

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

July 28, 2011

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
July 28, 2011
Lutheran Center
Chicago, Illinois**

The seventy-first meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened on Thursday, July 28, 2011, in the Council Room of the Lutheran Center at Chicago, Illinois, and by conference call. The first plenary of the meeting took place in executive session to address personnel matters. The second plenary was conducted in open session.

ROLL CALL

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

Voting Members

Officers:

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

Church Council:

Pr. David P. Anderson (<i>excused</i>)	Pr. Yvonne I. Marshall
Mr. Baron Blanchard (<i>excused</i>)	Ms. Susan W. McArver
Ms. Rebecca Jo Brakke	Pr. Raymond A. Miller
Ms. Rebecca D. Carlson (<i>excused</i>)	Mr. John S. Munday
Ms. Deborah L. Chenoweth	Mr. Mark W. Myers (<i>excused</i>)
Pr. Rachel L. Connelly	Ms. Ann F. Niedringhaus
Mr. John R. Emery	Pr. J. Pablo Obregon
Pr. Amsalu T. Geleta	Mr. Iván A. Pérez
Ms. Karin Lynn Graddy	Ms. Feronika Raming (<i>excused</i>)
Mr. Mark S. Helmke	Ms. Lynette M. Reitz
Ms. Louise A. Hemstead	Ms. Sandra Schlesinger
Mr. William B. Horne II	Mr. Blaire P. Smith (<i>excused</i>)
Pr. Keith A. Hunsinger	Pr. Jeffrey "Jeff" B. Sorenson
Mr. Mark E. Johnson (<i>excused</i>)	Pr. Kathryn A. Tiede (<i>excused</i>)
Pr. Susan Langhauser (<i>excused</i>)	Mr. David Truland (<i>excused</i>)
Pr. Steven P. Loy	Pr. Philip R. Wold
Pr. Heather S. Lubold	

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops

Bp. Allan C. Bjornberg (<i>excused</i>)	Bp. Ralph E. Jones
Bp. Wm. Chris Boerger	Bp. Gerald L. Mansholt (<i>excused</i>)
Bp. Michael L. Burk	Bp. Margaret G. Payne (<i>excused</i>)
Bp. Elizabeth Eaton	Bp. Harold L. Usgaard
Bp. Murray D. Finck (<i>excused</i>)	Bp. Herman R. Yoos III (<i>excused</i>)

Advisory Members

Pr. Jaime Dubon, president, Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA (*excused*)
Ms. Elizabeth Gaskins, president, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association (*excused*)

Advisory Members *(continued)*

Pr. David J. Keller, Lutheran Services in America
Ms. Katherine Long, president, European American Association *(excused)*
Ms. Arielle Mastellar, youth advisor *(excused)*
Pr. O. Dennis Mims, president, African American Lutheran Association *(excused)*
Mr. Fuad Nijim, president, Arab and Middle Eastern Association *(excused)*
Mr. Wayne B. Powell, ELCA colleges and universities *(excused)*
Pr. Mark R. Ramseth, ELCA seminaries *(excused)*
Pr. Arthur C. "Chris" Repp, chair, Global Mission program committee *(excused)*
Mr. Kyle Teague, youth advisor *(excused)*
Pr. Edmond Yee, Asian and Pacific Islander Association, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Association *(excused)*

Resource People

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration
Mr. Kenneth W. Inskeep, executive for research and evaluation
Pr. Marcus R. Kunz, executive for discernment of contextual and theological issues
Pr. Walter S. May, executive for synodical and constituent relations
Pr. Donald J. McCoid, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations *(excused)*
Pr. Darrell D. Morton, assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries *(excused)*
Pr. H. Karl Reko, coordinator for the Living Into the Future (LIFT) project
Ms. Myrna J. Sheie, executive for governance and institutional relations
Ms. Else B. Thompson, executive for human resources

Office of the Secretary:

Pr. Ruth E. Hamilton, assistant secretary *(excused)*
Mr. Phillip H. Harris, general counsel
Mr. Frank F. Imhoff, director for official documentation
Mr. David A. Ullrich, associate general counsel

Unit Executives:

Pr. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director, Congregational and Synodical Mission *(excused)*
Pr. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director, Global Mission *(excused)*

Separately Incorporated Ministries:

Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA
Mr. Douglas Haugen, director, Lutheran Men in Mission *(excused)*
Mr. John G. Kapanke, president and chief executive officer, Board of Pensions *(excused)*
Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president and chief executive officer, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers *(excused)*
Ms. Eva M. Roby, executive vice president for administration, Mission Investment Fund *(excused)*

Press:

Ms. Elizabeth M. Hunter, *The Lutheran* magazine
Mr. Daniel Lehmann, editor, *The Lutheran* magazine

Ecumenical Guests:

Ms. Lelanda Lee, The Episcopal Church *(excused)*
Pr. Mary Ann Neevel, United Church of Christ *(excused)*
Vacant positions: Moravian Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),
Reformed Church in America, and The United Methodist Church

**Thursday, July 28, 2011
Plenary Session I**

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

(Agenda I.A.)

Background:

Agenda items had been distributed by mail and electronically.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the meeting of the Church Council to order at 10:00 A.M.

At the invitation of the chair, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the ELCA, read Psalm 145:14–16 and opened the meeting with prayer.

The council entered into executive session to address personnel matters.

RECESS

Vice President Carlos E. Peña instructed the members to leave the secure conference call and to enter the open conference call. The July 28, 2011, meeting of the Church Council recessed at 10:34 A.M.

Thursday, July 28, 2011
Plenary Session II

The Church Council entered into open session at 10:47 A.M. Vice President Carlos E. Peña called the second plenary of the July 28, 2011, meeting to order, welcomed those joining the meeting, and called the roll.

REPORT OF ACTIONS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION
(Agenda II.B.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña announced that the following actions had been taken in executive session during the first plenary.

VOTED:

CC11.07.41 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

VOTED:

CC11.07.42 To adopt by addition the following continuing resolution of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*:

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

14.21.A11. Election of an Executive Director for Service Units

Unless otherwise specified in this constitution and bylaws, the Church Council shall elect the executive director for each churchwide service unit to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for election shall be made by the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop, as chief executive officer, shall arrange within the policy of this church for an annual review of each executive director. A unit executive director shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the executive director may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

VOTED:

CC11.07.43 To elect Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton to a four-year term as executive director of the Mission Advancement unit, beginning September 1, 2011.

VOTED:

CC11.07.44 To authorize and direct human resources staff in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in accordance with continuing resolution 19.31.A09, and churchwide practices and policies, to conduct the appropriate background checks and screening on candidates for the position of treasurer of the ELCA.

VOTED:

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

CC11.07.45 To elect the Rev. Linda O. Norman to a six-year term as treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, beginning October 1, 2011.

Vice President Peña bid Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton farewell as treasurer of this church and welcomed her into her new leadership role with the Mission Advancement unit. He invited her comments.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton expressed her appreciation for the support of the Church Council during her service as treasurer. She thanked the council for its confidence in her leadership of the Mission Advancement unit. She also voiced her trust in the Rev. Linda O. Norman and said that there would be a smooth transition in leadership in the Office of the Treasurer.

Vice President Peña introduced Treasurer-elect Norman and invited her remarks.

Pr. Norman stated her gratitude for the council and for Treasurer Jackson-Skelton. She thanked those involved in the process that led to her election.

Vice President Peña thanked Treasurer Jackson-Skelton and Treasurer-elect Norman for their comments. The chair reminded those present of protocols used during conference calls, and he asked that members of the council's Executive Committee remain on the conference call for a meeting after adjournment.

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICERS

PRESIDING BISHOP MARK S. HANSON

(Agenda II.C.1.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, who reported:

"I would like to begin by publicly sharing my congratulations and gratitude to both Christina, for her accepting of the executive director position in Mission Advancement, and Linda Norman, our treasurer-elect. The glowing things that were said about them in the closed session I wish they could have heard, but I will try to capture them. Christina, as has been said, has shaped this Office of the Treasurer with remarkable skill for its complexity of financial oversight that she has done with great skill and transparency, creating incredible trust in the Office of the Treasurer and all of us as elected leaders for the way that we steward this church's gifts for the sake of mission. As I said to the closed session, Christina, you exude a passion for mission that makes it very logical that you take that passion now and bring it to this church in the way that you tell the story of this church and invite deeper engagement in our life and our witness. That you have been part of the design of the Mission Advancement unit, that you have led it as interim director, makes all the sense in the world that you would lead it now. I do not know of any officer of an organization who would step aside from that position to take a lead programmatic position that you have so graciously and willingly done. So, thank you.

"Linda, you bring great skills. We have seen that in the Foundation. You have all the brilliance that we need to continue the complex financial, fiscal management, both internal and preparing for audits, but you also know how to oversee investments, and you too bring that articulation of your leadership in the fiscal side of our life for the sake of the missional side. We recalled your sermon to the Churchwide Assembly in 2009 and the widow's mite—maybe that was a prophetic moment of what was yet to unfold. And you, as a pastor, having served part-time in an urban setting, know that we steward these monies for the sake of God's work of proclaiming Jesus Christ and serving in the world. So, you will both be great colleagues together on the Administrative Team, with the Church Council, with the Conference of Bishops, and you maintain this strong cadre of great leaders within this church. So, I am delighted.

"Just a couple other things . . . we have lots of momentum going into the Churchwide Assembly, and I have high expectations for it. We came out of the Synod Assemblies with a really positive spirit, a lot of energy. This is not a church that is taking a breath and leaning back and wondering what is next. This is a church that knows who it is, who we are, and where God is leading us. And that clarity about our identity and mission will be the permeating thread that runs throughout this Churchwide Assembly. And I think when we leave that assembly we will have even higher expectations of the Holy Spirit and confidence in ourselves. And that is very exciting. I had a foretaste of that the last two weekends. Women of the ELCA gathered for its triennial in Spokane, and all that I described as my hopes for the

Churchwide Assembly were what I witnessed of the spirit in that triennial gathering. A deep commitment to mission, a high sense of hope for the church. And a real sense of the leadership that women bring, both in positions of leadership articulating their faith and undergirding us with their support. I experienced that again last weekend with Lutheran Men in Mission [at its triennial gathering] in Denver. One of the few denominations that still has a growing, strong, vibrant men's ministry. And all of it was about mission and proclaiming Jesus Christ. So, those are all hopeful momentum for what I think will be a great Churchwide Assembly.

"Finally, we are well into strategic planning for the churchwide organization. This is not a new planning process. This is building upon the work of the design, the work of LIFT [the Living Into the Future Together task force], and we have a great consultant, we have had a two-day retreat with an expanded leadership table, another one-day session with the Administrative Team. We will, by September, have a clear strategic plan for priorities, objectives, and measurable outcomes for the next two to three years. And I think that is going to serve us well. So, you can hear that I am in a position of great hope, and it is just good to be part of this church. Some of our partners in the Lutheran world have helped us to define ourselves by how they are choosing to define themselves. And that also positions us, and in a great position, to know who we are.

"Finally, the One Percent Challenge is growing throughout this church, and you will hear more about that at the Churchwide Assembly. But perk up your ears, and take up the challenge."

Vice President Peña thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson for his update and asked the members for their questions.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, noted that The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) announced it would not participate with the ELCA in training of military chaplains. She inquired of the church bodies' relationship in Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran Services in America.

Presiding Bishop Hanson replied that the relationship is being defined within each organization. The LCMS would like to continue working together with the ELCA in "externals," such as Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, but would not like to appear to be working jointly with the ELCA. The partner agencies are discerning their understandings of those relationships, he remarked. He said that he had sent a letter to the LCMS requesting clarification on its role in Lutheran Disaster Response, a "brand" that the ELCA holds and would like to advance. The ELCA is preparing a statement on the LCMS's announcement that Presiding Bishop Hanson planned to have ready on July 29, 2011.

There being no further questions, Vice President Peña thanked the presiding bishop for his update.

VICE PRESIDENT CARLOS E. PEÑA
(Agenda II.C.2.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that the assignments for some Church Council members during the Churchwide Assembly had changed and those members would receive more information about them.

SECRETARY DAVID D. SWARTLING
(Agenda II.C.3.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña asked Mr. David D. Swartling, secretary of the ELCA, for an update.

Secretary Swartling was in Orlando, Florida, reviewing the facilities that would be used during the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. He congratulated Treasurer Jackson-Skelton and Treasurer-elect Norman on their new positions. He reported that only a few details for the Churchwide Assembly remained. He mentioned that an agenda was being prepared for the Church Council meeting on August 14, 2011. The secretary said planning was in process around the legislative variables of the Churchwide Assembly, and he asked council members to share with him any issues they were hearing that could arise at the assembly.

There being no questions, Vice President Peña thanked Secretary Swartling for his report.

TREASURER CHRISTINA JACKSON-SKELTON

(Agenda II.C.4.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called on Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton for an update.

Treasurer Jackson-Skelton pointed out that summaries of the financial information for the end of May 2011 were available online at Net Community. She reported net operating revenue of \$734,000 for the first third of the fiscal year. Comparisons of mission support to the previous year indicated that it was stabilizing, she said, and there was no need to implement contingency plans.

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

SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS FOR REFERRAL

(Agenda II.E.)

Background:

The following resolutions were approved by Synod Assemblies as memorials. The Office of the Secretary received them as resolutions because they request specific units or offices of the churchwide organization to take action. The chair provided an opportunity for council members to indicate whether they wished to discuss separately any of the items listed in the *en bloc* resolution; any such item would have been removed from the *en bloc* resolution and discussed at the appropriate point in the agenda.

Church Council Action:

Vice President Carlos E. Peña noted that there was no request to remove an item from the *en bloc* resolution.

Secretary David D. Swartling moved the proposed action. It was seconded. There being no discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote. After the vote, he declared the motion had been approved.

VOTED:

CC11.07.46 To approve *en bloc* the following referrals of synodical resolutions.

A. Review of the FBI Raids on Peace Activists

Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, in the social statement For Peace in God's World (1995), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America declares, "We dedicate ourselves anew to pray and to work for peace in God's world"; and

WHEREAS, in that same social statement this church affirms, "Freedom of association and activities of non-governmental local, national, and international organizations are indispensable to building peace today;" and

WHEREAS, on September 24, 2010, there were FBI raids on several peace activists in Minneapolis and Chicago with subsequent grand jury subpoenas; and

WHEREAS, these peace activists have not been arrested or charged with any crime; and

WHEREAS, these people are entitled to presumption of innocence under the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, a report by U.S. Department of Justice Inspector General Glenn A. Fine (*A Review of the FBI's Investigation of Certain Domestic Advocacy Groups*, September 2010) had roundly criticized the FBI for improperly targeting domestic peace and anti-war groups for investigation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to call upon the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Church Council to call upon U.S. Senators and Representatives, U.S. Attorney General Holder, and President Obama to investigate these raids and subpoenas for constitutional legality in order to ensure that the legitimate right to dissent from the policies of our government remains guaranteed to all citizens.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC11.07.46a

To thank the Minneapolis Area Synod for its attention to the issue of FBI raids on peace activists and for connecting faith, public life, and a concern for human rights and the U.S. constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and assembly;

To express solidarity with the principles raised by the Minneapolis Area Synod and the synod's concern as outlined by the social policy of this church, including *For Peace in God's World* as cited and the social message, "Living in a Time of Terrorism" (1994);

To note the report already provided by the Inspector General of the Department of Justice as partial response to the synod's request;

To refer this item to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for further review of the Department of Justice report with the possibility of further contact with the Department of Justice and the U.S. Congress regarding the report and its stated recommendations and changes for investigative methods used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and

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

B. Human Rights Violations Against the Oromo People

Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G)

WHEREAS, we are called to follow Jesus Christ "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free" (Luke 4:18); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has repeatedly called upon its congregations to intercede for those around the world who are being subjected to systematic violation of human rights; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Oromo Evangelical Church in Washington, D.C., like the constitutions of many ELCA congregations, calls on members to "serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless..." (*C4.02.d.); and

WHEREAS, the Oromo people, who number 30 million within the territory of Ethiopia, have known more than a century of persecution at the hands of successive governments; and

WHEREAS, the people of the Oromia region of Ethiopia are presently being subjected to a massive campaign to deny their human and civil rights, including arbitrary detention, the torture of detainees, and extrajudicial executions; and

WHEREAS, Human Rights Watch, in a report released on April 6, 2011, called on the Ethiopian government to immediately release those detained without charge during "several waves of apparently politically motivated mass arrests of more than 200 ethnic Oromo Ethiopians;" and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of State, in its annual Human Rights report on Ethiopia (April 2011), has documented "unlawful killings, torture, beating, and abuse and mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters by security forces... poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention, particularly of suspected sympathizers or members of opposition or insurgent groups" and has called on the Government of Ethiopia to comply with its commitments under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to cease its practice of jamming Voice of America broadcasts that seek to report on the present situation and its denial of access to federal prisons by the International Committee of the Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, the Oromo Evangelical Church of Washington, D.C., as well as other Oromo congregations, stand ready to provide documentation and study materials on the present situation in Ethiopia through the synod office; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly encourage congregations of the synod to pray regularly for those in prison in Ethiopia and to devote time to studying the situation of the Oromo people; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly direct the bishop of the synod to send a letter to the U.S. Secretary of State expressing the synod's concern for the well-being of the Oromo people and requesting that all developmental and military aid to the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia be tied to that government's compliance with internationally-recognized human rights agreements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly meeting in Orlando, Florida, to undertake programs of education and advocacy on behalf of the human rights of the Oromo people.

Background

As baptized Christians, we are called by our baptismal covenant to stand in solidarity with people most affected by injustice and repression. To that end, the ELCA continually has affirmed its commitment to the promotion, preservation and protection of universal human rights.

The global engagement and awareness present in every expression of this church is formed through the practices of accompaniment, the mission theology of the ELCA. The blend of solidarity and accompaniment motivates ELCA members toward effective advocacy.

One of the commitments intrinsic to the practice of accompaniment is consultation with global companion churches prior to ELCA action outside the territories of the ELCA. In many areas, including governmental advocacy, operating without prior consultation can lead to unintended consequences, both for the ELCA and for our companion churches.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

**CC11.07.46b To thank the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod for its resolution related to human rights violations against the Oromo people;
To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units for consultation with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and
To request the secretary of this church to inform the synod of this action.**

C. Suicide Prevention

Southeastern Synod (9D)

WHEREAS, "A Message on Suicide Prevention," which the ELCA Church Council adopted on November 14, 1999, urges synods to support members, congregations, and affiliated institutions in their efforts to prevent suicide (page 10); and

WHEREAS, in the years since approval of this message, a number of significant public/private suicide prevention efforts have evolved, including the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP in 2001), the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report "Preventing Suicide: A National Imperative" (2002), the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (2002), the National Council for Suicide Prevention (NCSP, 2005), the Interfaith Dialogue on Suicide Prevention (2008), the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (NAASP, 2010), and the ELCA Suicide Prevention Ministry, Inc. (2010); and

WHEREAS, 34,598 U.S. citizens died by suicide in 2007 (latest statistics available), with an age-adjusted rate of 11.27 suicides per 100,000 people, resulting in a projection of 507 ELCA suicides annually based on an ELCA membership of 4.5 million, which would create an estimated 10,100 new ELCA survivors of suicide annually; and

WHEREAS, suicide prevention is a major concern of the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the third leading cause of death in college aged people (15–24), and the NSSP Objective 4.3 calls for increasing the number of colleges and universities with suicide prevention programs, and the 26 ELCA-affiliated colleges and universities constitute a significant body of at-risk persons, and the 2010 suicide of a pastor at Valparaiso University starkly portrays the randomness of suicide; and

WHEREAS, the federally sponsored Interfaith Dialogue on Suicide Prevention produced a consensus statement including this sentence: "The time is right for the life-enhancing strengths that are the foundation of our most ancient faith traditions to find application in preventing suffering and loss from suicide;" and

WHEREAS, the NSSP Objective 1.2 calls for regular national conferences on suicide prevention to maintain broad-based participation and involvement in reducing the toll of suicide and generate open discussion and assessment of suicide prevention programs; and Objective 6.4 calls for increasing the proportion of clergy trained in identifying and responding to suicide risk and behaviors; and Objective 7.5 calls for increasing the proportion of clergy trained in the unique needs of survivors of suicide; and

WHEREAS, the NSSP Objective 10.2 calls for increasing the funding (public and private) for suicide prevention research, and the mission of the NAASP includes cultivating the resources needed to sustain progress, and the IOM report includes specific

recommendations on needed suicide prevention research, and federal suicide prevention research funding is minimal and sporadic at best; and

WHEREAS, limited financial resources have precluded active support by the churchwide and synod offices in implementing “The Message on Suicide Prevention,” and a Suicide Prevention Endowment Fund has been established within the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust to build future financial support for churchwide and synod support of suicide prevention; and

WHEREAS, membership in a faith community is often cited as a protective factor against suicide but is not supported by any current research, and the magnitude of the problem of completed suicide within the ELCA is unknown, and factual knowledge about such a problem will enable prudent application of limited resources to alleviate the problem; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Synod memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to:

1. encourage all ELCA-related colleges and universities to adopt a comprehensive suicide prevention and educational program, which includes plans for immediate responses to a completed campus suicide, and appropriate ongoing support and counseling actions.
2. direct the ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Office to support a collaborative effort with other national faith communities to request the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to convene regular meetings of national faith communities for the purpose of advancing suicide prevention through the cooperative work of national faith communities.
3. encourage the congregations and members of the ELCA to call upon the U.S. Congress to convene regular national conferences of representatives from all constituencies with a vested interest in suicide prevention for the purposes of (a) promoting broad collaboration, (b) establishing priorities for the application of limited national resources, (c) engaging survivors of suicide in prevention activities that will promote their grieving and healing process, and (d) providing clergy training.
4. direct the ELCA Office of Advocacy Ministries to collaborate with other national faith communities, the NCSP, and the NAASP for the purpose of promoting the development of a “grassroots” funded National Suicide Prevention Research Endowment Fund, similar to existing research funds for heart and cancer research which are largely supported by the “grassroots,” for the purpose of conducting scientific suicide prevention research as recommended by the IOM and supported by Objective 10.2 of the NSSP.
5. encourage synods, affiliated institutions, congregations, and members to contribute to the established ELCA Suicide Prevention Endowment Fund, part of the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, for the purpose of building future financial resources for suicide prevention work within the ELCA, and providing survivors of suicide a convenient and meaningful way to honor and memorialize their loved ones lost to suicide through gifts to the Endowment Fund.
6. direct the Office of Research and Evaluation to include, over a period of three years, in the required annual report from each ELCA congregation, a question enabling that office to determine the annual number of completed suicides in the ELCA for the purposes of (a) assessing the impact of suicide on the ELCA, (b) comparing suicide rates of the general population to the ELCA, and (c) evaluating whether or not membership in the ELCA may be a protective factor for preventing suicide.

Background

The Southeastern Synod submitted a resolution on suicide prevention in 2009, a time—like the present—when “the availability of funding and staff resources” was challenging. Given budget constraints, staffing responsibility for projects currently in process and unit commitments to focus work around two churchwide priorities, it is recommended that the Church Council decline the request of the synod, but invite the possibility of resubmitting the request when the budget constraints are less challenging.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC11.07.46c

**To receive the resolution of the Southeastern Synod related to suicide prevention;
To acknowledge with gratitude the deep concerns and strong commitments expressed by the resolution, but to decline to initiate a process for response to the synod’s request, due to budget constraints and the resulting capacity limitations related to additional work in this area;**

To invite resubmission of the request by the synod in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission program unit as funding and staff resources permit; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

**D. Support of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)**

WHEREAS, "People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them" (Mark 10:13-16); and

WHEREAS, children and adults are welcomed into the family of God and called in baptism to a life of service; and

WHEREAS, this church has called pastors, lay ministers, volunteers, and parents to equip and empower young people for ministry; and

WHEREAS, adult youth ministry leaders live out Martin Luther's vision for the Church by teaching young people; and

WHEREAS, for more than 10 years the ELCA Youth Ministry Network has renewed, educated, and connected adult youth ministry leaders for service in the church and the world; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that congregations of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA encourage their members to pray for our young people, adult youth ministry leaders, and the ELCA Youth Ministry Network; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA encourage adult youth ministry leaders and pastors to take advantage of opportunities that renew, educate, and connect them and their ministries; and be it further

RESOLVED, that individuals from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA be encouraged to become members of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations, organizations, and individuals of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA be encouraged to support the ELCA Youth Ministry Network by sending adult youth ministry leaders to the annual Extravaganza in New Orleans, La., February 8-12, 2012, and Anaheim, Calif., January 24-28, 2013; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to encourage synods, congregations, adult youth ministry leaders, and pastors of the ELCA to support the ELCA Youth Ministry Network by joining the network and by sending adult youth ministry leaders to the annual Extravaganza in New Orleans, La., February 8-12, 2012, and Anaheim, Calif., January 24-28, 2013.

Background

This memorial affirms the development of strong youth ministries within the ELCA, including the Youth Ministry Network and its annual conference, called the Extravaganza. The Youth Ministry Network was begun in the late 1990s by ELCA adults working with youth who knew there was a need to support one another as Lutherans in this ministry. In 1998 they organized the first Extravaganza event for adults working with youth. The network continues as an independent group welcoming members. Extravaganzas are held annually.

Along with synods, the independent Youth Ministry Network is a primary network partner for the youth ministry staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit. CSM strongly supports the intent of this memorial to widen participation in the Extravaganza and encourage membership in the network.

In 2011, the CSM youth ministry budget provides for a partnership grant of \$25,000 to the Youth Ministry Network.

As indicated, the next two Extravaganzas are planned for New Orleans, La., February 8-12, 2012, and Anaheim, Calif., January 24-28, 2013.

CSM youth and young adult ministry staff consider partnership with the Youth Ministry Network to be a primary expression of the unit's goal to support networks and equip leaders for youth ministry.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC11.07.46d

To receive the resolution of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod and to commend commitment to youth ministry wherever it exists in this church;

To call for broader and deeper awareness of the importance of Lutheran ministry to and with youth and to encourage leadership development and strong networks to undergird this work;

To encourage all the congregations and synods of this church and adult youth ministry leaders, whether lay or rostered, paid or volunteer, who are engaged in youth ministry to find ways to become more skilled for this important work, including joining the Youth Ministry Network and attending the annual Extravanzas for adult youth ministry leaders; and

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

E. Advanced Health Care Directives

Sierra Pacific Synod (2A)

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to advocate for the completion of Advanced Health Care Directives by all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod's Witness and Service Discipling Team encourage the use of the ELCA's "Message on End-of-Life Decisions" and its 2003 social statement on health healing and health care as tools for education and guidance by its congregations and rostered leaders.

Background from the Theological Discernment Team

The memorial from the Sierra Pacific Synod urges renewed attention within the ELCA to the importance of Advanced Health Care Directives. It views such directives as one significant tool for making health care decisions, especially those related to the end of life. This attention and this view reflects what the ELCA has expressed in its social documents about health decisions and end-of-life.

The social message on "End-of-Life Decisions" (1992) mentions "advance directives" (p. 1), including durable power of attorney, living wills, and other forms that vary from state to state, all of which communicate future health care decisions.

The ELCA social statement, *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (2003), highlights the Christian perspective that health care is a shared endeavor with both personal and social responsibilities. It encourages Christians to understand patients as people in relationships rather than as isolated individuals making solo decisions. In that light it discusses personal responsibilities for future health care choices and advocates for the use of advance directives as one means to communicate with loved ones, pastors and others in a way that will respect a "person's desires and minimize the tremendous stress and suffering that later treatment decisions may entail" (p. 8).

The implementing resolutions of the statement encourage all members, congregations and ministry sites within the ELCA to use the social statement to aid discernment and to advance health care in as a shared endeavor. Resolution number five specifically encourages congregations and church-related institutions to be centers for dissemination of health education for their members and their communities (p. 26).

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC11.07.46e

To receive the resolution of the Sierra Pacific Synod prompting renewed attention to the importance of advanced health care directives as one significant tool for making health care decisions, especially those related to the end of life;

To reaffirm the resolve of the ELCA to be a church dedicated to sharing the endeavor for health care and wise decision-making by the adoption of the following social policy resolution:

RESOLVED, to express the encouragement of the Church Council to all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to complete advanced health care directives; and be it further

RESOLVED, to encourage congregations, synods, social ministry organizations, and other church-related institutions to be centers for dissemination of education regarding advance directives, including the use of “End-of-Life Decisions” and *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* as tools for education and guidance toward discerning wise health decisions; and

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

F. Fair Milk Pricing

La Crosse Area Synod (5L)

WHEREAS, dairy farmers are being paid less for milk than it costs them to produce it; and

WHEREAS, forty percent of Wisconsin farmers are eligible for or are currently receiving health insurance benefits through the Wisconsin Badger Care program; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack estimates the number of dairy farms in the United States declined from 111,000 to less than 65,000 in the last decade; and

WHEREAS, farmers are receiving a very small proportion of the retail cost of food; and

WHEREAS, in the social statement *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms this church’s commitment to support, advocate, and pray for those who farm the land, and calls for changing the way producers of food are paid so that they receive adequate prices for what they produce in order to fairly compensate them for their costs of production and labor; and

WHEREAS, dairy farmers are leading a national campaign to seek support among other sectors of the dairy industry for a more fair milk price; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod support dairy farmers in their campaign calling for fair and adequate compensation for their milk; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the congregations and the pastors of the La Crosse Area Synod raise awareness of the current and persistent financial crises facing farm families through study, discussion and prayers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2011 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to specifically include fair milk pricing as a poverty and justice issue.

Background

As the resolution from the La Crosse Area Synod indicates, the ELCA’s 1999 social statement on economic life, *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, states the strong support of the ELCA for farmers and ranchers:

Through the calling of agriculture, farmers produce the grain for our daily bread and the rest of our food supply. Without a bountiful and low-cost food supply, most Americans would not enjoy the livelihood they do. Farmers face the challenge of producing this food in ways that contribute to the regeneration of the land and the vitality of rural communities. At the same time, society as a whole must address the high levels of risk farmers face and the low prices they often receive. Changing agricultural policies and the growing power of large agribusiness corporations make this even more challenging. (p.15)

Prices for staple foods like milk are a complex issue with many implications for issues of poverty and justice. If higher prices for farmers lead to higher consumer prices, low income consumers are harmed. But if, in turn, farmers are not compensated sufficiently for what they produce because of flawed government subsidy policies or a lack of

competition, that also is an issue of justice. As a church, the ELCA lives in the tension between these needs and seeks to promote justice for all.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC11.07.46f

**To receive the resolution of the La Crosse Area Synod related to milk pricing and to thank the synod for its commitment to fair prices for farmers and for bringing the plight of U.S. dairy farms to the attention of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and
To affirm the support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for fair prices for farmers that compensate them adequately for their costs of production; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked those present to hold in confidence the personnel votes announced in open session until staff of the churchwide organization had been informed of the elections, which was expected by 12:30 P.M.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña repeated the request for confidentiality and asked members of the council's Executive Committee to remain on the conference call.

ADJOURNMENT

(Agenda 2.6)

The seventy-first meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adjourned July 28, 2011, at 11:10 A.M.