard at a meeting or in other decision making or idea exploring settings. Over half of the participants aged 60 or older said they had never had trouble getting their voice heard, while most of the younger women gave examples of this. Several participants described women's voices not being heard in meetings, especially in a male-dominated group. Others described the experience of not being heard until a male said the same thing, or a woman's idea was incorrectly attributed to a male. A couple participants described sexist comments at work regarding the female's role. A couple participants also felt there is a bias against female theologians, with students more likely to listen to male theologians. Some participants described the experience of not being heard, but not because they were female. Some felt they were not heard because they were young, single, from a rural area, or due to their race.

The next question asked if participants had ever been treated as if they held no authority. The majority of the participants had examples of being treated this way, although participants aged 60 or older were less likely to report experiencing this. Many participants described someone wanting to talk to the male boss or to hear something from a male instead of a female. A couple participants described a male colleague going to the boss and making decisions without her present. A couple synod bishops said people often assume their male assistant is the bishop. Some participants have been treated as if they held no authority, but they attributed it to other factors besides gender. A couple of the participants in their 20s and 30s felt it was an age issue rather than a gender issue. A couple participants in their 40s and 50s felt it was a clergy versus lay issue or a race issue.

Participants were next asked if they had ever been denied a job or promotion because they were female. Almost all of the participants in all of the age groups did not believe this had happened to them, at least not that they knew of or could prove. A couple participants felt they may have been denied a promotion or promotions were not made available to them because they were female. A couple participants also felt they were not getting equal pay in their position. One of the older participants felt it was more of an age issue than a gender issue.

The last question about participants' personal experiences asked if they had ever been strongly affected by a sermon, Bible study, or theological

teaching. Most of the participants gave examples of being strongly affected, about half positively and half negatively. Some of the positive messages participants heard were the active role of women in the church, that we are meant to be in relationship, and the use of female language to describe God. Some of the negative messages were that women are subservient to men, focusing on marriage or divorce, and the writings of Paul. A couple participants were offended in ecumenical contexts by others' attitudes toward women.

Current Issues for Women

The last three interview questions focused on current pressing issues for women and girls in the ELCA, the nation and the world. The first question asked participants about the current pressing issues for women in their congregation or setting. Several possible areas were listed, including health care, sexual assault/rape, economic hardship, eating disorders, emotional/psychological abuse, addiction to alcohol/drugs and pornography/prostitution. The most common response among participants in all age groups was health care, especially for older women. Many participants also listed economic hardship, especially among single and older women. Another typical response was women trying to balance both career and family, and the stress women are under to "do everything." Eating disorders and the media portrayal of body image were also concerns. Several participants felt abuse was a pressing issue, which is often psychological and may be hidden. A few participants in their 40s and 50s mentioned care-giving for aging parents as an issue, as well as the "glass ceiling" for women in the church. A couple participants in this age group also felt addiction and chemical dependency were pressing issues for women in their setting.

The next question asked participants what are the most significant challenges for girls in your congregation, your local community, the nation and the world. Participants in all age groups felt peer pressure and images presented by the media were two of the most important challenges for girls today. Self-esteem issues were also mentioned by several participants, and girls finding "where they fit in." High expectations and the "super girl dilemma" were also listed by some participants. A few participants listed drugs and alcohol as a significant challenge. A couple participants also mentioned getting a good education and funding that education as challenges. Sexual behavior and teen pregnancy were listed as challenges by a couple

participants. For girls around the world, the challenges were much different from those in the U.S. Hunger, access to education, living with HIV, rape, prostitution and slavery were all mentioned as challenges for girls worldwide.

The final question asked about the most significant advantages for girls. By far the most common response to this question was that girls have more opportunities and so many choices now. Several participants mentioned that girls have strong female role models, such as female pastors in the church. A couple participants felt there is more equality for girls, and women have an advantage in their ability to network and make friends easily. Women are not expected to give up their life for their children or spouse, and more girls are in college and graduate school. A couple participants mentioned that other women have paved the way for them, so things should be easier for girls today than previous generations.

Summary and Conclusions

Although this was a small sample, the results of this study give us an initial picture of some of the experiences and pressing issues for women in the ELCA. Most of the participants said they had never been prevented from doing certain duties in the church, but many had been expected to perform certain functions such as working in the kitchen or providing food, teaching Sunday school and working in the nursery. Participants in their 40s and 50s were more likely to describe an incidence of sexual harassment than the younger or older participants. This may be due to a generation effect, where older women did not think of it as harassment because it was not a defined concept at the time. Younger women may not be experiencing as much harassment due to increased awareness and training, especially in work settings.

On the other hand, women under 60 were more likely to say they had trouble getting their voice heard, most commonly in meetings with a male-dominated group. Women under 60 were also more likely to report having been treated as if they held no authority. Many participants described someone wanting to talk to the male boss or to hear something from a male instead of a female. Almost all of the participants did not think they had ever been denied a job or promotion because they were female. Participants gave examples of sermons or theological teachings that strongly affected them both positively and negatively.

As for current pressing issues for women in the

ELCA, the most common issues were health care and economic hardship. Stress and trying to balance work and family life were also main concerns. The most common challenges for girls were peer pressure and images presented by the media. Participants were also concerned about girls' self-esteem and identity. On the other hand, advantages for girls are all the opportunities they have today and strong female role models. Many participants felt that girls growing up today would have an easier time because of the women who had come before them.

This study gives us an initial picture of experiences and concerns of women in the ELCA. Future studies should include a wider range of women and more intentionally include persons of color. A survey with a larger sample might be a way to reach more women for their opinions. However, this study gives us a starting point to address some of the main issues women in the ELCA are facing today.

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

Exhibit K, Part 2, Appendix 2

Page 4

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Social Statement on Sexuality Update

Previous activity

After a monumental effort by writers, task force members, and staff, the task force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality published, in print and on the Web, *Free in Christ to Serve the Neighbor: Lutherans Talk About Human Sexuality* on December 4, 2006. Task force members and staff have been providing presentations to the Conference of Bishops, Church Council, special meetings in synods, and other places in order to build awareness and encourage a broad discussion of the study within this church. Initial responses indicate a largely positive reception of the study *where it is being used*. There is a sense that momentum is growing slowly, however, around the use of the study.

Work has also been directed toward developing supplemental resources to encourage use of the study. A video companion was created by staff and task force members David Tiede and Tim Wengert to aid those who will lead the study. As of April 1, the study now has been published in Spanish on the Web and a writer hired to create a youth-friendly version. The written youth study is to be available by August 15 and will be supplemented by Web based video clips. This work is made possible by a Thrivent churchwide grant.

Report on anticipated activity

The task force is now turning its attention to listening to the church as it discusses this third study and to its own conversations about the content of a first draft of a social statement on human sexuality. The twin foci were evident at the February 2007 meeting and in the activity of staff and task force members who are offering workshops on the study at synod assemblies.. A writing team has now been formed that will meet in late April to begin focused work on drafting social statement material. An October 2007 task force meeting is scheduled to coincide with the Conference of Bishops meeting and both groups will share a session of conversation. The first draft of the social statement is due in late winter 2008.

Timeline: ELCA Studies on Sexuality

2007

- February 16-18: Meeting of the task force
- April 30: Writing Team meeting
- August 15: Youth version of third study due
- October 5-7: Meeting of the Task Force
- November 1: Deadline for responses to *Free in Christ to Serve the Neighbor: Lutherans Talk about*

Human Sexuality

2008

- January 24-26: Meeting of the task force; will complete work on draft of social statement and plan for hearings.
- March: Distribution of the first draft of a social statement.
- March to September: Task force holds hearings on first draft.
- Mid-October: Deadline for responses to first draft.
- Late October/November: Meeting of the task force.

2009

- January: Final meeting of the task force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; finalizes work on a proposed social statement
- March: Church in Society Program Committee receives comment from Conference of Bishops and Church Council and prepares final text for Church Council
- April: Church Council action to review text and place the proposed social statement on Churchwide Assembly agenda
- May 1: Synods receive proposed social statement
- August: Churchwide Assembly considers proposed social statement

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Church in Society Program Unit Biennial Plan of Studies 2007-2009

“The [Church in Society] program unit, in order to assist members of this church in their study of social concerns, shall formulate a biennial program for the study of selected topics and for the development of relevant resources (people, networks, materials) and programs...

The program committee for the Church in Society unit shall review the biennial program of study as well as study material for publication and distribution.

The unit shall report its biennial program of study to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly and shall promote the program throughout this church.”¹

The following listing is subject to change and development. The ELCA Churchwide Assembly (2007), the Church Council, and the program committee for Church in Society may call for the development of other resources.

Publications

Social statement “Our Calling in Education”

The ELCA Task Force on Education has prepared a proposed social statement on education that will be acted upon by the Church Council in April 2007 and is to be considered by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. If adopted, the social statement will be available in Fall 2007. A Spanish translation will be available by mid 2008.

“Free in Christ to Serve the Neighbor: Lutherans Talk About Human Sexuality”

This study on sexuality, prepared by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality (TFSS), is designed for use in various ministry settings throughout 2007 to help members engage questions and issues related to sexuality from the standpoint of faith. Responses will be received by the task force through November 1, 2007, as input toward preparing a social statement. A Spanish version is available online, also.

“Free in Christ to Serve the Neighbor: Lutheran Youth Talk About Human Sexuality”

This version of the study will be written in a

“youth-friendly” manner that will include online resources to help facilitate conversation and is intended to foster youth participation in the study process, including the encouragement of formal responses to the task force from young people. The print document should be available by late Summer 2007 and electronic resources by early Fall.

Social statement on human sexuality

The first draft of a proposed social statement on human sexuality, prepared by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality, will be published in early 2008. The proposed social statement will be available in Spring 2009 and is to be considered by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. If adopted, the social statement will be available in Fall 2009. A Spanish translation will be available in mid 2010.

New message on immigration

The preliminary draft of a new message on immigration, developed in cooperation with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), will be brought to the ELCA Church

Council for consideration in November 2007. It is anticipated that a new message will be readied for action by Council in April 2008. It would then be published by late Summer 2008.

Social policy resolution on American Indian gambling

A proposal for a social policy resolution, and related recommendations, that clarifies the position of the ELCA on legal gambling sponsored by American Indian tribes, will be brought to the November 2007 meeting of Church Council.

Faith and science curriculum for youth

A study designed to help high school youth engage matters related to the interface of faith and science, developed in coordination with the Zygon Center of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and the Science and Religion Task Force of the East Central Wisconsin Synod, is to be published by the end of 2007.

Journal of Lutheran Ethics

This free, online journal will publish monthly articles on current issues and classical themes in Christian ethics (www.elca.org/jle).

¹Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns, p. 8-9.

Activities and Processes

Process for developing a social statement on sexuality

The Task Force on ELCA Studies on Sexuality is expected to meet twice in 2007, twice in 2008, and once in January of 2009.

Process for developing a social statement on genetics

The ELCA Task Force on Genetics will hold two meetings in 2007, three meetings in 2008, and two meetings in 2009.

Journal of Lutheran Ethics

Staff will continue to network with the contributing editors and other contributors to encourage online reflection and discussion of Christian ethics from diverse audiences.

Annual gathering of Lutheran ethicists

Studies will convene a meeting of Lutheran ethicists in January 2008 in Atlanta, Georgia, and another in 2009 in Chicago, Illinois.

CD ROM on: "Addressing Social Issues: ELCA Social Policy, Studies, and Resources"

A CD ROM that compiles ELCA social statements, messages, social policy resolutions, and selected interpretative material on how the ELCA addresses social issues should be available by Fall 2007. (A test version of the CD ROM is already in circulation.)

Faith and science

Studies will provide leadership for the Interunit Staff Team on Faith, Science, and Technology and will serve as the ELCA liaison with the ELCA Alliance for Faith, Science, and Technology. The staff team will continue to promote education and awareness of science and faith through its Web site, resource database, and networking.

Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

Studies will provide leadership for the Interunit Task Force for the ELCA's support of the Decade.

Moral Deliberation

Studies will provide leadership for a Thrivent churchwide grant project, "Talking Together as Christians Cross-culturally--Africans and Asians," that also involves program units for Multicultural Ministries and Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission."

ELCA Mission Personnel Completed Service Report

The following mission personnel appointed by a Global Mission call committee have resigned from service between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006:

APPOINTMENT	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	COUNTRY	START DATE	END DATE
Assigned	Persson	Lennart	Thailand	June 1, 1970	November 30, 2006
Assigned	Schick	Robert	India	January 11, 2000	September 30, 2006
Assigned	Schubert	Daryl	Tanzania	July 5, 2000	August 31, 2006
Assigned	Sorum	Jonathan	Slovakia	July 5, 2000	October 13, 2006
Associate	Persson	Carin	Thailand	August 1, 1991	November 30, 2006
Associate	Schubert	Jane	Tanzania	July 5, 2000	November 16, 2006
Contract	Redfield	Guy	Norway	February 11, 2003	September 30, 2006
Contract	Redfield	Guy	Norway	February 11, 2003	September 30, 2006
Full Time Regular	Johnson	Scott	Madagascar	June 21, 1998	May 15, 2006
Full Time Regular	Yuen	Royan	Hong Kong	May 1, 2000	January 31, 2006
Full Time Regular	Yuen	Candice	Hong Kong	May 1, 2000	January 31, 2006
Full Time Regular	Swanson	William	Germany	September 1, 2000	April 20, 2006
Full-Time Team	Roth Johnson	Heather	Madagascar	June 21, 1998	September 15, 2006
Global Mission 2 Years	Bradway	H. Leroy	Slovakia	September 8, 2002	October 3, 2006
Global Mission 2 Years	Quello	J. Christian	Lithuania	July 7, 2004	August 26, 2006
Global Mission 2 Years	Nipp	Jessica	Germany	July 7, 2004	September 30, 2006
Global Mission Associate	Lunn	John	India	November 2, 2002	June 30, 2006
Global Mission Associate	Satran	Shelly	Haiti	August 25, 2003	February 6, 2006
Global Mission Associate	Douglass	Katherine	France	September 1, 2004	August 31, 2006
Global Mission Associate	Anderson	William	China	August 1, 2005	August 1, 2006

The following mission personnel appointed by a Global Mission call committee died March 24, 2006:

Associate	Murnyak	Meredith	TANZANIA	February 1, 1983	March 24, 2006
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Recommended:

Recommended action is on agenda page 43.

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Multicultural Ministry Strategy Report
Multicultural Ministries
Research and Evaluation

Introduction

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, at its constituting convention in 1987, adopted the following goal: "It shall be a goal of this church that within 10 years of its establishment its membership shall include at least 10 percent people of color and/or primary language other than English" (ELCA 5.01.A87). In order to help achieve this goal, this church developed five multicultural ministry strategies. The first of these strategies, the American Indian and Alaska Native Strategic Plan, was adopted at the fifth biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in Philadelphia in 1997. At the seventh biennial Churchwide Assembly in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 2001, two strategies were adopted: the Asian and Pacific Islander Ministry Strategy and the Latino Ministry Strategy. In 2005, at the ninth biennial Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, two more strategies were adopted: the African Descent Ministry Strategy and the Arab and Middle Eastern Ministry Strategy. The following is a report on the progress of the ELCA in its multicultural ministries with a special focus on the implementation of these strategies.

In short, this church did not achieve the 10 percent goal within 10 years.¹ In fact, as of December 2005, about three percent of the baptized membership of the ELCA consisted of people of color or whose primary language is other than English (see Table 1).

Table 1: People of Color or Whose Primary Language Is Other Than English in the ELCA as of December 2005		
Group	Number	Percent
African American/Black	54,354	1.12%
American Indian/Alaska Native	7,095	0.15%
Arab/Middle Eastern	1,779	0.04%
Asian/Pacific Islander	21,950	0.45%
Latino/Hispanic	39,157	0.81%
Multi-ethnic	12,261	0.25%
Other	11,096	0.23%
Subtotal	147,692	3.04%
White	4,703,084	96.96%
Total	4,850,776	100.00%

In contrast, about 33 percent of the population of the U.S. consists of people of color or whose primary language is other than English.

¹ The numbers presented in this report on the people of color or whose primary language is other than English who are baptized members of the ELCA are based on the annual reports filed by congregations. These reports are compiled by the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA. The categories used for the collection of data reflect the guidance of the Multicultural Ministries unit of the churchwide organization. The categories also take into account those used by the U.S. Census Bureau so that it is possible to make comparisons to the population of the U.S. as a whole. The reports are completed by an individual in the congregation, most frequently the pastor, who is asked to report the number of persons in each category. In 1988, approximately 360,000 baptized members were not categorized. In 1990, about 70,000 were not categorized. In 2000, about 7,000 were not categorized and in 2005, approximately 2,500 baptized members were not categorized. For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that those who were not categorized are White.

Table 2 presents the trends for the ELCA from 1990 to 2005. While there was growth in each of the groups, change in the overall racial and ethnic proportion of membership in the ELCA has been very slow. African Americans and Blacks make up the largest group of people of color or whose primary language is other than English, yet they comprise only one percent of the total membership of this church. In terms of overall numerical growth, Latinos and Hispanics have added the most new members. At the same time, between 2000 and 2005, there was a slight decline in the overall number of American Indians and Alaska Natives and of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the ELCA.

Table 2: Number of People of Color or Language Other Than English in the ELCA in 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005

	1990	1995	2000	2005	Proportion		
					1990	2000	2005
African American/Black	50,336	49,460	52,558	54,354	0.96%	1.03%	1.12%
American Indian/Alaska Native	5,833	6,912	7,440	7,095	0.11%	0.15%	0.15%
Arab/Middle Eastern				1,779			0.04%
Asian/Pacific Islander	20,547	22,007	22,465	21,950	0.39%	0.44%	0.45%
Latino/Hispanic	23,299	28,118	37,540	39,157	0.44%	0.73%	0.81%
Multi-ethnic				12,261			0.25%
Other	3,700	3,926	10,587	11,096	0.07%	0.21%	0.23%
Subtotal	103,715	110,423	130,590	147,692	1.98%	2.55%	3.04%
White	5,137,024	5,080,066	4,995,329	4,703,084	98.02%	97.45%	96.96%
Total	5,240,739	5,190,489	5,125,919	4,850,776	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Percent Non-white	1.98%	2.13%	2.55%	3.04%			

Table 3 presents the race and ethnicity of active rostered leaders in the ELCA in 2006. Of the 11,322 ordained clergy in 2006, 4.2 percent are people of color or language other than English. Only among the deaconesses is the proportion close to 10 percent. But, there has been an increase in the number of ordained clergy who are people of color or language other than English between 2000 and 2006.

Table 3: Race/Ethnicity of Active Rostered Leaders in the ELCA in 2000 and 2006

	Ordained Clergy		Associate in Ministry		Deaconess		Diaconal Minister	
	2000	2006	2000	2006	2000	2006	2000	2006
African American/Black	144	190	4	2	2	2	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	25	26	2	2	0	0	1	0
Arab/Middle Eastern	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	86	108	1	1	0	0	0	0
Latino/Hispanic	119	145	1	3	0	1	0	0
Subtotal	375	475	8	8	2	3	1	0
White	11,723	10,847	734	680	31	28	29	108
Total	12,098	11,322	742	688	33	31	30	108
Percent Non-white	3.1%	4.2%	1.1%	1.2%	6.1%	9.7%	3.3%	0.0%

The Strategies

There is considerable hope for the future. The recent restructuring of the churchwide organization should contribute greatly to the ability of this church to implement these strategies. Multicultural Ministries is now a program unit and is working directly and collaboratively with the other program units of this church, including Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission, Global Mission, Church in Society, Vocation and Education, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, and Women of the ELCA. In 2005, the Office of the Presiding Bishop added an assistant for leadership development to direct its "leadership initiative," and the Church Council of the ELCA established a designated fund of \$4.5 million to fund the initiative. A significant aspect of the initiative is the coordination of the leadership development components of ethnic-ministry strategies. This has led to the creation of a churchwide leadership table, which is critical to the coordination of this work. The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit and the Vocation and Education unit also have added staff who are directly responsible for advancing the multicultural ministry work of this church. Finally, the Office of the Presiding Bishop is committed to maintaining, at a minimum, the current proportion of funding for multicultural work through the regular churchwide budget.

There is also considerable hope that increasing numbers of synods, congregations, and agencies and institutions of this church will work together with the churchwide organization to help this church receive the gifts of people of color and language other than English. Many new initiatives are taking shape or are underway.²

The churchwide organization is beginning a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the multicultural ministry strategies of this church. Specific outcomes for each aspect of each strategy are being defined more clearly and those responsible for achieving these outcomes are being determined. The outcomes also will be prioritized and, because resources are limited, detailed evaluations focused on the highest priority outcomes will be conducted. The evaluation is taking place in an attempt to achieve the highest possible level of implementation for the strategies. There is considerably more work to do both in terms of the implementation of the strategies and in the evaluation of that work. At this point, however, this report is limited to a simple review of what activities already have taken place.

While each of the strategies reflects its distinctive community within the ELCA and its wider context for mission and ministry, there are similarities among the strategies. Typically each of the strategies addresses some or all of the following:

1. developing and supporting leadership within the community;
2. developing and distributing language-specific or ethnic-specific congregational resources;
3. building Lutheran identity and strengthening the abilities of congregations to engage in evangelism, discipleship, and stewardship;
4. contextualizing the outreach strategies of this church, starting new congregations, and transforming existing congregations;
5. heightening concern for social justice throughout this church and strengthening the abilities of the congregations to engage in social ministries;
6. helping this church to be more aware of and sensitive to the cultures of the communities;
7. addressing racism within this church and society;

² Specific initiatives have been reported in the following synods or regions: Southwest California Synod, Sierra Pacific Synod, Eastern North Dakota Synod, Minneapolis Area Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, New England Synod, Metropolitan New York Synod, New Jersey Synod, the Southeastern Synod, the synods in Texas, and the synods in Region 1. Knowledge of all the work synods are doing to help implement the strategies is, of course, incomplete.

8. pursuing unity within each of the communities;
9. strengthening ecumenical connections.

The African Descent Ministry Strategy³

The African Descent Ministry Strategy is relatively new, adopted at the ninth biennial Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, in 2005. Several aspects of the strategy, however, already have been addressed.

Leadership

____ Since visionary leadership is a priority in the African Descent Ministry Strategy, much of the activity has been focused in this area.

The African American Lutheran Association's (AALA) biennial assembly in June 2007 will serve as the African Descent communities' major initiative for 2007-2008. Multicultural Ministries staff also designed and led an orientation on the restructured churchwide organization at the Cleveland and Metropolitan New York AALA chapter meetings. The orientation was designed to help leaders work with and through the churchwide organization.

The Vocation and Education unit has added a second position to assist in multicultural leadership development. The goal of this work is to create a leadership roster for this church that is more diverse. This assistant works specifically with leaders within the African-descent communities to equip African immigrant leaders for mission in the ELCA and to support African-descent women in leadership.

The strategy calls upon churchwide units to create and promote the means for active communication with and among people of African descent in the ELCA. As a result, the Multicultural Ministries unit has established an electronic listserv designed to engage the community in many ways, including providing publicity about events, a source of general news about the ELCA that is relevant to the life of Lutherans of African descent, and a source for information regarding the life of African-descent rostered leaders within this church.

The strategy also calls for churchwide units to encourage and help fund the participation of African-descent pastors in conferences, workshops, seminars, convocations, and continuing education opportunities. As beginning efforts, Multicultural Ministries staff provided opportunities for meetings of African-descent pastors in northern California, Atlanta, and New York City. Fifty rostered persons also attended a gathering in Talladega, Alabama, in January 2006.

Churchwide units are also encouraged by the strategy to advocate for contextual theological reflection opportunities for seminarians and pastors serving in the Caribbean and other communities of African descent. Five sites have been identified for such opportunities. Funding has been available from the leadership initiative for Horizon Internships. Events are planned or have occurred in Chicago, Milwaukee, Jersey City, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and New York City.

Finally, considerable work has taken place with the seminaries of this church. Multicultural Ministries staff met with faculty of African descent at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia regarding the development of programmatic resources for clergy. The Vocation and Education unit, the Multicultural Ministries unit, the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, and the Southeastern Synod also have entered into a new

³ The African Descent Ministry Strategy specifically calls on each of the expressions of the ELCA to participate in various aspects of the strategy. This review gives primary attention to those aspects of the strategy that address the churchwide organization. In the future, the assessment will include the other expressions of the church as well.

partnership with the Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta. The center will expand its work with African-descent youth; it will strengthen its ties and expand its ecumenical work with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; it will continue its work of contextualizing clinical pastoral education; and it will focus considerably more attention on the formation of lay and rostered leaders through the development of programs that are designed to be implemented nationally.

Congregational Resources

The strategy asks churchwide units to develop training and mentoring tools to empower synods and congregations in their family ministry programs. The children's ministry event and resources have been promoted among African descent congregations along with an ecumenical resource on Black family ministry. The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, the Multicultural Ministries unit, and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, worked together on the development of the African-descent hymnal, *This Far by Faith*.

Evangelism, Discipleship, Stewardship, and Lutheran Identity

The strategy calls for churchwide units to identify strong stewardship congregations within the African-descent community to serve as models. Multicultural Ministries staff continues to work with Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission stewardship staff on the final draft of an African-descent stewardship resource that will be distributed to the 246 congregations of African descent. This resource will also be included in the 2007 stewardship resource packet.

The strategy also calls for churchwide units to create outreach resources that target young adults and youth. A consultation for young adults, ages 19-35, was held in January 2007.

Contextualizing Outreach Mission Strategies, Starting New Congregations

In an effort to support outreach, considerable attention has been devoted to leadership development and, in particular, Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM), which was developed under the auspices of the Vocation and Education unit. For example, Multicultural Ministries staff participated in a Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and Luther Seminary consultation on the TEEM process. Multicultural Ministries staff also serve as part of a structured interviewing team that meets with candidates for new mission development. Multicultural Ministries staff continue to work specifically with congregations in Houston and Fort Worth, Texas, to design and implement their respective mission development plans. The African American Lutheran Association's regional events designed to encourage outreach will be held in Oakland, California; Teaneck, New Jersey; and Detroit, Michigan. The Vocation and Education unit continues to support and be a resource to the African American Leadership Initiative in Detroit, Michigan.

In terms of new congregational starts (and redevelopments) in the African-descent community, the African American Outreach Strategy Team provides oversight and advice to the staff of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit. The Evangelism Strategy commits this church to starting at least half of its new congregations among people of color or language other than English.

Social Justice and Social Ministry

The strategy calls upon churchwide units to develop plans to share effective congregational models of doing justice and showing mercy. The Diakonia Leadership Institute, sponsored by the Church in Society poverty ministries, has provided training events

for leaders in low-income communities to enhance evangelical witness through social ministry and has provided support in resource development through fund-raising training. Also, financial resources have been provided through domestic hunger grants and loans.

The strategy also calls upon churchwide units to use available printed resources as aids to encourage this church to be about faith active in love. A criminal justice resource has been produced and continues to be distributed within the African-descent community.

In the strategy, churchwide units are encouraged to partner with Lutheran social ministry organizations and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS). Through the World Hunger program, the ELCA is an active partner with LIRS as it addresses the needs of people of African descent as they immigrate to the United States. LIRS has agreements with congregations and agencies that are serving the African community on immigration and asylum issues.

Churchwide units also are asked by the strategy to develop resources for assisting all expressions of the ELCA in responding to HIV and AIDS, in developing prison ministries, in improving public school education, and in working with similar issues of importance within the African descent community. Much work has been done in the area of HIV and AIDS. For example, the Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC) has assisted with the development of resources related to HIV and AIDS. The ELCA World Hunger program, especially through the "Stand with Africa" campaign, is working with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to address HIV and AIDS. The Church in Society poverty ministries supported a contingent of ELCA representatives to the International AIDS Conference in Toronto in 2006 and, at the encouragement of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, is developing a new strategy for ELCA engagement with HIV and AIDS. The ELCA Washington Office has taken a leadership role on the ONE Campaign, which advocates for an increase in federal foreign assistance for HIV and AIDS prevention and amelioration. Resources are available on HIV, AIDS, and prison ministries both in print and on the Web.

Awareness and Sensitivity

The strategy also encourages churchwide units to welcome African national pastors with respect and sensitivity. To this end the African National Leadership Team serves as a resource to the strategic planning efforts of the Multicultural Ministries unit. Multicultural Ministries staff also met with pastors of the Virgin Islands in retreat and participated in the "African National Summit."

Vocation and Education and Multicultural Ministries staff have met with African immigrant leaders and pastors to identify leadership needs. The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit has been created an African Leadership group to support the work with African immigrants.

Unity

____ The strategy calls for the churchwide units to convene regular consultations of congregational leaders, rostered leaders, teaching theologians of color, synodical leaders, and churchwide staff to assess and plan future directions for this church's common ministry. A Region 1 and 2 event is planned for clergy and lay persons of African-descent congregations. Ongoing work continues with the seminary and college faculties to develop a recruitment strategy and a support network for African-descent leaders.

Ecumenical Connections

The strategy encourages churchwide units to convene and participate in regular consultations with this church's ecumenical partners engaged in multicultural ministries.

The American Indian and Alaska Native Strategic Plan

The American Indian and Alaska Native Strategic Plan is the oldest of the strategic plans. It was adopted at the fifth biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in Philadelphia in 1997. Because of the age of the plan, there is some question about its current relevance. Some things have been accomplished and others have not. New priorities need to be set.

Leadership

The strategic plan calls for all clergy and lay persons called to American Indian and Alaska Native congregations to participate in a culturally relevant orientation program within three months of accepting a call. The advisory council in 2001 and 2006 affirmed the need to develop and implement this aspect of the strategy. The intention of the training was to focus on protocol, hospitality, ways of keeping communities healthy, and honoring spiritual and traditional practices and ritual. At one point, it appeared that Luther Seminary was doing an orientation, but this is no longer the case. The Indigenous Institute, meeting in November 2006, affirmed the need for an orientation particularly in Regions 1 and 3 using the First Call Theological Education program, which is conducted by the Vocation and Education unit and the Synodical Relations section through their ministry leadership coordinators.⁴

The strategic plan sought to encourage American Indian and Alaska Native youth participation at churchwide and synodical youth events that would assist in leadership development opportunities for Native young people. Currently, two young American Indian and Alaska Native persons serve on the Multicultural Advisory Committee. Perspectives vary when listening to young people about their experiences with the Lutheran Youth Organization. Many American Indian and Alaska Native youth who have attended state that they feel out of place and that their voices are not heard at these events. Approximately 12 youth attended the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event and the Youth Gathering in 2006.

Three American Indian women were ordained in 2000 and two American Indian persons are enrolled in Theological Education for Emerging Ministries. There is also a partnership between Carthage College and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago designed around American Indian students. Finally, there have been productive recruitment meetings in the Minneapolis Area Synod and with the Eastern North Dakota Synod that are producing new candidates.

Congregational Resources

A worship resource for Alaska Native congregations is under development, but completion and distribution dates are unknown. The process has taken a very long time. The communities have relied on material produced by the United Methodist Church and other denominations. In addition, culturally relevant Bible studies have been developed by these communities (not published) and used at several family Bible camps. Bible studies have been well-received by campers and are being used in their home congregations.

Contextualizing Outreach Mission Strategies, Starting New Congregations

The strategic plan set out the goal of establishing four new American Indian and Alaska Native congregations by 2000. This goal was achieved. Since 2001, two new ministries have

⁴ The Indigenous Institute provides a means for engagement between leaders in the ELCA and American Indian and Alaska Native peoples.

begun. There appear to be at least five sites in Seattle, Oakland, Omaha, Phoenix, and Albuquerque with potential for the future.

Social Justice and Social Ministry

_____The strategic plan called for churchwide advocacy through the Church in Society unit on issues related to American Indians and Alaska Natives, including religious freedom, protection of sacred sites, land, language, sovereignty, self-determination, and treaty rights. The Indigenous Institute has been working to create awareness of these issues. While there was less advocacy work on behalf of American Indian and Alaska Natives because of staffing changes in the ELCA Washington Office, in the past year this office has begun new work related to these communities. For example, in December 2006, the office advocated for the passage of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Act (H.R. 4766), which was adopted by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The community will advocate for the passage of the measures on Indian Healthcare (H.R. 5312 and S. 1057). There is a desire to establish a group of American Indians and Alaska Natives to advise the ELCA's Washington Office on an annual legislative agenda that includes policy priorities for the American Indian and Alaska Native community. The goal is to keep Indian healthcare, affordable housing re-authorization, and Head Start re-authorization as priorities. The strategy also put emphasis on communicating with the American Indian and Alaska Native community about advocacy.

In terms of social ministry, money for the Seward Peninsula Endowment Fund continues to be raised. The majority of American Indian and Alaska Native ministries in the ELCA function as social ministries. The Indigenous Institute meeting in November 2006 called for the development of an inventory of services provided for, and provided by, the American Indian community.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) issues of social justice related to American Indians and Alaska Natives include predatory lending, non-discrimination in the work place, environmental issues such as the presence of toxic dumps on reservations, and video games. Corporations that use offensive or racist imagery also need to be challenged.

The Lutheran Office for World Community monitors discussions concerning the rights of indigenous peoples. It also has facilitated accreditation of ELCA persons on the Lutheran World Federation delegations at United Nations meetings on indigenous issues.

The strategy calls for information regarding opportunities for enriching social ministry efforts between congregations. The Diakonia Leadership Institute, training in fund-raising skills, and domestic hunger grants have provided opportunities for enriching social ministry efforts in congregations.

Awareness and Sensitivity

Raising the awareness and sensitivity of the wider church to issues important to American Indians and Alaska Natives was an important and key part of the strategic plan. An advisory committee to monitor and guide activities of the American Indian and Alaska Native ministries in the ELCA was established and convened once in 2001 and once in 2006. In addition, members have been consulted by phone on various issues relevant to the welfare of the American Indian and Alaska Native ministries and communities.

The strategy also calls on this church to sponsor and facilitate culturally sensitive learning for its social ministry organizations. To this end, the Indigenous Institute meeting in November 2006 proposed that American Indian and Alaska Native cultural competency be a

theme for the 2008 Lutheran Services in America conference.

Unity

____ The Church in Society and Multicultural Ministries units have worked through the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) on the United Nation's "Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." There also has been work with LWF on the establishment of a desk for indigenous peoples.

The Arab and Middle Eastern Ministry Strategy

Leadership

A goal of the Arab and Middle Eastern Strategy is to support and engage Arab leaders as they move toward ordination. The Vocation and Education unit in partnership with the Multicultural Ministries and Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission units has worked in the recruitment and support of Arab leaders working towards ordination. Candidates have been ordained and now are serving in Arab ministries in Brooklyn, New York; Dearborn, Michigan; and Chicago, Illinois.

Two leadership training events for lay leaders have been conducted in partnership with the Multicultural Ministries unit. These events have resulted in persons from the community becoming more active in the work of the synods.

The strategic plan encourages youth participation in churchwide youth events. Twenty young people from the community attended the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event and the Youth Gathering that took place in Texas in 2006. They participated in workshops, interactive programs and community support groups. During this event two young people were elected to the Multicultural Advisory Committee representing the Arab community.

Congregational Resources

Each congregation received hymnals from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Each congregation received funding to support its worship life. Materials have been purchased for Bible studies, Sunday schools, and youth meetings to help teach children, youth, and young adults.

The strategy calls for assistance to create church-sponsored after-school programs for children. The children's ministry project and the domestic hunger grants program offer support for after-school programs for children and community service centers. One Arab-Middle Eastern congregation participated in the children's ministry event.

Evangelism, Discipleship, Stewardship, and Lutheran Identity

A workshop was provided by the Multicultural Ministries and Vocation and Education units on what it means to be Lutheran and Arab.

Contextualizing Outreach Mission Strategies, Starting New Congregations

The strategic plan set out the goal of establishing five or more Arab and Middle Eastern congregations by the year 2015. There is a new Arab Lutheran ministry in the San Francisco Bay area. A candidate will be graduating this summer from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Social Ministry

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC) have been involved in efforts to encourage ministries for social justice, specifically in the work of the ELCA Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine. LOWC has worked with the ELCA Washington Office on advocacy for Augusta Victoria Hospital and on efforts for Middle East peace with regard to U.S. and United Nations policy. ELCA World Hunger funds have supported this work.

Members of Arab and Middle Eastern congregations have been invited to various training events sponsored by the Church in Society poverty ministries.

Awareness and Sensitivity

In May 2, 2006, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson joined other Christian leaders in the U.S. in an appeal to President George W. Bush, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to take immediate actions for hope and peace in the Middle East. The full text of the letter is available on the ELCA Web site.

To raise cultural awareness, the Global Mission unit coordinated a fifty-day U.S. tour by the Al Raja Palestinian folk dance troupe, with audiences totaling 52,000, including those at the San Antonio youth gathering. In order better to understand the situation in the Middle East and interpret it for ELCA members, 12 ELCA staff and synod leaders visited Jerusalem and the West Bank in January 2007.

Racism

The Arab community has participated in two multicultural workshops to equip leaders with the tools necessary to function within a new and different culture in society and in this church.

During 2006, the Global Mission unit addressed justice issues in the Middle East in the following ways: emergency funds for Augusta Victoria Hospital, adversely affected by the Palestinian financial crisis in the wake of withheld taxes and reduced funds from international donors in response to Hamas leadership of the Palestinian government; support for the Mount of Olives Housing Project, designed to help fill the desperate housing need of Palestinian Christians in the West Bank; special support to the Beirut-based Contact and Resource Center to help Lebanese civilians affected by the summer 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah; funds to the Middle East Council of Churches for emergency relief to those displaced by bombing.

Unity

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson has asked other U.S. religious leaders to join him in calling for "the cessation of all violence, for an international peacekeeping force and a negotiated agreement for a just peace."

Presiding Bishop Hanson sent an open letter to several Jewish, Muslim, and Christian leaders in the U.S. on the Middle East situation. The full text of Presiding Bishop Hanson's "Open Letter to Jewish, Muslim and Christian Leaders" is on the ELCA Web site.

Presiding Bishop Hanson, who also serves as president of the Lutheran World Federation, called for an end to the fighting in Lebanon and Israel and the conflict in Gaza in a joint appeal, "A Call to End the Violence," with other church leaders from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). The full text is on the ELCA Web site.

Ecumenical Connections

The Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine and the Peace Not Walls campaign actively have engaged Middle East peace efforts through an enhanced Web site (www.elca.org/peacenotwalls/index.html); by substantially increasing the number of subscribers and merging the Middle East informational listserv with the public policy action alerts of the e-advocacy network; by planning for a Middle East peace presence at 20 synod assemblies in Spring 2007 (and the remainder in 2008 and 2009); and by exploring various ways to expand grassroots advocacy around the ELCA and to promote positive economic initiatives in the West Bank and Gaza. As an active participant in Churches for Middle East Peace, the ELCA joined ecumenical partners in Washington-based peace advocacy.

The Asian and Pacific Islander Ministry Strategy

The Asian and Pacific Islander Ministry Strategy was adopted at the seventh biennial Churchwide Assembly in 2001 at Indianapolis, Indiana.

Leadership

The goal in Asian ministry leadership development is to have a sufficient number of lay, ordained, male, female, and youth ministers to meet the needs of the community. From 1997 to 2006, more than 50 new Asian leaders were added to the leadership rosters of the ELCA, including those from traditional Master's of Divinity programs, the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program, and other church bodies. In 2006, seven new Asian pastors were ordained.

Luther Seminary with the Minneapolis and the Saint Paul Area Synods has begun a program for Hmong leaders. There are currently seven Hmong candidates in the program. The program has significant components online so they are available nationally. It may also be possible to adapt the program to many other languages.

A goal of the strategy also is to identify and nominate Asians to serve on ELCA boards and committees. To this end, the Church in Society unit appointed a young Asian woman to the new Justice for Women consulting committee.

Congregational Resources

—One goal of the strategy is to have sufficient resources available in Asian languages for the nurturing of Christian believers. To do this, at least one Asian ministry resource is being produced in a different Asian language every year. The following resources have been made available to congregations: *Worship Principles*; *The Use of the Means of Grace*; *Asian Lutheranism: Which Way?*; *Telling God's Story of Love* (available in eight Asian languages); *Welcome, Welcome*; *Asian Ministries: Challenges and Opportunities*; *Speaking from Heart*; *Lutheran Basics* (in nine Asian languages); *Asian Spirit Journey* (a devotional book using the year B lectionary); *Sacred Sea* (a devotional book using the year C lectionary); *Church and Discipleship: An Asian Lutheran Perspective*; *Cheerful Giving: Asian Lutheran Stewardship* (available in six languages with another three languages to follow); *Reaching Asians and Pacific Islanders*; *Bridging Gospel with Asian Cultures*.

Evangelism, Discipleship, Stewardship, and Lutheran Identity

The number of members is fluctuating. Asian congregations and ministries are engaged in evangelism that involves the conversion of people from other faiths to Christianity. This means that more adults typically are baptized than infants. More attention needs to be given to the 3,000 White congregations that report Asian membership. New resources need to be developed, along with the availability of more immersion experiences, the development of

teams that bring together Asians and Whites, and the development of more informative Web sites about Asian ministry.

An emphasis on discipleship is changing the typical paradigm for leadership in the Asian community. Some congregations can afford to pay for a full-time pastor, but many cannot. This means that all Asian members of the church must come to understand the proclamation of the Gospel as their vocation.

Age-specific teaching materials are being developed with a grant from the Church Council's designated leadership funds. Once these materials are developed, a series of small, local training events will be conducted. These materials should be ready for use on a larger scale in the fall of 2007.

The Asian community is also being challenged by the strategy to become more involved in global mission work. At this point, there are about 20 Asian congregations that have sent mission support or members on short-term mission trips to Asia, Europe, or Latin America on a direct congregation-to-congregation basis.

Contextualizing Outreach Mission Strategies, Starting New Congregations

A goal of the strategy is to increase the number of Asian congregations, ministries, and synodically authorized worshipping communities from 75 in 2001 to 115 by 2010. At the end of 2006, the number of ministries had grown to 100.

Social Ministry

____ The strategy calls for staff who work in social ministry in the Church in Society unit and the director for Asian ministries in the Multicultural Ministries unit to work together to organize periodical training events for local Asian ministries in different regions of the country. Workshops on fund-raising skills and poverty ministry are organized to meet the needs of Asian ministries in different parts of the country.

The Latino Ministry Strategy

The Latino Ministry Strategy was adopted at the seventh biennial Churchwide Assembly in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 2001.

Leadership

The Latino Ministry Strategy proposed a host of activities designed to develop and support leadership in the community, including the development of a committee to review and revise programs and curricula used for leadership development in the Latino Lutheran community. The committee, which was established and convened by the Vocation and Education unit, meets on a regular basis. It includes Latino Lutheran scholars, staff from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, and the director for Latino ministries from the Multicultural Ministries unit. The committee is working to contextualize theological education for lay and clergy leaders in the Latino Lutheran community, and its January 2007 meeting was dedicated to developing an online curriculum. It also has resulted in the development of various resources in Spanish for use by lay leaders in congregations or persons preparing for ordination through the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program. Many of these resources have been developed without outside financial assistance, which represents a major commitment for the committee and the Latino community in the ELCA.

There is also a focus on developing lay leadership, which included an event in October 2006 attended by individuals from most of the regions of the ELCA. A second phase took

place in March 2007, bringing together lay and clergy members of Lutheran Latino congregations with Latino scholars.

An anticipated convocation to orient new leaders to Latino ministries in the ELCA has not taken place yet.

Leadership training by means of workshops for lay and clergy people in the areas of evangelism, mission, and congregational polity is ongoing. Lay and clergy formation programs are in place, as well as scholarships and assistance.

Through programs like Theological Education for Emerging Ministries, as well as lay leadership training institutions, leaders are being identified and encouraged, trained, and assisted. There are candidates in preparation for church vocations.

Workshops to train congregational councils have been held, and a resource is being developed.

Congregational Resources

The Latino Ministry Strategy calls on this church to identify and develop congregational resources for Latino congregations. Churchwide staff are working to compile a list of resources developed by congregations as well as to produce a bilingual resource that will be shared among Lutheran Latino congregations and throughout the ELCA. For example, the brochure of the corporate social responsibility program was translated into Spanish.

Two new resources were published in the spring of 2007. One is based on the Rick Warren series "The Purpose-Driven Life," contextualized for Lutheran Latinos. The other is a bilingual resource for congregational councils.

Marketing-produced resources have not been as effective as desired, but the multicultural resources marketing team, which consists of staff from the churchwide organization and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, meets regularly to address this issue.

Evangelism, Discipleship, Stewardship, and Lutheran Identity

The committee cited above, including Latino Lutheran scholars and staff from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission and Multicultural Ministries units, also has created opportunities to explore Lutheran Latino identity. An international consultation was held in Mexico in 2004, and the presentations are being edited for release in the spring of 2007. Additional opportunities to discuss Latino Lutheran identity are being planned that will involve members of the Hispanic Outreach Program Executives Team (HOPE) and Latino scholars. Also, the Asociación para los Ministerios Hispanos (Latino Association) has committed to discussing Latino Lutheran identity in all of its regional consultations.

Contextualizing Outreach Mission Strategies, Starting New Congregations

The Latino Ministry Strategy places special emphasis on ensuring this church's outreach to Latinos in a manner that understands and respects the nuances of Latino culture. This is accomplished in several ways, including training for new mission developers, consultations with synodical mission directors, and development of synodical strategies that include the active participation of Latinos. For example, the director for congregation-based community organizing in the Church in Society unit has provided training for Latino mission developers in leadership skills for public life. At the same time, there are still many synods without Latino ministry strategies or funding designated for Latino ministry.

The strategy also emphasizes ministry among Latinos of all ages. This generational outreach approach is being encouraged among Latino congregations and in the developing of new missions.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-16, 2007

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Social Ministry

The strategy calls for providing Latinos with educational opportunities and resources with a religious foundation to develop social ministries. The Diakonia Leadership Institute, sponsored by the Church in Society poverty ministries, has identified lay leaders in low-income communities and has provided training, including workshop sessions in Spanish, for them. Training was also provided in grant writing and fund-raising.

One goal of the strategy is to involve the benefactors of social ministry programs in the development of those programs. The domestic hunger grants and loans program has engaged the Latino community through New City Parish in Los Angeles, assisting in the development of social ministry programs.

Unity

A churchwide team includes among its responsibilities attention to the better coordination of the various Latino networks throughout this church. Members of the team are assigned to work in various regions with regional and synodical leaders and with the Latino congregations and missions located there.

Ecumenical Connections

Currently there are two meetings a year on Latino ministry with the ELCA and its full-communion partners. These meetings are designed to focus on issues related to leadership development, joint creation of resources, and other forms of mutual assistance. Future meetings will be dedicated to youth and young adult ministries in the various denominations. The relationship with the Reformed churches is especially strong.

Conclusions

Despite the existence of an ELCA continuing resolution that a goal of this church is to include among its members at least 10 percent people of color or whose primary language is other than English, and despite the existence of five multicultural ministry strategies approved by a Churchwide Assembly, and despite the efforts of some congregations, synods, and units of the churchwide organization, the ELCA has made very modest progress in becoming a more multicultural church. At the very least this fact raises questions about either the commitment of this church to the goal or the effectiveness of its current attempts to achieve it. Over the next few years, the churchwide organization will spend considerably more time evaluating its own programmatic efforts and make changes where needed. At this point, the increase in the number of Latinos and Hispanics is a sign of hope, as is a 27 percent increase between 2000 and 2006 in the number of ordained clergy who are people of color or whose primary language is other than English. Perhaps it is significant to note that between 1990 and 2005, the White membership of the ELCA declined by eight percent, while the membership of people of color or whose primary language is other than English increased by 42 percent. Still, the percentage of the baptized membership of this church who are people of color or whose primary language is other than English increased only one percent during that time period. If this trend continues, it will take the church another 100 years to reach the 10 percent goal.

At the same time, this rate of change is completely inconsistent with the changes in the composition of the population of the United States. As noted at the beginning of this report, the U.S. population is currently about one-third people of color or whose primary language is other than English. None of the synods of the ELCA comes close to approaching this figure. In the Metropolitan New York Synod, for example, about 20 percent of the baptized members

are people of color or whose primary language is other than English. In 2005, the Metropolitan New York Synod included more people of color or whose primary language is other than English than any other synod (14,521). But the population of the territory of the Metropolitan New York Synod is 44 percent persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. In 2005, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod included 9,874 persons of color or whose primary language is other than English (nine percent of the baptized membership), but the population of the territory of the synod was 39 percent persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. With the exception of the Caribbean Synod, these discrepancies are consistent across synods.

Without a significant change in the commitment and practices of all the expressions of the ELCA, this church will continue to go without the gifts of people of color or whose primary language is other than English. In an attempt to renew its commitment, the churchwide organization is changing its practices by finding and implementing new ways of working toward the goal. For the first time, for example, churchwide units have designated which units, and which individuals within units, are responsible for implementing every aspect of each strategy. This effort clearly shows how responsibility is shared but accountability is specific.

This report also indicates that several units have called or hired staff in areas that relate directly to issues that are identified in the strategies. This is a very hopeful sign as each of the program units takes on a more direct responsibility for the implementation of the strategies. Funding the implementation of the strategies, however, remains a challenge even as staff and grants for leadership development from the Office of the Presiding Bishop office have been approved.

Finally, although the strategies specify many ideas, projects, and activities as critical, other ideas, projects, and activities have evolved and have been utilized (e.g., the Indigenous Institute) in an attempt to implement further the goals of the strategies. In other words, the strategies are “living” documents where creative work is embraced if its primary focus is to accomplish more fully the intent of the strategies.

These changes at the churchwide organization show a renewed desire for results and give hope that in the future more significant accomplishments toward becoming a more inclusive church can be reported.

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible

Foundation Issues of the Authority of Scripture

(Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible)

North Carolina Synod (9B) [2005 Memorial]
[CA05.06.27]

WHEREAS, within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America there is a disconcerting level of divergence as to how best to interpret the Scriptures and to what extent and in what ways biblical authority informs, shapes, and norms the life of the individual Christian and this church itself; and

WHEREAS, there is a crucial need to work toward a consensus on a biblical hermeneutic and the most appropriate methods of biblical interpretation that foster the most accurate understanding and faithful interpretation of the therapeutic, informative, prophetic, pastoral, and normative message of the Scriptures and its impact on the life of the individual Christian and the corporate life of this church; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions rightfully question any authoritarian or ecclesial structure that usurps the ultimate authority of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the Lutheran Confessions simultaneously affirm the authority of the Scriptures, historically respecting the plain sense of Scripture opened to us by the Holy Spirit and rightly divided into Law and Gospel; the Lutheran Confessions, likewise, call the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to foster faithful and sustained dialogue with the Scriptures regarding complex and controversial issues of faith and life while avoiding both ecclesial authoritarianism on one extreme and individual, parochial, and congregational autonomy and subjectivism on the other; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to summon and harness the talents and resources of this church's brightest and best to help guide this church in a sustained, faithful, and ongoing conversation with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions regarding complex and difficult matters of faith and life; and

WHEREAS, there is a compelling need to facilitate faithful conversation with the Scriptures and to foster a functional and sustainable consensus from within which major theological, ethical, and doctrinal decisions can then be forged in order to enhance the health, mission, and well-being of this church, to increase the levels of trust, and to strengthen the bonds of community, fellowship, and mutual ministry; and

WHEREAS, even modest progress toward achieving a workable resolution of these more basic and foundational matters can enhance the future health and well-being of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and foster a climate more conducive to the qualities and gifts of faithfulness, resiliency, steadfastness, wisdom, discipleship, and hope amidst the uncertainties and vicissitudes posed by present and future challenges; and

WHEREAS, an increasing clarity surrounding this

church's theological grounding and understanding of the authority and proper interpretation and application of Scripture can better equip and strengthen this church in addressing numerous other matters of significant theological and ethical gravity currently facing it, thus rendering this church less vulnerable to forces that otherwise have the potential to generate much confusion, dissension, and pain throughout it; and

WHEREAS, continued confusion surrounding the authority of Scripture and the inability to develop a credible and coherent method for the interpretation and normative application of the truth revealed in the Scriptures is one of the most perilous deficiencies that threatens to undermine and weaken the life and mission of the modern church in general and Protestantism in particular; and

WHEREAS, the constitutions of this church (churchwide, synod, and congregation) confess that "The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world." Furthermore, this church "accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life"; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Bishops has "called on ELCA members to unite in prayer, read Scripture and Luther's Large Catechism, participate in weekly worship, study theology, practice forgiveness, invite people to a faith community, and serve and love in Christ's name"; and

WHEREAS, for the sake of the Gospel, as well as the health and well-being of this church's life and ministry, there is an urgent need to summon this whole church to a renewed focus on its call as baptized people to a life of prayer, discipleship, sanctification, and theological discernment; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to join with the appropriate churchwide units, agencies, synods, seminaries, congregations, and others in an ongoing effort to address issues surrounding the authority of Scripture, the development of a coherent and credible hermeneutic that is faithful to the Gospel as revealed most clearly in Jesus Christ, God's Living Word, and to develop an ecclesial climate, process, and means for fostering healthy and spirited conversation that faithfully relates the truths revealed in the Scriptures and affirmed in the Lutheran Confessions to the faith and life of both

individual Christians and the corporate life of this whole church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide units, in cooperation with agencies, synods, seminaries, congregations, and others across this church, develop a specific plan, process, procedure, and schedule for addressing these concerns and that a progress report be presented at the 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Background Prepared for the 2005 Churchwide Assembly

The memorial of the North Carolina Synod on "Foundational Issues" appropriately focuses on the centrality of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It relates to the authority of Scripture and the importance of articulating a Lutheran hermeneutic in the study and interpretation of Scripture.

The ELCA already gives attention to these "Foundational Issues" in various ways. For example, the Association of Teaching Theologians of the ELCA, whose purpose is to encourage and stimulate theological reflection, meets annually. The group also meets every three years with the Conference of Bishops to discuss matters of theological concern to the life of this church. In August 2003 the subject of the association's gathering was "Interpreting the Bible: The Promise and Challenges of a Lutheran Hermeneutic." This is an example of the attention given to "issues surrounding the authority of Scripture" and "the development of a coherent and credible hermeneutic," as cited in the North Carolina Synod memorial. The publishing ministry of the ELCA-Augsburg Fortress, Publishers-recently produced a new adult Bible study series, No Experience Necessary, that seeks to encourage the study of Scripture throughout the congregations of this church. That Bible study series will contribute to "fostering healthy and spirited conversation that faithfully relates the truths revealed in the Scriptures," as cited in this memorial. Further, the Division for Ministry has the responsibility to "initiate, encourage, and promote theological reflection in cooperation with the Association of Teaching Theologians of the ELCA, seminaries and college and universities of this church, the Conference of Bishops, and other churchwide units" (ELCA continuing resolution 16.11.B03.f.).

Churchwide Assembly Action

The assembly voted (CA05.06.27):

To refer the memorial of the North Carolina Synod on foundational issues of the authority of Scripture and principles of biblical interpretation to the Office of the Secretary, acting in consultation with the presiding bishop, the Conference of Bishops, and the Division for Ministry (or the appropriate churchwide unit), for development of a report and possible recommendations to be presented at the April 2006 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Response from the Office of the Secretary, Office of the Presiding Bishop, and the Vocation and Education unit (April 2006)

[See Agenda page XX]

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible Work Groups
As of January 16, 2007

Adult Studies Work Group

Gloria Bengtson, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Jessicah L.K. Duckworth, Doylestown, PA
Kate Sprutta Elliott, Women of the ELCA
Mark S. Hanson, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Douglas H. Haugen, Lutheran Men in Mission
Diane L. Jacobson, Luther Seminary
Steven P. Loy, Las Cruces, NM
Mark A. Powell, Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Nelson T. Strobert, Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Gettysburg
Scott A. Tunseth, St. Paul, MN
Marianne A. Wilkinson, Kansas City, MO
Anne Williams, Moline, IL

Hermeneutics Work Group

Neil Elliott, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
F. Javier Goitia Padilla, San Juan, PR
Erik M. Heen, Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Philadelphia
Ralph Klein, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Duane H. Larson, Wartburg Theological Seminary
Mark C. Mattes, Grand View College
Paul A. Schreck, Office of the Secretary
A. Craig Settlage, Vocation and Education
Richard Sklba, Milwaukee, WI
Elna K. Solvang, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN
Mary Streufert, Church in Society
David R. Strobel, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Gary Weant, Dallas, NC

Youth and Young Adult Ministries Work Group

Thulisiwe N. Beresford, Flint, MI
Stephanie J. Coltvet, Bloomington, MN
Arlene Flancher, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Nathan C. Frambach, Wartburg Theological Seminary
Paul Gehrs, ELCIC
Kristen Glass, Vocation and Education
Maren Hulden, Chicago, IL
Janet Lepp, Rockford, IL
Jon Pahl, Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Philadelphia
Kristin A. Swanson, Luther College
Hal C. Weldin, Luther Seminary

Children & the Bible Work Group

Marcia J. Bunge, Valparaiso University
Norma J. Cook Everist, Wartburg Theological
Seminary
Mary E. Hughes, Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Kathleen Johnson, Oakdale, MN
Susan W. McArver, Lutheran Theological Southern
Seminary
Eric Maki, St. Marys, OH
Steven Meysing, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Diane Monroe, Evangelical Outreach and
Congregational Mission
Cindy Paulson, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Sandra Schlesinger, Midland, MI

Worship and Preaching Work Group

Michael L. Burk, Worship and Liturgical Resources
Joseph G. Crippen, Northfield, MN
Carol S. Hendrix, Lower Susquehanna Synod
Randy Lee, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations
Carey G. Mack, Dearborn, MI
Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, California Lutheran
University
Peter Perella, New Baltimore, MI
Craig A. Satterlee, Lutheran School of Theology
at Chicago
Martin Seltz, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Dena L. Williams, Denver, CO

Theological Education Work Group

Lisa E. Dahill, Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Ruth E. Hamilton, Office of the Secretary
Roy A. Harrisville III, Menomonie, WI
Gregory P. Kaufmann, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Donald J. McCoid, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
Eliseo Perez-Alvarez, Lutheran Seminary Program
in the Southwest, Austin, TX
H. Frederick Reisz, Bluffton, SC
Robin J. Steinke, Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Gettysburg
Jonathan P. Strandjord, Vocation and Education
Audrey L. West, Lutheran School of Theology
at Chicago
Michael West, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers

Evangelizing and Outreach Work Group

Ruben F. Duran, Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission
Helen Harms, Wheeling, WV
David P. Housholder, Huntington Beach, CA
Kristin Johnston Largen, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
David G. Mullen, Sierra Pacific Synod
Peter T. Nash, Wartburg College
Craig L. Nesson, Wartburg Theological Seminary
Kathie Bender Schwich, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Kristofer A. Skrade, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Paul H. Summer, Port Orange, FL

Ethics, Daily Life, and Contemporary Issues Work Group

David A. Brondos, Mexico City
Barbara Gaiser, Luther Seminary
Stewart Herman, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN
Bill Huff, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Larry J. Jorgensen, Anchorage AK
Kathryn A. Kleinhans, Wartburg College
Stanley N. Olson, Vocation and Education
Tim Paulson, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Floyd M. Schoenhals, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod
Martha E. Stortz, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
Roger A. Willer, Church in Society

Guests

Frank Imhoff, Communication Services
Daniel J. Lehmann, *The Lutheran*
Rebecca Sims, Research and Evaluation

PENSION EQUITY REPORT

Introduction and Executive Summary

Since the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), there has been much concern and discussion about the issue of low compensation and pensions for rostered leaders¹ in this church. Although most, if not all, ELCA synods maintain minimum guidelines for cash compensation, actual compensation varies widely with many rostered leaders paid below guidelines.

As for pensions, the ELCA Retirement Plan is similar to other employer-sponsored retirement plans that provide benefits related to the level of compensation earned during an employee's years of active service. Thus, rostered leaders who receive low compensation during their years of active service also receive low pensions in retirement when compared with those who received higher compensation.

Previous Churchwide Assemblies and many synod assemblies have considered the issue of low compensation and low pensions. In response, the ELCA established the Special Needs Retirement Fund to provide additional income for those retired rostered leaders and surviving spouses in need and to supplement pension contributions for those serving at low salaries. The Appendix includes a history of Churchwide Assembly action and information about a program recently implemented by the Eastern North Dakota Synod.

In 2001, the Churchwide Assembly addressed low compensation and pension benefits when it passed a resolution (CA01.06.39) that called upon the ELCA to

- acknowledge the serious concern about inadequate compensation and pensions expressed in the memorials of the Northwest Washington Synod, the Western North Dakota Synod, and the Northern Great Lakes Synod;
- encourage continued efforts within this church to seek adequate levels of compensation for clergy and other rostered leaders;
- encourage synods to adopt adequate compensation guidelines and to urge congregations to meet or exceed them when possible;
- acknowledge the action of the 1993 Churchwide Assembly which created the Special Needs Retirement Fund for retired rostered leaders and surviving spouses who live in poverty;
- call upon congregations and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to give generously to the Special Needs Retirement Fund, noting that \$5 million in additional funding will enable the ELCA to supplement pensions

¹ Throughout this report the term "rostered leaders" refers to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

for the approximately 170 retired pastors and spouses living below the poverty level;
encourage giving beyond \$5 million so the Special Needs Retirement Fund will have sufficient funds to address the need for pension supplementation for pastors currently serving in low-salaried positions; and
direct the Board of Pensions to prepare methods to bring into equity pensions of professional leaders and to report its findings to the Church Council for further consideration and possible implementation.

This report is the Board of Pensions' response to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly's directive to examine possible methods of achieving pension equity for the professional leaders of the ELCA.

Observations

The Board of Pensions draws the following key observations:

Low compensation is a widespread issue within the ELCA. Our analysis of clergy compensation in six ELCA synods revealed that more than half of the parish pastors in those synods are paid below the guideline minimum. If compensation is low, then pensions (which are proportional to compensation and years of service) also will be low. The best solution, and the only way to achieve true equity, is to raise compensation levels and thereby pensions as well. This would not be easy. While pension policy is managed on a churchwide basis, compensation decisions are made locally. A far less effective solution would be to provide disproportionate pensions to narrow the inequities. However, this would not address the main issue of low compensation. Instead, it could produce a pension program where low-salaried rostered leaders receive more income in retirement than they received while they were in active service.

Our ecumenical partners have dealt with this issue in different ways. The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have defined benefit pension plans with minimum pension provisions that provide proportionately greater benefits to low-salaried members. The United Church of Christ (UCC) has an individual account plan similar to the ELCA Retirement Plan. The UCC receives a special offering each year—as much as \$1 million—to provide relief to retired ministers and surviving spouses with very low incomes.

The defined benefit approach is not practical for the ELCA because of this church's long history of individual account pension plans with member-directed investments and distributions. The only practical approach to improving pensions for the low-salaried rostered leaders would be through a minimum pension contribution year-by-year. A minimum equal to 10 percent of the "guideline-defined compensation" would mean rostered leaders who are paid below their synod's minimum guidelines would receive a pension contribution as if they were paid the guideline amount.

There are two key drawbacks to the minimum contribution concept. First, since it would apply only to future years of service, the improvement for low-salaried rostered leaders would be realized only gradually over a period of many years. Second, the cost to provide a minimum contribution equal to 10 percent of the applicable synod guidelines for all rostered leaders in congregation's is very high – an estimated \$4.4 million per year or 0.7 percent of total defined compensation for all sponsored members.

Funding supplemental contributions could be achieved by requiring additional benefit contributions of 0.7 percent of defined compensation. But this would be a substantial increase and would be on top of the 0.9 percent of defined compensation being collected to help fund retiree medical subsidies. The combined amount would represent a 6 percent surcharge on the cost of ELCA benefits. This could discourage plan participation and be especially burdensome for smaller congregations.

The logical approach to funding is voluntary funding through the Special Needs Retirement Fund since it was created, in part, for this very purpose. The main challenge is to strengthen fund-raising efforts so the Special Needs Retirement Fund can fulfill the objectives for which it was established.

Conclusion

Given our analysis, the issue of pension equity would be best addressed by ensuring compensation for rostered leaders at least meets minimum synod compensation guidelines. Additional efforts would focus on building the Special Needs Retirement Fund, both to meet the needs of those who served at low compensation and now have low pensions and those currently serving at low salaries.

The Issue of Pension Equity

Analysis of Defined Compensation

The first step in addressing possible methods of improving pension benefits for low salaried rostered leaders was to analyze compensation levels. Our analysis revealed the extent to which ELCA pastors are low-paid (relative to synod guidelines) and served as a basis for estimating the cost of possible pension improvements.

For purposes of our analysis, we selected six ELCA synods that offer a representative sample based on their geographic settings. Two synods serve rural areas; two serve inner-city/urban areas and two serve urban/suburban areas.

In this analysis, we compared reported 2002 defined compensation for 969 sponsored pastors with their respective 2002 synod compensation guidelines². We then calculated the difference between each pastor's defined compensation and the corresponding guideline amount indicated by the synod. The results are shown below:

Analysis of ELCA pastors' defined compensation relative to synod guidelines

Synod	1	2	3	4	5	6	Entire sample
Population setting	Inner city/urban	Inner city/urban	Urban/suburban	Urban/suburban	Rural	Rural	
Total number of pastors analyzed	175	223	203	134	68	166	969
<i>Percentage paid below guideline</i>							
More than \$20,000 below	8%	9%	7%	13%	12%	10%	9%
\$15,001 to \$20,000 below	6	4	5	9	6	7	6
\$10,001 to \$15,000 below	6	5	4	7	7	8	6
\$5,001 to \$10,000 below	10	6	9	10	15	13	10
\$1 to \$5,000 below	27	13	14	26	37	37	24
Total paid below	57%	37%	39%	65%	77%	75%	55%
<i>Percentage paid at or above guideline</i>							
\$0 to \$5,000 above	21%	19%	19%	16%	21%	16%	18%
\$5,001 to \$10,000 above	10	13	17	5	1	4	10
\$10,001 to \$15,000 above	5	11	15	4	0	2	7
\$15,001 to \$20,000 above	5	5	6	3	1	2	4
More than \$20,000 above	2	15	4	7	0	1	6
Total paid at or above	43%	63%	61%	35%	23%	25%	45%
Synod's total defined compensation as a percentage of its total guideline amount	96.2%	108.6%	103.0%	93.1%	86.5%	89.3%	98.0%
Synod's rank (among 65 synods) in terms of average defined compensation	26 th	9 th	21 st	4 th	56 th	58 th	

Our analysis supports the view that under-compensation is a significant issue within the ELCA. More specifically:

In our sample more than half of the pastors are paid below synod guidelines; one of every five pastors earns a salary that is more than \$10,000 below guidelines.

In the two rural synods three out of four pastors are paid below guidelines. Even in the two synods where, on average, salaries are above guidelines, more than one in three pastors is paid below guidelines.

² Base salary (based on years of service) + Social Security allowance + housing allowance or imputed value of parsonage (30% of salary + SSA); assumed all pastors are full-time.

While low salaries are more prevalent in rural areas, they are quite prevalent in other areas as well.

Overview of the ELCA Retirement Plan

A brief discussion about the ELCA Retirement Plan is helpful to understanding how it works for rostered leaders at different levels of compensation.

The purpose of the ELCA Retirement Plan is to build and preserve income for retirement. The plan is designed so rostered leaders and lay employees (referred to collectively as members) who have participated in the plan for 35 years or more and receive Social Security benefits will be able to maintain their preretirement standard of living in retirement. For those with fewer years of ELCA service, the goal is to provide a pro-rata portion of the full-career benefit. This objective is carried out through an individual account (defined contribution) plan, qualified as a tax-sheltered annuity under Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b)(9). The ELCA Retirement Plan has the following major features:

Combined plan for rostered leaders and lay employees. Each congregation determines which, if any, of its employees it will enroll in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program (which bundles the retirement plan with health, disability, and survivor benefits). Seminaries, synods, and churchwide units (except for the Publishing House) are required to enroll all of their eligible employees.

The goal of the plan is to provide pension benefits that, in combination with primary Social Security, will be sufficient to replace 100 percent of pre-retirement spendable income at Social Security retirement age (65 to 67 depending on year of birth) after 35 or more years of participation.

A contribution rate of 10 percent of defined compensation applies to most members. Higher contribution rates apply to members of the predecessor church plans who were age 45 or over as of Dec. 31, 1987, and for members whose Letter of Call designates a higher rate.

Pension contributions are credited to the members' individual accounts and allocated among 20 investment funds as directed by the members. All investment income on these funds is credited to participants.

Members may take all or part of their retirement accumulation in the form of a participating annuity from the Board of Pensions. The plan offers several options for providing spousal or other survivor benefits. Members also may leave all or part of their retirement accumulation in their individual account and take limited withdrawals tailored to meet their income needs.

The underlying philosophy of the plan includes the following elements:

Employers' responsibilities: Congregations and other employers are responsible for making the required contributions. Due to limitations on withdrawals, congregations have a high degree of assurance their contributions will be used to provide income during retirement. They have less assurance, however, as to the adequacy of that income (see *Approach to income replacement* below).

Members' responsibilities: Members have responsibility for determining how to invest the contributions made on their behalf. The Board of Pensions furnishes detailed descriptions of the 20 investment fund choices currently offered, outlining the risks and return potential. Members may make additional voluntary contributions on a salary reduction (pre-tax) basis.

Board of Pensions' responsibilities: The Board of Pensions is the plan fiduciary and administrator. In this capacity, the Board of Pensions is responsible for managing the retirement funds with the goal of delivering superior long-term investment results for members. The Board of Pensions strives to add value year-to-year relative to performance benchmarks for each fund. The Board of Pensions also is responsible for communicating all aspects of the plan to participating members and has partnered with Mellon HR Solutions to maintain member retirement account records.

Approach to income replacement: While the goal of the plan is income replacement in retirement, actual pension amounts are influenced by a number of variables. First, the plan defines the contributions to be made on behalf of plan members each year, not the resulting benefits. Second, contributions reflect compensation over a member's entire career, not only the years immediately preceding retirement. Third, benefits vary with investment performance, both before and after retirement. Members assume the risks of unfavorable investment performance and realize the rewards of favorable investment performance (i.e., investment gains and losses). Finally, since plan contributions are generally the same percentage of defined compensation for all members regardless of pay level, the resulting pension benefits tend to be uniformly related to pay (and, of course, length of service).

Below is an illustration of the expected income replacement in retirement from the ELCA Retirement Plan and Social Security for three career members with defined compensation at retirement of \$30,000, \$45,000 and \$60,000.

For a career member earning \$30,000, the combined retirement income is estimated to be \$29,700 (99 percent of preretirement earnings). For a career member earning \$45,000, the combined retirement income is estimated to be \$42,750 (95 percent of preretirement earnings). At \$60,000 the combined income is \$52,800 (88 percent of preretirement earnings). Note that Social Security replaces a higher percentage of income for members with low compensation than it does for members with high compensation. Thus, the percentage of preretirement earnings replaced by the ELCA Retirement Plan and Social Security combined will be somewhat greater for a low-paid member than for a high-paid member. In dollar terms, however, low-paid members will have lower incomes in retirement than those who earned higher salaries.

Pension Equity Issue

Compensation is at the root of pension equity. If compensation is equitable, then pensions will also be equitable because they are based on compensation. However, if compensation is not equitable (as we found in the six synods we sampled), then pensions also will not be equitable.

Clearly, the preferred method of achieving pension equity is to increase the compensation levels of those who are low-paid. To improve pensions without changing underlying compensation practices would, at best, lead to a system

where low-paid rostered leaders may receive more in retirement than they received while working. While the Board of Pensions studied pension equity upon the 2001 Churchwide Assembly's request, our findings reveal the issue is one of low compensation rather than low pensions. Pensions only follow the actual level of compensation that congregations pay rostered leaders.

What Ecumenical Partners Are Doing

The ELCA is not the only denomination faced with this issue of low compensation and low pensions. As discussed below, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ, and The Episcopal Church have all dealt with the issue of low pensions.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

In the 1950s, the Board of Pensions of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. [predecessor church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)] began to allocate funds to increase pensions for those individuals receiving inadequate income based on low salaries. By the mid-1960s, approximately \$1 million per year was divided among almost 3,000 family units receiving inadequate pensions. However, funding never reached a level that could provide for all in need.

A suggestion was made for the church to redesign the retirement plan to distribute equal pensions regardless of income during service. The Board of Pensions' response to this proposal was not favorable because all pensions would be reduced to a "needs basis," penalizing those pastors who had or would receive more based on earning higher salaries during service. The Presbyterian Board of Pensions believed the long-range solution was not equalized pensions, but rather an increase in denominational salaries.

During the 1970s, however, some organizations in the predecessor churches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) called for social change and a reexamination of the philosophy of the plans existing at that time. Proponents for change felt the inflation of the 1970s was not offset by supplements and that retirement incomes must be based on years of service rather than the traditional salary scales.

Support for a defined benefit plan of this nature emerged, and in 1986, when the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States were reunited to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the benefit boards of both churches also merged. The new Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Benefits Plan introduced a "leveling up" feature that provides minimum pensions based on the greater of the member's salary or the median salary of an employee in a comparable work category and years of pension plan participation. The new benefit plan was designed to be supported with financing provided by the whole

community of the church. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) chose to address pension equity by creating an entirely new plan in which individual retirement accounts do not exist.

United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ's defined contribution retirement plan is similar to the ELCA Retirement Plan. To address the issue of low pensions, the denomination has developed the *General Synod Plan of Supplementation of Small Annuities for Retired Clergy*. (Additionally, there is a separate plan set up for retired lay employees.) The funding for this plan comes primarily from The Christmas Fund, an annual special offering from congregations and other organizations of the United Church of Christ since the 1940s. A portion (\$1 million of 2001 offerings and \$1.1 million of 2002 offerings) of the Christmas Fund is allocated to the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ to supplement pensions for retired pensioners (clergy or widowed spouses) during the following year. The amount of the gift is based on need and years of dues-paying participation in the United Church of Christ pension fund(s).

The UCC Pension Boards determine eligibility for supplementation based on information supplied by the pensioner, which is reviewed periodically to ensure supplements properly reflect actual pension income³ and personal asset amounts. Effective Jan. 1, 2003, the minimum pension level is \$19,800 (\$1,650 monthly) for a retired pastor or \$13,200 (\$1,100 monthly) for a surviving spouse. Benefits are extended only to those whose pension income falls short of these minimums. To qualify for the supplement, the pensioner needs 30 years of dues-paying service, and dues must have been paid until at least age 65. The supplement is reduced proportionately for fewer years of dues-paying service, but is provided as long as pension dues were paid until at least age 60. The number of pensioners receiving supplements today is about 500 (out of 6,000 pensioners).

The Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church has a history of addressing the issues of pension adequacy and equity for churchworkers. Through benefit minimum levels, cost-of-living adjustments, and benefit increases due to investment performance, The Episcopal Church has worked to ensure the majority of its retired churchworkers are able to live the lifestyle of the average middle-income family at age 65 or older.

The Episcopal Church provides a defined benefit plan for clergy that includes a minimum pension benefit. Minimum benefit levels are set to provide long-service clergy families with pension income similar to that of an average American family at age 65 or older. Social Security and modest savings are assumed in the calculation.

For clergy retiring today, the pension is calculated according to a formula based on *highest average compensation* and *years of credited service*. *Highest average*

³ Annuities paid by the Pension Boards + Social Security benefits (before Medicare reductions) or Social Security benefits foregone + any other retirement benefit(s) + income of spouse under age 65.

compensation is the average of the highest-paid seven out of eight consecutive 12-month periods during a priest's career. For clergy with 40 years of credited service, the pension benefit is approximately 60 percent of *highest average compensation*, but no less than \$18,000 per year. This minimum applies to about 10 percent of retiring clergy whose *highest average compensation* is less than \$28,000. Both the basic pension and the minimum are reduced for those with shorter service.

The Episcopal Church also maintains minimum pension levels for currently retired clergy and surviving spouses. In 1997, minimum levels for these groups were significantly increased, improving the benefits of 19 percent of retired clergy (about 900 individuals) and 57 percent of surviving spouses (over 1,100 individuals). For most retired clergy with 40 years of service, the minimum benefit level was set at \$10,000 and decreased proportionately for fewer years of credited service. The minimum benefit level for most surviving spouses was set at 80 percent of the new clergy minimums. The cost of these adjustments for current and future retired clergy and surviving spouses in 1997 was \$74.6 million, which was funded by a portion of the fund's uncommitted reserves.

Methods for Improving Pension Equity

As directed by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, the Board of Pensions has analyzed several alternative approaches that could be considered to improve pension benefits for low-salaried rostered leaders in the ELCA. This section describes three such approaches and the implications of each, including advantages, disadvantages, and an estimate of cost implications.

All three methods would aim to achieve a minimum level of retirement benefits regardless of level of compensation. None of the methods would improve rostered leaders' level of compensation.

Alternative 1: Current Plan with Minimum Contribution Feature

The first alternative would add a minimum contribution feature to the current retirement plan. Under this alternative, the ELCA would continue to maintain an individual account plan and members would continue to make investment decisions. The primary change would be to provide rostered leaders serving at low salaries (defined in relation to synod guidelines) with a larger pension contribution. For example, each rostered leader could receive the greater of her or his current contribution (generally 10 percent to 12 percent of defined compensation) and a minimum contribution defined as 10 percent of the applicable synod guidelines. To satisfy federal tax laws the contribution could never exceed 100 percent of the member's taxable compensation (generally defined compensation minus housing or housing allowance). All rostered leaders would continue to receive their regular contribution from their employers. For

low-salaried rostered leaders, the additional contribution needed to bring the total up to the new minimum would come from a separately funded pool.

The key advantage of this approach would be in maintaining individual accounts, member control over investment decisions, and distribution flexibility. It would also be relatively easy for members to understand.

The additional cost of this minimum contribution for rostered leaders in congregations would be quite high – an estimated \$4.4 million or 0.7 percent of total defined compensation for all sponsored members. The cost could be reduced by setting the minimum contribution at a lower level. For example, if the minimum contribution were set at 9 percent of synod guidelines compensation, then the minimum would cost an estimated 0.4 percent of total defined compensation or \$2.7 million per year for all sponsoring congregations. But that would leave the plan short of achieving “pension equity.”

Alternative 2: Defined Benefit Plan with Minimum Benefit

The second alternative would define each rostered leader’s monthly pension using a formula that reflects her or his years of service and final average compensation prior to retirement and would provide for an appropriate minimum benefit. For example, the basic formula might be 60 percent of a member’s final average defined compensation, but not less than \$25,000 per year. Again, to satisfy federal tax rules the benefit could never exceed 100 percent of the member’s final average taxable compensation. The formula pension would apply to those who have 35 or more years of service and would be proportionately reduced for those with less than 35 years. It would also be reduced for those who retire prior to Social Security normal retirement age (67 for those born after 1959). The concept of a defined benefit plan with a minimum pension is used by both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and The Episcopal Church.

The key advantage of this approach is the ability to precisely define minimum benefits for low-salaried rostered leaders. Furthermore, the defined benefit approach is generally about 20 percent less costly than a comparable defined contribution plan. As a result, a defined benefit plan with a minimum pension feature could be provided for lower cost than the current defined contribution plan (without a minimum). The cost is lower because employers, rather than members, would realize the investment gains and losses of the pension fund. In a defined contribution plan, where members bear the investment risk, contribution rates must be set somewhat higher so the plan will provide adequate benefits even if investment returns fall short of expectations. In the ELCA Retirement Plan, this means a minimum contribution rate of 10 percent, where an 8 percent rate would be sufficient if investment returns were more certain.

For employers contributing to a defined benefit plan, the greater the investment gains, the lower the required contributions. The converse is also true. That is, if

investment earnings fall short of expectations, contributions must be increased. Thus, the likelihood of lower cost is offset to some extent by the uncertainty as to the contributions employers would be required to make from year to year.

Alternative 3: Cash Balance Plan with Minimum Contribution

The third alternative is a cash balance plan. This approach—which looks like a defined contribution plan, but is technically a defined benefit plan—has become relatively popular among U.S. companies in the last 10 to 15 years. Like a defined contribution plan, a cash balance plan maintains an individual account for each plan member and could have a minimum contribution like the one described above under the first design alternative. The key difference is that, as with a traditional defined benefit plan, the plan sponsor makes investment decisions and realizes investment gains and losses. Member accounts are credited with “interest” at predetermined rates that can vary from time to time, but would be on the order of 6.5 percent to 7.5 percent. These interest credits would generally be less than what the fund actually earns over time, thereby allowing employers to contribute less than the nominal contribution amounts credited to each member’s account. This approach was recently introduced by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as a supplement to its traditional defined benefit plan.

A cash balance plan combines some of the advantages of a defined contribution plan and a defined benefit plan. It maintains individual accounts and distribution flexibility for plan members at a cost to employers that is generally less than a pure defined contribution plan.

Comparative Advantages and Disadvantages

The key advantages of each of the three alternatives (as an approach to improving benefits for low-salaried rostered leaders) are summarized in the table below:

	Current plan	Defined benefit	Cash balance
Lower cost			
Minimum benefits precisely defined			
Contribution rates fixed regardless of investment results			
Easy for members to understand			
Maintains individual accounts			
Maintains investment choice			

Maintains distribution flexibility

The key disadvantages of each of the three alternatives (as an approach to improving benefits for low-salaried rostered leaders) are summarized in the table below:

	Current plan	Defined benefit	Cash balance
Applies to future service only (improvements for low-salaried emerge only gradually)			
Higher cost			
Contribution rates may change due to investment results			
Minimum benefit not precisely defined			
Difficult for members to understand			
No individual accounts			
No investment choice			
Little distribution flexibility			
Added cost and confusion of administering two plans			
Additional IRS non-discrimination rules apply			
Contrary to long history of individual account plans and trends in pension plan design			

All three of the alternatives would present significant administration challenges, both for synod staffs and the Board of Pensions. The result would be an increase

in the cost of the retirement plan. For the current plan (and for a cash balance plan) we would need the applicable salary guideline amount for each sponsored member. While most synods publish a table or formula for determining the minimum base salary, the determination becomes more complex when it comes to the housing allowance (or the value of church-provided housing) and the Social Security allowance. Another complicating factor is that some rostered leaders serve two or more congregations while others serve less than full time. These factors can make the determination of the applicable guideline compensation particularly difficult. There are also situations where long-service rostered leaders, who have been reasonably well-compensated throughout their careers, agree to serve in low-paying parishes as they phase into retirement. Should these rostered leaders receive a supplement?

There would also be additional administration requirements for a defined benefit plan. For example, the plan would need to track years of service for each rostered leader, including information to distinguish part-time service from full-time service. The plan would also need to maintain a history of defined compensation and taxable compensation for up to 10 years.

Preferred Alternative

Aside from not addressing the underlying issue of low compensation, the major disadvantage of all three alternatives is they would apply to only future service. Therefore, they would improve benefits for low-salaried rostered leaders only gradually over a long period. Beyond that, we would reject the defined benefit alternative, even with its cost advantages, because it would be very disruptive to plan members. While possibly appealing to rostered leaders who would benefit from the minimum pension feature, it would likely be considered a “take-away” by most other members.

The cash balance approach would be somewhat less disruptive and more appealing to members. Even so, removing their investment choice and incurring the cost and confusion of maintaining two separate plans are too high a cost for the marginal benefits achieved.

That leaves the current plan with a minimum contribution feature as the only practical approach. Although the improvement for low-salaried rostered leaders would be gradual, the minimum contribution feature could be implemented without adversely affecting any plan members. The key stumbling block is cost, which is discussed in the next section.

Methods for Funding Minimum Contributions

This section outlines two methods that might be considered to fund additional contributions for rostered leaders serving at low salaries. For purposes of this discussion, we have assumed that greater equity would be achieved by adding a minimum contribution feature to the current plan. This is described as Alternative 1 in the preceding section. We have assumed the minimum contribution would be 10 percent of guideline compensation calculated individually according to the applicable synod guidelines. We have estimated the cost of supplementing contributions for low-salaried rostered leaders to this extent would be 0.7 percent of the defined compensation for all sponsored members or \$4.4 million per year.

Method 1: Require Funding by Sponsoring Congregations

Method 1 would require all congregations to pay an additional 0.7 percent of defined compensation. This amount would be allocated to a pool the Board of Pensions would use to supplement contributions for rostered leaders who are eligible under the new minimum contribution feature.

This method would impose a substantial additional funding burden on congregations. For example, for a congregation that provides defined compensation of \$50,000 to its rostered leader, the additional cost would be \$350 per year. Some congregations might attract additional giving to cover this added responsibility. Other congregations would find it necessary to pay the additional amount out of funds otherwise available for rostered leaders' salaries or mission support.

Congregations are already making an additional contribution to support ELCA retiree medical promises. Congregations make a retiree support contribution that will soon rise from the current level of 0.6 percent of defined compensation to 0.9 percent of defined compensation to help pay for a portion of the monthly cost of retiree medical coverage promised by predecessor church bodies and continued by the ELCA. If an additional required contribution of 0.7 percent were added, it would raise the average paid by congregations from \$450 per year to \$800 per year. While many larger congregations could afford this additional amount, we are concerned about smaller congregations with lesser financial means. At a defined compensation level of \$30,000, the additional contribution would rise from \$270 to \$480 per year. For a small congregation this could pose a substantial burden.

Method 2: Encourage Voluntary Funding by Concerned Plan Members, Congregations and ELCA Members

Method 2 would look to the Special Needs Retirement Fund as a source for supplementing pension contributions for low-salaried rostered leaders. As described previously, this fund was established following the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. In addition to providing supplemental retirement benefits for retired pastors and surviving spouses with low incomes, this fund is intended to be a

source of supplemental contributions for rostered leaders currently serving at low salaries.

Method 2 is the preferred method of funding, given the Churchwide Assemblies' consistent support for the Special Needs Retirement Fund and the competing needs for resources within this church. Clearly, much more fund-raising needs to be done if the Special Needs Retirement Fund is to meet the needs for which it was established. One idea is for ELCA congregations to collect a special offering once a year for this purpose as the United Church of Christ does. Another idea is to support and encourage the ELCA Foundation to promote the fund more aggressively.

The main drawback to this method is that it will likely take many years before the fund becomes large enough to begin to satisfy both objectives. The Special Needs Retirement Fund has grown to about \$2 million since its inception 10 years ago. At that level, it is sufficient to provide a supplement to only 45 needy retirees and surviving spouses and to bring their total income up to only \$1,000 per month for an individual or \$1,250 per month for a couple. The near-term goal is to build the fund to a level of \$8 million at which point it could support 120 retired members or couples with a minimum monthly income of \$1,250 per month for an individual or \$1,600 per month for a couple.

Toward that end, the ELCA contributed \$500,000 from its 2001 budget and the Board of Pensions contributed \$250,000 of undesignated funds. Additionally, the Board of Pensions has introduced a pension "check-off" option whereby retired members who are receiving monthly pensions can donate a portion of each monthly payment to the Special Needs Retirement Fund. Currently, more than 550 retirees and surviving spouses are contributing more than \$185,000 per year.

Conclusion

Given our analysis, the issue of pension equity would be best addressed by ensuring compensation for rostered leaders at least meets minimum synod compensation guidelines. Additional efforts would focus on building the Special Needs Retirement Fund to meet the needs of those who served at low compensation and now have low pensions and those currently serving at low salaries.

To help strengthen one another in mission as a churchwide unit, the Board of Pensions is prepared to

- continue promoting the Special Needs Retirement Fund through periodic communications;
- continue encouraging retired plan members to support the Special Needs Retirement Fund through deductions from their monthly pension checks;

implement and promote a payroll deduction arrangement for active members whereby members could have Special Needs Retirement Fund contributions withheld from their paychecks and forwarded to the Board of Pensions by their employers; and
implement and promote a monthly contribution arrangement for congregations whereby interested congregations could be “billed” for these contributions by the Board of Pensions.

Appendix: History of ELCA Action

As part of our discussion of methods for addressing pension equity, it is important to look at the history of actions undertaken by this church around the issues of low compensation and pensions.

Actions of the Churchwide Assemblies

A summary of Churchwide Assembly actions is printed in Exhibit B, Part 2, pages 1–4.

For the ELCA, these issues were first addressed during the 1991 and 1993 Churchwide Assemblies. At the 1991 CWA, a resolution was adopted to examine inadequate compensation and pension benefits for rostered leaders. It stated the following: To request the staff of the Division for Ministry, in cooperation with the Division for Outreach, the Conference of Bishops, the Board of Pensions, and other appropriate parties, to examine the matter of inadequate compensation and pension benefits for clergy and associates in ministry; and to report to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly” (CA91.7.110).

During the interim period between the 1991 and 1993 assemblies, an appointed group of ELCA leaders was commissioned to undertake a study that focused on the following five goals:

1. To determine what causes and leads to low compensation for clergy and associates in ministry serving congregations;
2. To ascertain the impact of low compensation on rostered persons and congregations;
3. To examine the implications of low compensation on the ministry of the congregations;
4. To identify the needs generated in rostered persons and congregations by low compensation; and
5. To secure suggestions from rostered persons and congregations on how low compensation can be raised.

In early 1993, recommendations were presented to both the ELCA Division for Ministry and the ELCA Church Council. The Church Council recommended the establishment of a special fund to provide relief for pensioners receiving at or near the minimum pension and to provide additional pension contributions for pastors earning low levels of compensation. The 1993 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution to establish a Special Needs Retirement Fund (CA93.8.100):

To establish in consultation with the ELCA Board of Pensions a special fund to provide both for additional pension contributions for pastors in situations of low compensation, and for pensioners who are receiving at or near the minimum pension. This will be a churchwide

program to encourage support throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

To recommend that the Division for Ministry in consultation with the Division for Congregational Ministries, the Division for Outreach, and representatives from synods and rostered leaders propose additional strategies for improving the ability of congregations to understand and respond to the interconnected issues of congregational mission and ministry, particularly as they relate to rostered leadership; and to request that a report be prepared for transmission to the 1995 Churchwide Assembly; and

To recommend that the Division for Ministry, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, discuss constructive strategies that might be helpful in the present circumstances to address effects of low compensation on pastors, rostered laypersons, and congregations.

The Special Needs Retirement Fund was created in 1994, with a managing committee of representatives from the Board of Pensions and the ELCA Foundation. The initial focus has been on assisting retired pastors and surviving spouses living below the poverty line⁴. Today, for these retirees, the fund supplements pension income and pays the medical premium for those with ELCA coverage.

In 2002, 45 retired individuals (or couples) received \$100,000 from the Special Needs Retirement Fund, an average of \$2,570 per member. Due to the fund's limited size (it has grown to only \$2 million), there has been no supplementation to active pastors receiving low compensation during their years of active service.

At the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, three similar memorials to equalize pensions (provide equal dollar pensions that vary only with length of service) were submitted by the Southwestern Washington Synod, the Oregon Synod, and the Northern Great Lakes Synod. The Southwestern Washington Synod memorial stated the following:

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Washington Synod does hereby memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to direct the Board of Pensions to examine its policies and adopt alternative methods to bring into equalization pensions of professional leaders based on years of service.

No formal action was recommended as a response to these memorials. However, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly recommended intensifying fund-raising for the Special Needs Retirement Fund and encouraging synods to make efforts to

⁴ In order to qualify for benefits, a pensioners total monthly income from all sources cannot be greater than \$1,000 for an individual or greater than \$1,250 for a couple. In addition, net assets must be less than \$15,000.

achieve minimum compensation standards. In addition, the Board of Pensions prepared a response to these memorials.

The Board of Pensions response stated that a move to equalized pensions would result in fundamental reallocation of pension contributions. As intended, equalization would cause members with below average salaries to have increased amounts allocated to their pension accounts. But, conversely, members with above average salaries would have reduced amounts allocated to their pension accounts. While some plan members might readily accept this change in plan design, most members, particularly those with above average salaries, would oppose this change. They would then look to their employers to replace lost pension contributions. These actions would work against the concept of equalized pensions. The Board of Pensions raised a number of other questions concerning the feasibility of equalized pensions.

The Board of Pensions recommended no action at that time due to the complexity of the issue and past actions of the Churchwide Assembly. The Board of Pensions viewed the memorials as extensions of the concerns related to low clergy compensation addressed at the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. At that meeting, the assembly did not move towards equalized compensation or pensions, instead opting to create the Special Needs Retirement Fund.

The ELCA Church Council has consistently supported the Special Needs Retirement Fund. In 1999, the Church Council contributed \$500,000, bringing the fund's assets up to \$1 million, but the fund has remained under-funded in relation to its goals.

In 2000, the Board of Pensions initiated a "low pensions" project. The first goal of the project was to increase the amount of monthly assistance received by Special Needs Retirement Fund recipients to meet increased minimums of \$1,250 (single) and \$1,600 (couple). The second goal was to increase the number of recipients from 50 to 170 members. (At that time, 170 retired members and/or surviving spouses were living below the poverty level.) The Board of Pensions estimated that an additional \$5 million in funding would be required to meet these goals. To further support growth of the fund, the Board of Pensions contributed \$250,000 of undesignated funds.

In 2001, the Northern Great Lakes Synod submitted a memorial to the Churchwide Assembly related to compensation and pension equity:

WHEREAS, the church is called to be a community of service and justice, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commends good stewardship in its practices; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's current active clergy are increasingly more diverse in gender and years of service in the church, with numbers of

parishes unable to provide for synodical guidelines in compensation and benefits; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions currently bases its retirement plan on a percentage of salary with the result that those who serve small parishes and ministries with limited finances are penalized in their retirement because of this policy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions currently uses a principle of equity for payment of health benefit premiums for clergy and lay professionals; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Great Lakes Synod does hereby memorialize the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to direct the Board of Pensions to

- (1) Make publicly available, through its web site and publications, all synodical guidelines for compensation and a comparative analysis of those guidelines to actual reported compensation.
- (2) Examine its policies and adopt methods to bring into equity pensions of professional leaders.

The Northwest Washington Synod and the Western North Dakota Synod also submitted similar memorials in support of the Northern Great Lakes Synod memorial.

In response, the Memorials Committee of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly drafted the *Compensation and Pension Equity* memorial (stated in the *Introduction*). This memorial was then referred to the Board of Pensions.

Action of the Eastern North Dakota Synod

One ELCA synod has taken action to augment pension contributions of its low-paid pastors. In 2000, the Eastern North Dakota Synod developed the *Eastern North Dakota Synod Endowment Fund* and a formal plan that addresses five issues that relate to sustaining rural ministry and enhancing quality pastoral leadership.

One point in the five-point plan addresses the issue of pension equity. It picks up from the second goal of the Special Needs Retirement Fund to provide assistance for pastors receiving low pension contributions. However, pension equity is not the stated goal of this synod. Bishop Rick Foss of the Eastern North Dakota Synod has said he does not believe pension equity is possible under the current economic realities of rural ministry. By means of its program, Bishop Foss said the synod aims to “raise the bottom up” so those receiving less will receive more, although the final amount received will not be equalized.

The program is funded by the *Eastern North Dakota Synod Endowment Fund* with fund-raising efforts coordinated by the synod endowment steering committee. The goal of the synod is to grow this fund to \$5 million primarily

through gifts from individual donors. In mid-2002, the fund level amounted to \$1.3 million in cash and the synod had distributed funds of \$150,000 for various parts of the program over the prior two-year period.

Early in 2001, the synod provided supplemental pension contributions to full-time pastors who received defined compensation in the bottom quartile of the synod during 2000. If a pastor received defined compensation of less than \$33,000, the synod made up the shortfall in pension contributions (at a 10 percent contribution rate). Early in 2002, the fund provided supplements to pastors who received defined compensation in the bottom third (less than \$37,000) of the synod during 2001. In 2003, the synod had hoped to provide supplements to all pastors receiving defined compensation less than the average Eastern North Dakota Synod clergy salary during 2002. However, due to the downturn in the investment market over the past few years, the synod has decided to supplement the pensions of those who received defined compensation less than \$38,000 in 2002. In 2004, the synod hopes to provide supplements to those in the bottom half of the synod.

As the endowment fund grows over time, the synod's ultimate goal is to increase the dollar amount and number of supplemental pension contributions available until all full-time pastors in the synod are receiving pension contributions at or above the average ELCA clergy salary.

2007 Churchwide Assembly Agenda

NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

Day/Time	Event
Sunday, August 5	
11:00 a.m.	Executive Committee
12:00 Noon	Executive Committee Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Church Council
3:00 p.m.	Joint meeting of Church Council and the Conference of Bishops
5:45 p.m.	Dinner cruise for Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives
7:30 p.m.	A Celebration of God's People and Their Songs
Monday August 6	
8:30 a.m. -10:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 12:00 Noon 12:00 Noon-8:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. 5:45 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Conference of Bishops Church Council Orientation for Church Council Lunch (on own) Registration desk open Nominations desk open News Conference Choir Rehearsal Orientation for voting members HOLY COMMUNION Dinner
7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ONE <i>Anticipated:</i> adoption of assembly rules and order of business; first ballot for presiding bishop
Tuesday, August 7	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION TWO <i>Anticipated:</i> resolution on <i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship</i> ; consideration of Book of Faith proposal; evangelism update; report of Nominating Committee; first report of Memorials Committee; presentation of budget; second ballot for presiding bishop.
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for separate consideration (removal from en bloc) of responses to synodical memorials and for substitute responses to synodical memorials</i>

Tuesday, August 7, Continued	
11:30 p.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION THREE <i>Anticipated:</i> introduction of social statement; report of vice president and Church Council; presentation of Galatians.
3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Nominees forum: question and answer with nominees (7) for presiding bishop
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	<u>Hearings at hotel:</u> <i>Both hearings:</i> book of faith; Blue Ribbon Committee; sexuality studies; social statement on education <i>First session only:</i> rural update; budget; Middle East strategy <i>Second session only:</i> urban update; World Hunger update; HIV and AIDS strategy
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Dinner at hotel
8:00 p.m.	Seminary receptions
Wednesday, August 8	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll
6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION FOUR <i>Anticipated:</i> Distribution of biographical data about nominees for presiding bishop; speeches; keynote address by Musimbi Kanyoro; report on justice for women; third ballot for presiding bishop; first report of Reference and Counsel Committee.
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for amendments to the social statement, constitutional amendments, by law amendments, and separate consideration (removal from en bloc) of recommended constitutional amendments</i>
11:30 p.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for nominations from the floor</i>

Wednesday, August 8, Continued	
2:00 p.m.-5:45 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION FIVE <i>Anticipated:</i> Bible study (Tiede); three nominees respond to questions; fourth ballot for presiding bishop; report of the treasurer; consideration of the report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding; committee of the whole (human sexuality); Lutheran Disaster Response update; college corporation meetings.
6:00 p.m.	Reception: Campus Ministry and Colleges (individual college receptions in the evening) Dinner on own
Thursday, August 9	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION SIX <i>Anticipated:</i> Fifth ballot for presiding bishop; response by presiding bishop; report of the presiding bishop; report of the secretary; first common ballot; World Hunger Appeal action.
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for non-germane resolutions</i>
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for first common ballot</i>
2:00 p.m.-3:45 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION SEVEN <i>Anticipated:</i> Bible study (Tiede); first ballot for secretary; consideration of HIV and AIDS strategy.
4:00 p.m.	Mass Choir Rehearsal
4:45 p.m.-5:45 p.m. 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Workshops at hotel Dinner on own
Friday, August 10	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	<i>Deadline for amendments to 2008-2009 budget proposal</i>
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION EIGHT <i>Anticipated:</i> Second ballot for secretary; consideration of social statement on education.
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION

Friday, August 10, Continued	
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION NINE <i>Anticipated:</i> Bible study (Wengert); distribution of biographical data for nominees (7) for secretary; question and answer with nominees (7) for secretary; third ballot for secretary; consideration of biennial budget; constitutional amendments; presentation of <i>Servus Dei Award</i> to Secretary Almen.
6:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for second common ballot</i>
6:00 p.m.	Closing banquet
Saturday, August 11	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION TEN <i>Anticipated:</i> Speeches by nominees (3) for secretary; fourth ballot for secretary; possible fifth ballot for secretary; report on multicultural ministry; update on leadership.
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ELEVEN <i>Anticipated:</i> Bible study (Trelstad); unfinished business; announcement of 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
4:30 p.m.	Order for closing the Assembly

NOTE: consideration of memorials and resolutions will be interspersed throughout.

2007 Churchwide Assembly Agenda

Day/Time	Event
Monday August 6	
12:00 Noon-8:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. 5:45 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Registration desk open Nominations desk open News Conference Choir Rehearsal Orientation for voting members HOLY COMMUNION Dinner
7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ONE
Tuesday, August 7	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION TWO
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for separate consideration (removal from en bloc) of responses to synodical memorials and for substitute responses to synodical memorials</i>
11:30 p.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION THREE
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	Hearings at hotel
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Dinner at hotel Seminary receptions
Wednesday, August 8	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION FOUR
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for amendments to the social statement, constitutional amendments, by law amendments, and separate consideration (removal from en bloc) of recommended constitutional amendments</i>
11:30 p.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for nominations from the floor</i>
2:00 p.m.-5:45 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION FIVE
6:00 p.m.	Reception: Campus Ministry and Colleges Dinner on own
Thursday, August 9	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION SIX
10:45 a.m.	<i>Deadline for non-germane resolutions</i>
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for first common ballot</i>
2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION SEVEN
5:45 p.m.	Mass Choir Rehearsal
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Dinner on own
Friday, August 10	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	<i>Deadline for amendments to 2008-2009 budget proposal</i>
8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION EIGHT
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION NINE
6:00 p.m.	<i>Deadline for second common ballot</i>
6:30 p.m.	Closing banquet
Saturday, August 11	
5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. 6:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	BoP Run, Walk 'n' Roll Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION TEN
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	HOLY COMMUNION

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ELEVEN
4:30 p.m.	Order for closing the Assembly