



2007 Churchwide Assembly

Living in God's amazing grace: Thanks be to God!

BRIEFING GUIDE

August 6-11, 2007
Chicago, Illinois

► **THEME:** We gather in Chicago from throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under the theme, *Living in God's amazing grace: Thanks be to God!*

We come together for the tenth Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We assemble to represent and serve on behalf of all the members in all the congregations of this church. We are summoned to seek the guidance of God's Spirit and to pursue the well-being of the Church of Jesus Christ.

► **NUMBER OF VOTING MEMBERS:** Total *voting membership* for the 2007 Churchwide Assembly is *1,071*, including the four churchwide officers.

► **ASSEMBLY PARTICIPANTS:** In addition to the 1,071 VOTING MEMBERS of the assembly, other categories include:

1. **ADVISORY MEMBERS** with voice but not vote are: (a) members of the Church Council, unless elected as voting members; (b) program committee chairs and board chairs or their designees; (c) executive directors of churchwide units; (d) the executive for administration; and (e) executive assistants to the presiding bishop.
2. **RESOURCE PERSONS**, who are granted voice in areas of expertise related to the assembly agenda, are: (a) section executives; (b) chairs of advisory committees; (c) chair of the Nominating Committee; (d) chair of the Committee on Appeals; and (e) other persons so designated.
3. **NON-VOTING MEMBERS** are: (a) presidents of ELCA seminaries; and (b) presidents of ELCA-related colleges and universities. One faculty member from each of the eight ELCA seminaries is present to serve as a potential resource for the assembly, as is one representative of the Association of Teaching Theologians.
4. **OFFICIAL GUESTS** include the former presiding bishops of this church, inter-church and ecumenical representatives, and leaders of predecessor church bodies.
5. **CONGREGATION OBSERVERS:** Each congregation may register an observer for the assembly. An observer receives the assembly material and may be present on the floor for all plenary sessions as well as worship and meal events.
6. **SYNODICAL OFFICERS, SYNODICAL STAFF, AND REGIONAL COORDINATORS:** Because of their responsibilities, many synodical officers, synodical staff members, and regional coordinators observe the deliberations of the assembly from seating provided for them at observer tables.
7. **CONVO PARTICIPANTS AND YOUNG ROSTERED LEADERS:** Participants will observe the deliberation of the voting members of the assembly.
8. **VISITORS.**
9. **STAFF** of the assembly.

► **OPENING WORSHIP:** The assembly will begin with the *Service of Holy Communion* at 4:00 P.M. on Monday, August 6, in the *Hall B* of Navy Pier in Chicago.

► **DAILY WORSHIP:** Worship is a central part of the Churchwide Assembly and will take place Tuesday

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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through Friday at 11:30 A.M. in the **Hall B** at Navy Pier. On Saturday, August 11, the service will begin at 11:00 A.M.

► **OFFERINGS:** Special *offerings* during this assembly are designated for the **100th Anniversary of Lutheran Campus Ministry** (Monday, August 6) and the **60th Anniversary of the Lutheran World Federation** (Saturday, August 11).

► **PLENARY SESSIONS:** All plenary sessions of the assembly will be held in the **Hall A** of Navy Pier in downtown Chicago. The schedule is as follows:

● Plenary Session One	August 6	7:30 P.M.–9:30 P.M.
● Plenary Session Two	August 7	8:30 A.M.–11:00 A.M.
● Plenary Session Three	August 7	2:00 P.M.–4:00 P.M.
● Hearings for Voting Members on Proposals for Assembly Action *		5:00 P.M.–6:00 P.M. 7:00 P.M.–8:00 P.M.

* *Hearings will be held in various locations
as listed in the Program and the Order of Business.*

● Plenary Session Four	August 8	8:30 A.M.–11:00 A.M.
● Plenary Session Five	August 8	2:00 P.M.–5:45 P.M.
● Plenary Session Six	August 9	8:30 A.M.–11:00 A.M.
● Plenary Session Seven	August 9	2:00 P.M.–5:30 P.M.
● Plenary Session Eight	August 10	8:30 A.M.–11:00 A.M.
● Plenary Session Nine	August 10	2:00 P.M.–5:30 P.M.
● Plenary Session Ten	August 11	8:30 A.M.–10:30 A.M.
● Plenary Session Eleven	August 11	2:00 P.M.–4:30 P.M.
● Adjournment	August 11	4:30 P.M.

► **ORIENTATION FOR INTERESTED VOTING MEMBERS:** An *orientation session* will be held for voting members in the assembly plenary hall (**Hall A of Navy Pier**) on Monday, August 6, at 2:30 P.M.

► **VOTING KEYPADS:** Each voting member's place will have an electronic voting keypad. Use of the keypad will be described and demonstrated at the first plenary session. Voting members must never use another person's keypad. Voting members are *NOT* to cast any proxy votes; proxy voting is precluded by bylaw 12.31.08. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

► **RESOURCES:** Materials for voting members provide the official documentation for the deliberations of the Churchwide Assembly.

1. *2007 Pre-Assembly Report* (sections distributed in various mailings and on-site), including:

- Section I, page 5, Rules of Organization and Procedure;
- Section II, Reports of the Presiding Bishop, Secretary, and Treasurer;
- Section III, Reports of churchwide units;
- Section IV, page 1, Election of the Presiding Bishop;
- Section IV, page 3, Election of the Secretary;
- Section IV, page 5, Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible;
- Section IV, page 9, Reception of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
- Section IV, page 11, Mission Funding;
- Section IV, page 13, Social Statement on Education;
- Section IV, page 35, World Hunger Appeal;
- Section IV, page 37, Strategy on HIV and AIDS;

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- Section IV, page 41, Full Communion with Moravian Provinces;
- Section IV, page 43, Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws;
- Section IV, page 47, 2008-2009 Budget Proposals;
- Section V, page 1, Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding;
- Section V, page 7, Policies and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns;
- Section V, page 15, In the City for Good;
- Section V, page 17, Rural Ministry;
- Section V, page 19, Leadership Development Initiative;
- Section V, page 33, Justice for Women;
- Section V, page 43, Multicultural Ministries Strategy;
- Section V, page 53, Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine;
- Section V, page 55, Vision and Expectations;
- Section V, page 63, Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline;
- Section VI, Report of the Memorials Committee and recommendations for responses to synodical memorials;
- Section VII, Report of the Nominating Committee;
- Section VIII, Recommendations from the Committee of Reference and Counsel;
- Section IX, Report of the Church Council; and
- Section X, Current edition of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

2. Other materials *to be distributed on-site* in Chicago upon registration for the assembly include:
 - a. An *Order of Business*, which outlines the anticipated agenda of plenary sessions;
 - b. A *Program*, which includes the listing of locations for the hearings for voting members on Tuesday, and also contains various matters of information;
 - c. A set of worship booklets;
 - d. A three-ring binder;
 - e. A voting-member packet of important pages;
 - f. A pocket agenda;
 - g. A carrying bag;
 - h. A name tag for voting members that must be displayed to obtain access to the plenary floor.

► **DEADLINES:** Certain deadlines are a part of the rules of procedure for the Churchwide Assembly to help ensure the orderly conduct of business. These include:

1. **Tuesday, August 7, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for removing from the *en bloc* motion a proposed response to a synodical memorial;
2. **Tuesday, August 7, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for submission of substitute motions to recommendations of the Memorials Committee;
3. **Wednesday, August 8, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for submission of proposed amendments to the social statement on education;
4. **Wednesday, August 8, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for removal of items from the *en bloc* motion related to proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;
5. **Wednesday, August 8, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for submission to the secretary of proposed constitutional or bylaw amendments;
6. **Wednesday, August 8, at 2:00 P.M.**—deadline for submission of nominations to the secretary;
7. **Thursday, August 9, at 10:45 A.M.**—deadline for submission of any resolution not germane to matters before the assembly or on the assembly agenda;
8. **Thursday, August 9, at 2:00 P.M.**—first common ballot closes for elections;
9. **Friday, August 10, at 8:30 A.M.**—deadline for proposed amendments to the budget proposal (see Section IV, pages 47 and following, in the *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*).

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- ▶ **RESOLUTION FORMS:** Proposed resolutions and amendments to matters on the floor are to be submitted in writing to the secretary's deputy, seated on the floor to the presider's right. Normally, such written motions should be submitted before a voting member seeks to move such an action on the floor. Certain motions automatically are referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel (see Section I in the "Rules of Organization and Procedure" in the *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*).
- ▶ **WITHDRAWAL FORMS:** Separate forms are available for withdrawal from *en bloc* consideration of memorials and amendments. Such forms are to be submitted in writing to the secretary's deputy, seated on the floor to the presider's right (see Section I in the Rules of Organization and Procedure in the *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*).
- ▶ **FLOOR NOMINATIONS:** Nominations, where permitted under the bylaws, may be submitted with the required number of signatures at the Nominations Desk in the Assembly Secretariat (Room 302) prior to the deadline.
- ▶ **DISTRIBUTION OF BALLOTS:** As in the past, packets of ballots will be prepared for distribution by each synodical bishop at the time of the casting of the first and second ballot for presiding bishop, the first and second ballot for secretary, and the first common ballot for council, board, and committee members.
- ▶ **SEATING OF ALTERNATE VOTING MEMBERS:** A form will be available at the registration center and subsequently at the Information Desk in the Assembly Secretariat (Room 302) for the seating of an alternate voting member in the event of an unexpected, *permanent* absence of a regular voting member. The form requires the *signature of the bishop of the synod and of the secretary of this church*.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS, BOARD AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, AND SECTION EXECUTIVES:** To the left (when facing the platform), seating *at tables* is provided for members of the Church Council. Immediately behind the council, seating is provided for executive directors, chairs of program committees and boards, as well as other committee chairs.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR ELCA SEMINARY, COLLEGE, AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS AS NON-VOTING MEMBERS:** Seating *at tables* is provided to the far left (when facing the platform) for non-voting members (presidents of ELCA seminaries, colleges, and universities).
- ▶ **SEATING FOR FACULTY RESOURCE PERSONS** Seating *at tables* is provided to the far left (when facing the platform) for faculty observers from the ELCA's eight seminaries and the representative of the Association of Teaching Theologians.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR ACCREDITED MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES:** Seating *at tables* is provided to the right (when facing the platform) for media representatives with credentials from the news and information area of the Communication Services unit.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR CONGREGATION OBSERVERS:** Seating *at tables* is provided to the far right along the wall (when facing the platform) for individuals pre-registered as congregation observers.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR SYNODICAL OFFICERS, SYNODICAL STAFF MEMBERS, AND REGIONAL COORDINATORS:** Seating *at tables* is available to the far right (when facing the platform) for synodical officers and staff, unless such individuals serve as voting members.
- ▶ **SEATING FOR CONVO AND YOUNG ROSTERED LEADERS:** Seating is provided in designated areas to the far right (when facing the platform).

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► **SEATING FOR SPOUSES OF BISHOPS:** Seating in chairs is provided to the far right (when facing the platform) for spouses of synodical bishops.

► **ATTENDANCE:** Attendance at all plenary sessions is expected.

► **SUMMARY FOR CONGREGATIONS:** Each congregation will receive a brief summary of actions and decisions following the Churchwide Assembly. Voting members also will receive this summary.

► **AFTER THE ASSEMBLY:** Voting members are encouraged to report to their own congregations and, if possible, to others in their area. In preparation for this task, individuals may wish to collect:

1. the daily copy of the *Pier Review* with summaries of assembly actions as well as anticipated events of each day during the course of the assembly;
2. the Preliminary Minutes, which are distributed during the assembly; and
3. other materials that will assist in summarizing the assembly's key decisions.

For constructive communication after the 2007 Churchwide Assembly, resources include:

1. A major summary of the Churchwide Assembly, which will be published in the September 2007 issue of *The Lutheran* magazine and on the Web by late August at www.thelutheran.org; and
2. The assembly's Web pages, www.elca.org/assembly/07/, which will list all assembly actions.

► **SIZE OF CHURCH BODY:** The *total baptized membership* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is **4.8 million**, according to the 2006 parochial statistics for ELCA congregations:

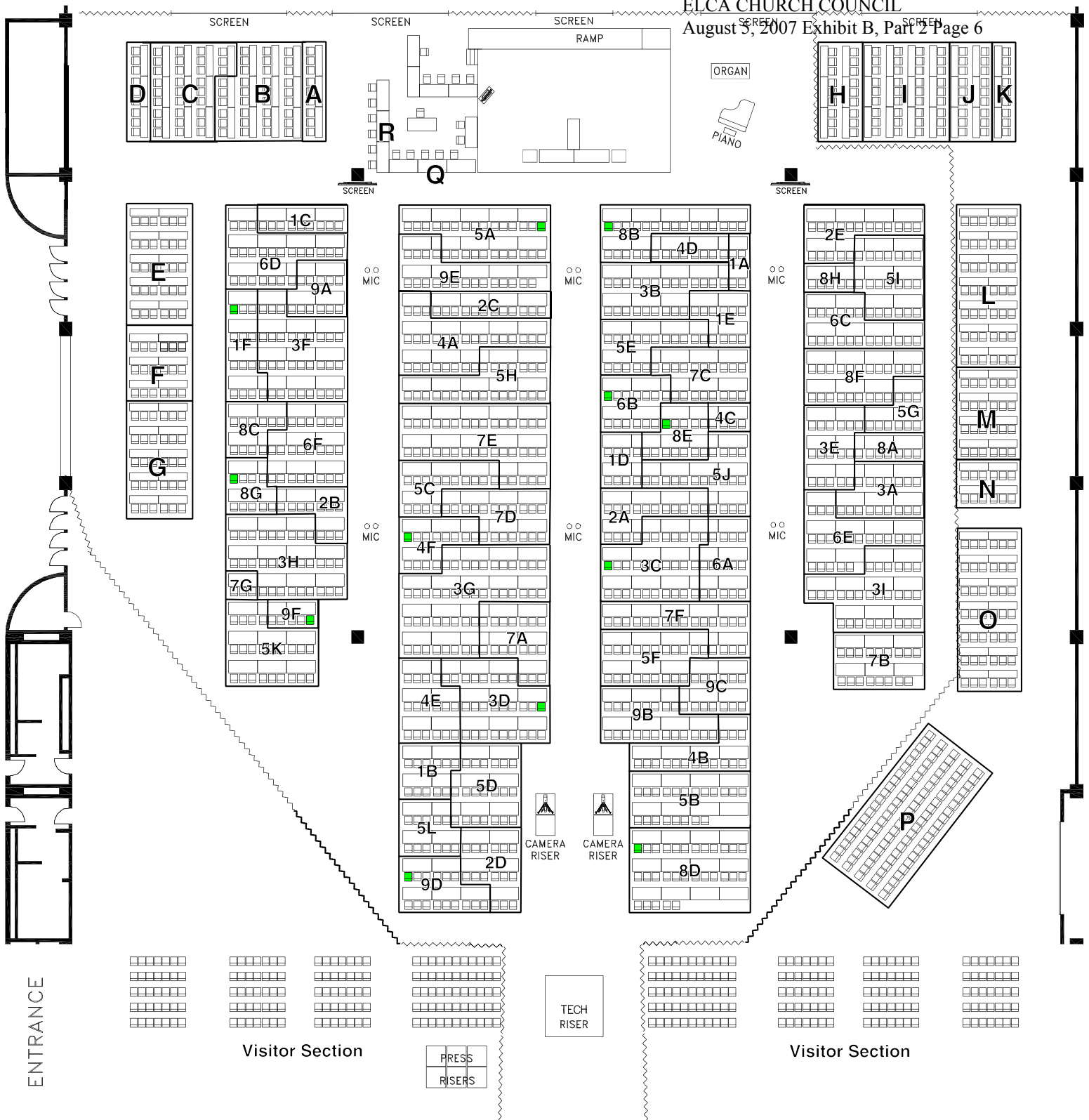
1. Number of congregations in 2006—**10,470**.
2. Baptized membership for 2006—**4,774,203**.
3. Confirmed membership—3.6 million (**3,580,402**).
4. Total participants in worship each week—1.4 million (**1,408,682**).
5. Number of synods—**65** (see *Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for a complete list of synods, including number of congregations and members in each).

The ELCA is the sixth largest Christian denomination in the United States, according to statistics compiled by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

1. Roman Catholic Church (67.8 million in 2004),
2. Southern Baptist Convention (16.3 million),
3. United Methodist Church (8.2 million),
4. Church of God in Christ of Memphis, Tenn. (5.5 million), and
5. National Baptist Convention U.S.A. (5 million).

The baptized membership of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 2005 was 2.4 million. Worldwide, there are 69.8 million Lutherans, 66.2 million of whom are in the 140 member churches of the Lutheran World Federation, a global communion of Lutheran churches. (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints [Mormon] reports 5.5 million, but is not listed as a Christian denomination here.)

► **ASSEMBLY SEATING:** A floor map (next page) shows the assigned seating locations of the voting members from this church's 65 synods as well as those of other assembly participants.



- A Churchwide Officers
- B Church Council Members
- C Chairs of Committees and Boards, Executive Directors of Churchwide Units
- D Section Executives
- E Ecumenical Guests, and Lutheran World Federation
- F Seminary Presidents, and Faculty Resource Persons
- G ELCA College and University Presidents
- H Credentialed Media
- I Synodical Officers and Staff Members
- J Bishops' Spouses
- K Regional Coordinators
- L Youth and Young Adult Convocation
- M Resource Persons
- N Invited Guests
- O Congregational Observers
- P Young Rostered Leaders
- Q Secretary's Deputy
- R Assembly Staff Members

In Honor of The Reverend Dr. Lowell G. Almen

CC ACTION

Recommended: *To adopt the following resolution:*

The position of secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was established on April 30, 1987, when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially was constituted. Elected on May 2, 1987, as the first—and thus far only—person to hold the office of secretary was the Rev. Dr. Lowell Gordon Almen. Coming to the position with a uniquely appropriate background, Secretary Almen has served this church and shaped the office in ways that will continue to guide the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for years to come. In honor of his distinguished service as the secretary of this church, his leadership is acclaimed with gratitude and his contributions to the well-being of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are embraced with thanksgiving. Therefore, it is hereby declared and acknowledged:

The responsibilities of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are manifold and various. One constant that you have emphasized amidst this variety is service. You have insisted that the purpose of the Office of the Secretary is to be the servant of the servants of Christ, aiding the members of this church and others with promptness, courtesy, and friendliness.

You came to this position having served previously as a parish pastor, campus pastor, director of communications for Concordia College, Moorhead, managing editor and then editor of The Lutheran Standard, and observer of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church as it carefully constructed what became the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. All of these experiences have enriched his service as secretary.

For your continual reminders that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is one church in three interdependent expressions;

For your stewardship and knowledge of the history, polity, and ecclesiology both of this church and American Lutheranism and your ability to utilize that knowledge for the present and future mission and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

For your encyclopedic knowledge of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the other governing documents of this church and your dedication to their foundational and unifying roles in this church;

For your untiring efforts to answer questions accurately, clearly, and thoroughly and to apply and interpret the constitutions and policies of this church fairly;

For your ecumenical sensibility and endeavors, linking this church to the Church catholic, particularly your roles as chair of the Lutheran–Reformed Coordinating Committee and co-chair of the eleventh round of the Lutheran–Roman Catholic dialogue;

For connecting the various dimensions of this church through your travel to congregations and synods, through your care for this church’s military chaplains, and through service on the boards of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers; Women of the ELCA; and the Board of Pensions;

For your attention to the smallest detail, including the welfare of voting members as they enter and exit escalators;

For your dry humor and occasional smile;

For your pastoral leadership throughout this church and particularly in the Conference of

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

August 5, 2007

Exhibit B

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Bishops, the Church Council, and the churchwide organization; and

For forty years of ordained service to God and the body of Christ, the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America offer their heartfelt gratitude to you and raise a loud shout, "Thanks be to God."

May the years to come be filled for you, Secretary Lowell Almen, with much joy and enduring hope.

Upon approval and action by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the *Servus Dei* Medal is conferred upon the Reverend Dr. Lowell G. Almen, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1987-2007).