



Preliminary Minutes

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Eighth Biennial Churchwide Assembly

August 11-17, 2003—Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Plenary Session Eleven

Saturday, August 16, 2003

2:00 P.M.—5:30 P.M.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called the eleventh plenary session to order at 2:03 P.M. (Central Daylight Time) on Saturday, August 16, 2003, in Halls A-C of the Midwest Airlines Center at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Ecumenical Greetings:

Roman Catholic Church

Presiding Bishop Hanson welcomed The Most Rev. Stephen E. Blaire, chair of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Bishop Hanson said that this church had a "commitment to strengthen our relationship with the Roman Catholic Church." He explained that, as a member church of the Lutheran World Federation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was just beginning to experience the fruits of the 1999 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. He expressed hope that the two church bodies might collaborate "in some fashion" to mark the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017.

Bishop Blaire said, "I feel very much at home here," because his "mother's side of the family is Lutheran." He said that the Roman Catholic Church has no "strategic plan" to identify and nurture leaders, "but it is happening." He identified several areas in which lay leadership was emerging, especially religious education and pastoral care. He added that, "it has taken 400 years for us to follow up on Martin Luther's idea of the priesthood of all the faithful, "but we are now doing better." He noted that there was a renewed emphasis in the Roman Catholic Church on how the faithful were called to service through their baptism. In his church, he said, they were developing new understandings of lay leadership, as lay people worked for renewal in the world. This has led, he added, to new understandings of ordained ministry by bishops, priests, and deacons.

Ecumenical Greetings:

United Methodist Church

Presiding Bishop Hanson said that the ELCA was involved in dialogue with five church bodies, including the United Methodist Church. He said, "the co-chairs of the dialogue, Bishop Melvin Talbert of the United Methodist Church and Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg of the ELCA's Rocky Mountain

Synod, have said that they expect the dialogue to 'further explore and discover our partnership in the Gospel, and we hope to discern a clearer vision of our common discipleship' and their 'hope for full communion between our two churches.'" Bishop Hanson welcomed Bishop Donald A. Ott, coordinator of the United Methodist Church's Initiative on Children and Poverty, to bring a greeting.

Bishop Ott responded to the challenge to offer examples of ways in which his church is identifying and nurturing lay leaders by noting that he has come to a new appreciation of ways in which Christian leaders "must live the life to which they are calling others." He noted that in each worship service in his tradition ordained leaders are expected "to issue an invitation to discipleship." He also said that the church must "insist on integrity, excellence, and passion" on the part of all leaders. "God longs for us to share the gifts of the Spirit."

Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 28-29.)

Presiding Bishop Hanson noted that he had earlier told the assembly that the ELCA would have the opportunity to "become part of the changing landscape of ecumenism" by becoming one of the founding members of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. He welcomed to the dais the Rev. Randall R. Lee, director of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, and the Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America.

Pr. Lee indicated that the proposal for the ELCA to become a founding partner in Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. presented "a truly historic moment," because it "represents the beginning phase of creating a new ecumenical organization" to "strengthen our Christian witness in the world."

Pr. Granberg-Michaelson read a passage from 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, and said that Christian Churches Together provided an opportunity for all participating churches "that we may drink of one Spirit." This new organization, he said, would represent "a broader fellowship" than possible through the existing organizations of the National Council of Churches of Christ, the National Association of Evangelicals, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He noted that the United States is one of the few countries where historic Protestants, Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, Evangelicals, and ethnic churches do not relate in some way under one umbrella. Christian Churches Together would provide the framework for a "more inclusive" expression of the body of Christ. He reported that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Moravian Church are "now on board" in the new organization. During the 2004-2005 biennium other Christian churches would consider affirming partnership in this new venture, he said, and when 25 churches have become partners, the new venture would be launched.

Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Lowell G. Almen, secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to introduce the recommendation of the Church Council.

Moved;

- Seconded:**
1. To welcome with gratitude the proposed formation of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. as an avenue for fostering Christian evangelism faithful to the proclamation of the Gospel;
 2. To affirm the importance of drawing into conversation a larger group of Christians than those now represented in various organizations, for the purpose of fostering deeper expressions of unity in Christ; and
 3. To declare the acceptance by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of the invitation to participate as an “historic Protestant” church body in the creation of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. as a way “to create new levels of relationships and actions that offer a shared witness for Christ to the world.”

Mr. Lyall A. Schwarzkopf [Minneapolis Area Synod] proposed an amendment.

Moved;

- Seconded:**
- To work together with participating churches while the ELCA’s CCT representatives refrain from signing any item supporting or opposing social issues.

Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Rebecca S. Larson, executive director of the Division for Church in Society, to explain how the ELCA addressed social concerns in ecumenical settings. Pr. Larson said that she appreciated the intention of the motion but did not believe that it was necessary. She said that any time the ELCA or its representatives spoke on such issues, they did so in keeping with the ELCA’s social statements. This church, she said, is “exceedingly careful” in every ecumenical consortium.

Mr. Schwarzkopf said that he appreciated this position, but had offered his motion to provide further assurance.

The Rev. Serena S. Sellers [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] opposed the amendment because she understood that in ecumenical gatherings all decisions were made “by consensus” and that the ELCA could not be forced to adopt any position.

The Rev. Jon S. Enslin [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin] opposed the amendment because it could render ELCA representatives unable to speak on issues in which the ELCA had taken a position.

The Rev. Michael A. Harris [Florida-Bahamas Synod] moved to end debate on matters before the assembly. The motion was adopted without discussion.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Vote Required
Yes-801; No-157
To move the previous question on all matters before the house.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Yes-163; No-800

To work together with participating churches while the ELCA’s CCT representatives refrain from signing any item supporting or opposing social issues.

Assembly

Action

CA03.06.25

Yes-918; No-48

To welcome with gratitude the proposed formation of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. as an avenue for fostering Christian evangelism faithful to the proclamation of the Gospel;

To affirm the importance of drawing into conversation a larger group of Christians than those now represented in various organizations, for the purpose of fostering deeper expressions of unity in Christ; and

To declare the acceptance by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of the invitation to participate as an “historic Protestant” church body in the creation of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. as a way “to create new levels of relationships and actions that offer a shared witness for Christ to the world.”

Bishop Hanson asked the assembly to stand and sing the hymn, “Rise, Shine, You People” in gratitude for the deepening unity we have in Christ.

Report of the Memorials Committee

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI)

Bishop Hanson called on Ms. Judy Biffle and Mr. Brian D. Rude, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, to lead the assembly in consideration of several memorials.

Category E13: Composition of the Church Council

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 70-74.)

Ms. Biffle introduced the recommendation of the Memorials Committee:

Moved;

Seconded:

To receive the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod regarding synodical election of Church Council members; and

To decline to begin the process to amend the ELCA constitution as requested by the synod, but

to affirm the action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (CC03.04.21) related to this issue:

To acknowledge with gratitude the memorial received by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly from the Minneapolis Area Synod, and especially the synod's expressed concern for building trust in and commitment to the global and domestic outreach efforts of this church;

To underscore the extensive study and deliberation on the size, nature, and role of the Church Council in the process that led to the formation of the ELCA, and in the ongoing life of this church, including considerable consultation in response to the 2001 memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod;

To affirm that the current model of the Church Council as the board of directors of the churchwide organization—with 37 voting members, including the four officers, plus nine advisory bishops and two youth advisors—provides an effective deliberative and decision-making body;

To ask planners of synodical assemblies to find ways to give greater visibility to members of the Church Council, especially in those synods from which council members come;

To request that the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council in consultation with the Department for Synodical Relations explore the possibility of:

- A systematic pattern for ongoing contact by council members with synodical bishops and vice presidents, including a possible meeting once a year with Synod Councils in assigned synods; and
- A plan for a biennial synodical-churchwide consultation of all officers-jointly planned by synodical and churchwide representatives-for exploration of developing issues and examination of current needs;

To direct that the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee examine the continuing resolutions related to council committees and propose changes that would foster greater understanding and appropriate involvement in decision-making on the overall program of the churchwide organization; and

To encourage planners of synodical events to provide opportunities for full-time officers and executive directors of divisions, as well as other senior executive staff, to be present at synodical events as program participants and resource people to build relationships and foster greater mutual understanding.

Ms. Biffle noted that recommendation of the Memorials Committee regarding Category E13 was before the assembly, and expressed the committee's concern that a Church Council of 65 members would effectively force decisions into smaller groups.

Bishop Peter Rogness [Saint Paul Area Synod] moved a substitute resolution:

**Moved;
Seconded:**

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, on its last day of deliberation, having pulled from *en bloc* recommendation for non-approval a resolution calling for the recomposition of the ELCA's church council, and specifically asked the Church Council to give it further consideration; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 assembly discussion expressed urgency over possibilities of improved connections between churchwide, synods, and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the January 5, 2003 consultation referred to in 2003 CWA materials (VI, p. 72), amid a variety of views, expressed agreement that further action would best be considered following conclusions of the Strategic Planning process and its implications for structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, we stand today faced with the convergence of several factors calling for us to find ways to be efficient, connected, and interdependent, including:

- a strategic plan that anticipates clearer focus and internal restructuring around the five strategic directions;
- decreasing mission support;
- an assembly in 2005 at which time decisions around sexuality will surely test the strength of the unity of this church; and

WHEREAS, a church council composed of one member elected by each synod (plus the four officers), given the responsibility of oversight of the entire churchwide ministry in place of separate unit governance boards would result in:

- substantial cost savings¹;
- a governance board selected by elections that would include participation by every clergy and congregation voting at synod assemblies;
- far closer coordination and accountability for the various programmatic and administrative units of the church;
- a much greater ability to be responsive to priorities and changes within the life of the church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2003 churchwide assembly reaffirm the request of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly that consideration be given to such a synodically-composed church council, including the council assuming oversight of the ministry of the churchwide units:

This assembly encourages Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson to consider the advantages of such governance adjustments as he brings recommendations this fall to the church council for the implementation of the strategic plans; and

¹ Current governance costs (church council of 37 members, 2 youth advisors, 9 advisory bishops; plus 170 persons on six division boards and two steering committees) is between \$335,000 and \$395,000. A church council of 69 members (plus 2 youth and nine bishops) would cost \$173,000. An additional day would cost \$14,000.

This assembly directs the Church Council to prepare such a governance model for discussion and response by 2004 synod assemblies.

Bp. Rogness said that his proposal was “built on the presumption that this church needed to build better connections” between synods and the churchwide structure. It would, he said, provide synod assemblies better means to address difficult issues.

The Rev. G. Scott Cady [New England Synod] opposed the substitute resolution on grounds of “issues of inclusivity.” He said that the Church Council could easily become a group where the overwhelming numbers of members would be “middle-aged white guys.”

Bishop Craig E. Johnson [Minneapolis Area Synod] spoke in favor of the substitute, saying that it would provide “more organic connections,” because council members would be on the territory of every synod. He also noted that many of the ELCA colleges had large boards and that they worked wonderfully.

Bishop Gregory R. Pile [Allegheny Synod] said that “a larger council will effectively centralize power and decision making.” He added that in 15 years his synod had not had anyone serve on the Church Council, but he believed his synod had been well represented by those who had served.

Mr. David E. Laden [Saint Paul Area Synod] suggested that mission support had lagged because there was a decline in the sense of connectedness that members had with churchwide issues. At those times that his synod has had a member of the council, he believed there was a greater sense of connectedness.

The Rev. Janine G. Rew-Werling [South Dakota Synod] asked the presiding bishop to have placed on the video screens the footnote to Bishop Rogness’s resolution indicating the projected cost savings. The bishop arranged to have the information projected on the screens.

The Rev. Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane [New Jersey Synod] said the ELCA’s governing documents were assembled “very carefully.” He said that he believed the present structure was working and that he opposed piecemeal changes and “tinkering.”

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad [Northeastern Iowa Synod] said that his Synod Council had been better informed because of the involvement of Ms. Sally Young on the Church Council. She was able to explain Church Council deliberations to the synod and take synod concerns back to the Church Council. He said the problem in communications was “a systemic problem, not a people problem.”

Bishop Paul R. Swanson [Oregon Synod] requested that the full text of the resolution appear on the video screen.

A voting member spoke in opposition to the resolution, suggesting that synods were not making full use of those who already served on the Church Council and the various boards of divisions.

Bishop Martin D. Wells [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] said that those who had been concerned about the distance between members and the churchwide organization had hoped for “one signal” that communications “were opening up.” He noted that two prior resolutions that might have opened up communications had been defeated, and he expressed the hope that this resolution would pass.

Mr. Jon W. Tehven [Northeastern Iowa Synod] asked whether the intent of [Bishop Rogness’s] resolution was to have the Church Council take the place of the division boards. Bishop Rogness said that it was.

The Rev. Richard A. Cavens [Alaska Synod] asked whether this proposal would cut into available mission funds. Bishop Rogness responded by saying that the proposed reductions in costs necessary for governance would “free up” funds for mission.

Mr. Ronn Williamson [Minneapolis Area Synod] said that he opposed “piecemeal” changes and was particularly concerned that the Churchwide Assembly would no longer elect the Church Council.

Bishop Robert D. Berg [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] supported the proposal, believing that it would provide a clearer means for Church Council members to relate to the synods.

The Rev. Harald G. Bringsjord [Northwestern Minnesota Synod] asked for a copy of the proposed resolution in writing. Bishop Hanson indicated that the best possible option currently available would be to keep the resolution scrolling on the video screens.

The Rev. Fred S. Opalinski, a member of the Church Council from Latrobe, Pennsylvania, said that the proposal would “change the ethos of the council,” because members would vote as representatives of their synods. He appreciated that he was able to serve on the Church Council in order to serve the whole church and not just to represent the concerns of his own synod.

Mr. John F. Gruber [Greater Milwaukee Synod] noted that under the proposal elections for the Church Council would be improved, because synod members would be acquainted with the nominees for whom they were voting. He added that he knew virtually none of the nominees for the various offices he voted on as a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly.

Ms. Faith A. Ashton [North Carolina Synod] noted that some of the ELCA division and department boards required special expertise. She expressed the view that experience and good stewardship should be as important criteria as simply numbers in electing those who serve.

Ms. Sheila M. Flucke [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] said that voting to maintain the status quo would not resolve the significant level of disconnect that existed.

The Rev. George E. Keck [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] moved to end debate on the matter.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-875; No-107

To move the previous question.

Bishop Hanson proceeded with the vote on the motion to substitute.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Yes-428; No-554

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, on its last day of deliberation, having pulled from *en bloc* recommendation for non-approval a resolution calling for the recomposition of the ELCA’s Church Council,

and specifically asked the Church Council to give it further consideration; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 assembly discussion expressed urgency over possibilities of improved connections between churchwide, synods, and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the January 5, 2003 consultation referred to in 2003 CWA materials (VI, p. 72), amid a variety of views, expressed agreement that further action would best be considered following conclusions of the Strategic Planning process and its implications for structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, we stand today faced with the convergence of several factors calling for us to find ways to be efficient, connected, and interdependent, including:

- a strategic plan that anticipates clearer focus and internal restructuring around the five strategic directions;
- decreasing mission support;
- an assembly in 2005 at which time decisions around sexuality will surely test the strength of the unity of this church; and

WHEREAS, a church council composed of one member elected by each synod (plus the four officers), given the responsibility of oversight of the entire churchwide ministry in place of separate unit governance boards would result in:

- substantial cost savings²;
- a governance board selected by elections that would include participation by every clergy and congregation voting at synod assemblies;
- far closer coordination and accountability for the various programmatic and administrative units of the church;
- a much greater ability to be responsive to priorities and changes within the life of the church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2003 churchwide assembly reaffirm the request of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly that consideration be given to such a synodically-composed church council, including the council assuming oversight of the ministry of the churchwide units:

This assembly encourages Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson to consider the advantages of such governance adjustments as he brings recommendations this fall to the church council for the implementation of the strategic plans; and

This assembly directs the Church Council to prepare such a governance model for discussion and response by 2004 synod assemblies.

Bishop Hanson indicated that the recommendation from the Memorials Committee was again before the assembly.

The Rev. Bradley W. Miller [Southeastern Iowa Synod] said that he believed that the ELCA was “on the verge of schism” and that “we face great conflict in the next two years. He urged that the voting members not return home without taking measures to improve representation.

Mr. Neil J. Bullock [Metropolitan Chicago Synod] moved to end debate on the matter.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

**Assembly
Action
CA03.06.26**

**Two-Thirds Vote Required
Voting Cards**

To move the previous question.

Yes-643; No-320

To receive the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod regarding synodical election of Church Council members; and

To decline to begin the process to amend the ELCA constitution as requested by the synod, but to affirm the action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (CC03.04.21) related to this issue:

To acknowledge with gratitude the memorial received by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly from the Minneapolis Area Synod, and especially the synod’s expressed concern for building trust in and commitment to the global and domestic outreach efforts of this church;

To underscore the extensive study and deliberation on the size, nature, and role of the Church Council in the process that led to the formation of the ELCA, and in the ongoing life of this church, including considerable consultation in response to the 2001 memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod;

To affirm that the current model of the Church Council as the board of directors of the churchwide organization—with 37 voting members, including the four officers, plus nine advisory bishops and two youth advisors—provides an effective deliberative and decision-making body;

To ask planners of synodical assemblies to find ways to give greater visibility to members of the Church Council, especially in those synods from which council members come;

To request that the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council in consultation

² Current governance costs (church council of 37 members, 2 youth advisors, 9 advisory bishops; plus 170 persons on six division boards and two steering committees) is between \$335,000 and \$395,000. A church council of 69 members (plus 2 youth and nine bishops) would cost \$173,000. An additional day would cost \$14,000.

with the Department for Synodical Relations explore the possibility of:

a. A systematic pattern for ongoing contact by council members with synodical bishops and vice presidents, including a possible meeting once a year with Synod Councils in assigned synods; and

b. A plan for a biennial synodical-churchwide consultation of all officers-jointly planned by synodical and churchwide representatives-for exploration of developing issues and examination of current needs;

To direct that the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee examine the continuing resolutions related to council committees and propose changes that would foster greater understanding and appropriate involvement in decision-making on the overall program of the churchwide organization; and

To encourage planners of synodical events to provide opportunities for full-time officers and executive directors of divisions, as well as other senior executive staff, to be present at synodical events as program participants and resource people to build relationships and foster greater mutual understanding.

Category E7: ELCA Studies on Sexuality Time Line

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, page 60-63.)

Mr. Rude introduced the recommendation of the Memorials Committee.

Moved;

Seconded: To receive the memorials of the Nebraska Synod, Central/Southern Illinois Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Allegheny Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to the time line for the decision by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on the blessing of committed same-gender relationships and the ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships;

To acknowledge the continuing discussion throughout this church in response to the ELCA

Studies on Sexuality, "Journey Together Faithfully: A Call to Study and Dialogue," and to acknowledge the need for continuing conversations, dialogue, study, and discernment of these issues;

To support the ongoing work of the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, as they continue to address and respond to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly resolutions on the blessing of committed same-gender relationships, the ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships, and development of a social statement on human sexuality; and

To decline to alter the time line established by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.

Bishop Carol S. Hendrix [Lower Susquehanna Synod] moved to amend the final paragraph of the recommendation.

Moved;

Seconded: To amend the final paragraph by deletion and addition:

To ~~decline to~~ alter the time line established by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly by adopting in 2007 a statement on human sexuality prior to the resolution in 2007 of any specific decisions concerning the blessing of committed same-gender relationships and the ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships.

Bp. Hendrix stated that she did not bring this amendment to rescind any prior action but to allow the study on human sexuality to inform specific decisions related to the blessing of same-gender relationships and the ordination of candidates. To do otherwise, she suggested, "puts the cart before the horse."

Ms. June C. Ericsson [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod] said that she opposed further delays, because gay and lesbian people of her acquaintance had asked her to stand with them in affirming their desire to be a full part of the church. She said she did not want to go home with news of another delay.

The Rev. George E. Keck spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that part of the genius of the ELCA was that it worked on social statements before taking action. He also noted that he had learned from the Rev. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, that partner churches in the LWF would be grateful if the ELCA took sufficient time to consider this issue.

The Rev. Jayne M. Thompson [Central States Synod] spoke against the amendment on the basis of history and process, noting that the ELCA had been working on this issue for 15 years without moving close to resolution. She pointed to a contradiction that existed when churches offered a "full welcome" to gay and lesbian people but then denied roster status to those in committed relationships.

Mr. Micah J. Garnett [Lower Susquehanna Synod] urged the assembly to allow the necessary time to complete the sexuality study, not wanting it to be rushed through before it had been carefully considered.

Mr. Ronn Williamson [Minneapolis Area Synod] asked whether the task force would be able to complete its work by the deadline.

Bishop Margaret G. Payne [New England Synod], speaking as chair of the task force preparing the sexuality statement, noted that the task force was constituted to do the will of the assembly as it prepared for 2005. She asked whether the church would be ready to make a decision by that time.

Bishop Donald J. McCoid [Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod] said that he was sensitive to those who were waiting for a decision, but also sensitive to those who were raising serious questions. He spoke in favor of a delay.

Bishop Stephen P. Bouman [Metropolitan New York Synod] opposed the amendment, saying, "We need to do what we said we would do." Noting that the assembly theme was "For the Healing of the World," he said that the 2003 Churchwide Assembly needed to offer healing to that portion of the world that included gay and lesbian people.

Bishop Gregory R. Pile [Allegheny Synod] noted that many in the church "feel very uneasy" about the possibility of blessing same-gender relationships and of ordaining gay and lesbian candidates. The amendment, he said, offered the opportunity to provide a strong theological foundation before making difficult decisions. He reported on a conversation with a Lutheran bishop from Kenya who expressed grave concerns about actions the ELCA might take, if such actions were not grounded in the Scriptures and the Lutheran confessions.

Bishop Robert A. Rimbo [Southeast Michigan Synod] said that the ELCA had "entered into a covenant with the gay, lesbian, transgendered community" to take action on these questions in 2005. He opposed a delay.

Bishop Michael J. Neils [Grand Canyon Synod] indicated that not allowing sufficient time to study issues of sexuality would force the church to enter the study as though it were "floor debate." Too many people, he said, would fight so that their side would prevail, rather than taking the time to listen to all sides of the issue.

Mr. Leonard C. Weiser Jr. [Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod] opposed any further delay. Saying that he is a gay man, he noted that "the pain is a lot to bear," as this issue was continually delayed.

The Rev. W. Stevens Shipman [Upper Susquehanna Synod] expressed concern that many who were speaking to this amendment "were presuming a certain outcome to this study." He urged the assembly not to forget its focus on other important issues, such as evangelism.

Mr. Daniel S. Anderson [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] said that he was a gay man and was impressed with the process and looked forward to the release of the study guide from the task force in September 2003. He urged a continuation of the established time line.

The Rev. Christopher B. Enstad [Minneapolis Area Synod] said that he had come away from an open hearing on the study "changed." He urged the ELCA to "find ways to hang together in our disagreements."

Ms. Ellie Pedersen [Central States Synod] suggested that the church should delay action on these issues no more than it would delay action on feeding hungry people, while awaiting a study on hunger.

Mr. Raymond A. Alt [Western North Dakota Synod] moved to end debate on the amendment.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

**Two-Thirds Vote Required
Yes-776; No-197**

To move the previous question.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Defeated:**

Yes-462; No-526

To amend the final paragraph by deletion and addition:

To ~~decline to~~ alter the time line established by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly by adopting in 2007 a statement on human sexuality prior to the resolution in 2007 of any specific decisions concerning the blessing of committed same-gender relationships and the ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships.

Bishop Hanson said that the recommendation from the Memorials Committee was before the assembly.

Mr. Henry L. Harms [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] spoke in favor of the recommendation, expressing a desire for no further delays in the time line.

The Rev. Harvey L. Nelson [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] moved to close debate.

**Moved;
Seconded:**

Two-Thirds Voted Required

To move the previous question.

Bishop Neils asked what would happen if the recommendation from the Memorials Committee would be defeated. Bishop Hanson responded that the action of the 2001 assembly would remain in effect and that this assembly would simply take no action in response to memorials on this issue.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

**Two-Thirds Voted Required
Yes-853; No-123**

To move the previous question.

**Assembly
Action**

Yes-687; No-278

CA03.06.27

To receive the memorials of the Nebraska Synod, Central/Southern Illinois Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Allegheny Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to the time line for the decision by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on the blessing of committed same-gender relationships and the

ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships;

To acknowledge the continuing discussion throughout this church in response to the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, “Journey Together Faithfully: A Call to Study and Dialogue,” and to acknowledge the need for continuing conversations, dialogue, study, and discernment of these issues;

To support the ongoing work of the ELCA Studies on Sexuality, as they continue to address and respond to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly resolutions on the blessing of committed same-gender relationships, the ordination of approved candidates in committed same-gender relationships, and development of a social statement on human sexuality; and

To decline to alter the time line established by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.

2004-2005 Budget Proposal

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 31-72.)

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Ms. Linda J. Brown, chair of the Church Council’s Budget and Finance Committee; Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and the Rev. Charles S. Miller, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, to join him for the discussion and vote on the 2004-2005 budget proposal.

Bishop Hanson called on Ms. Brown to read the budget recommendation from the Church Council.

**Moved;
Seconded:**

2004 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 2004 current fund fiscal year income proposal of \$84,310,000; and

To approve a 2004 World Hunger income proposal of \$16,250,000.

2005 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 2005 current fund fiscal year income proposal of \$85,140,000; and

To approve a 2005 World Hunger income proposal of \$16,500,000.

Spending Authorization:

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates; and

To acknowledge and affirm the responsibility of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to begin in

2004 an alignment of the churchwide spending plan, staffing, and structure with “Faithful Yet Changing: The Plan for Mission in the ELCA,” limited to the parameters of the revised income estimates.

Mr. Luis Rodriguez [Southwestern Texas Synod] moved to suspend the rules of the assembly regarding the deadlines for submission of an amendment.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Defeated:**

**Two-Thirds Vote Required
Yes-177; No-609**

To suspend the rules of procedure for the assembly.

Mr. Leon T. Philpot [Eastern North Dakota Synod] moved to amend the recommendation.

**Moved;
Seconded:**

To amend the spending authorization by addition of a new second paragraph:

To direct the Church Council to dedicate 50 percent of all fiscal year 2003-2005 income in excess of the amount approved by the 2001 and 2003 assemblies to those initiatives of any division, office, department, or unit of the ELCA that advance and support the youth and family ministry strategic goals and planned actions of the ELCA. The amount shall not exceed \$1 million per fiscal year.

Mr. Philpot described his proposal as not an expense but an investment in youth, young adults, and children.

Mr. Luke E. Wilson [Southeastern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment noting that the words “youth and family” did not appear in the budget.

Ms. Brown spoke in opposition on behalf of the Church Council’s Budget and Finance Committee. She said that she was not opposed to additional spending for youth and family ministry, but believed that adding items to the budget in this fashion was “not healthy.” She said that program initiatives belonged in the budget.

The Rev. Christian B. Meier [Northeastern Minnesota Synod] asked how budget surpluses were normally handled.

Ms. Brown called attention to a process noted on page 32 of Section IV of the *2003 Pre-Assembly Report*. Treasure Jackson-Skelton said that, should a surplus develop, those funds would normally be directed to unfunded mandates and to the creation of a necessary operating reserve.

The Rev. Wendell L. Hendershott Jr. [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod] asked for the text of the proposed amendment to the budget proposal to be displayed on the video screen.

The Rev. Benjamin T. Carlsen [Eastern North Dakota Synod] challenged the church to increase its giving.

Bishop Wm. Christopher Boerger [Northwest Washington Synod] suggested that youth and family monies were better spent at the congregational, synodical, or regional levels.

Mr. John C. Mickelson [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] moved to end debate on the matter.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

**Two-Thirds Vote Required
Yes-809; No-48**

To move the previous question.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Defeated:**

Yes-206; No-674

To amend the spending authorization by addition of a new second paragraph:

To direct the Church Council to dedicate 50 percent of all fiscal year 2003-2005 income in excess of the amount approved by the 2001 and 2003 assemblies to those initiatives of any division, office, department, or unit of the ELCA that advance and support the youth and family ministry strategic goals and planned actions of the ELCA. The amount shall not exceed \$1 million per fiscal year.

Bishop Margarita Martinez [Caribbean Synod] moved to amend the spending authorization.

**Moved;
Seconded:**

To amend the spending authorization by addition of a new paragraph:

To affirm the ELCA's commitment to be an antiracist, multicultural church by referring to the Church Council the affirmation of the Assembly to assign budget allocations that reflect the priority commitment for multicultural ministries such as: anti-racism training, leadership development, scholarships for seminarians, and new missions.

Bishop Martinez expressed the concern that declining revenues would hinder recruitment of minority candidates for ministry.

Ms. Grace El-Yateem [Metropolitan New York Synod] supported the ELCA's initial goal of a full 10 percent of membership being persons of color or of primary language other than English and urged continued efforts toward reaching that goal. She compared the ELCA's budget process to household budgeting, saying that when money is tight, priorities needed to be set. She believed this concern should remain a priority.

Ms. Carol K. Mahnke [Southeastern Iowa Synod] spoke in opposition to the amendment, noting that there was "crisis after crisis after crisis" in the world. She said she preferred not to single out certain ministries for special consideration but to enable the ELCA to respond quickly to crises as the need arose.

The Rev. Stephan M. Kienberger [Caribbean Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that it expressed support for the strategic plans and the evangelism strategy adopted at this assembly. It sent a message, he said, "that this is important."

Mr. Derek J. Dozer [Southern Ohio Synod] moved to end debate on the matter.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

Yes-777; No-109

To move the previous question.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Defeated:**

Yes-415; No-470

To amend the spending authorization by addition of a new paragraph:

To affirm the ELCA's commitment to be an antiracist, multicultural church by referring to the Church Council the affirmation of the Assembly to assign budget allocations that reflect the priority commitment for multicultural ministries such as: anti-racism training, leadership development, scholarships for seminarians, and new missions.

Ms. Connie Frankenfeld [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] asked for clarification as to whether the proposed budget included allocations for the evangelism strategy as it was adopted. Pr. Miller referred the assembly to page 37 of Section IV. He noted that, as the budget was developed, the outcome of the assembly action could not be known. He indicated that the budget process as it moved forward would be "redone" in light of assembly actions, including the evangelism strategy.

Mr. J. Everett Wick [Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod] expressed concern that only 6.2 percent of the budget was allocated for investment in stewardship. This was too small, he said, in light of the ELCA's ongoing fiscal problems.

Mr. Earl L. Mummert, a member of the Church Council, expressed his concern that "we act as if we were a poor church." He estimated that the 5 million members of the ELCA have a combined income of \$125 billion annually. In terms of percentage of income contributed to the church, ELCA members ranked 31st among Lutheran church bodies worldwide, he said.

Mr. John Schreiber [Southeast Michigan Synod] moved to end debate on the matter.

**Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:**

**Two-Thirds Vote Required
Yes-836; No-45**

To move the previous question.

**Assembly
Action**

Yes-858; No-48

CA03.06.28

2004 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 2004 current fund fiscal year income proposal of \$84,310,000; and

To approve a 2004 World Hunger income proposal of \$16,250,000.

2005 Budget Proposal:

To approve a 2005 current fund fiscal year income proposal of \$85,140,000; and

To approve a 2005 World Hunger income proposal of \$16,500,000.

Spending Authorization:

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after

periodic review of revised income estimates; and

To acknowledge and affirm the responsibility of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to begin in 2004 an alignment of the churchwide spending plan, staffing, and structure with “Faithful Yet Changing: The Plan for Mission in the ELCA,” limited to the parameters of the revised income estimates

Report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII.)

Presiding Bishop Hanson invited Ms. Sally Young, co-chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, to move forward with a discussion of resolutions from voting members.

Bishop Peter Rogness [Saint Paul Area Synod] moved to amend the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Assembly. The amendment was adopted without discussion.

Moved; **Two-Thirds Vote Required**
Seconded; **Yes-589; No-220**
Carried: To suspend the rules of procedure and to restrict debate to three speeches, for and against, on each issue before the assembly.

Mr. Allen D. Christensen [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] moved adoption of Motions D, E, H, and L *en bloc*. The motion was carried without discussion.

Moved; **Yes-872; No-56**
Seconded;
Carried: To consider Motions D, E, H, and L *en bloc* without separate amendment or debate.

Ms. Young subsequently introduced as an *en bloc* action the adoption of Motions D, E, H, and L. The motions were adopted without discussion.

Moved; **Yes-927; No-12**
Seconded;
Carried: To adopt Motions D, E, H, and L *en bloc*.

Motion D: Response to Denial of Visas to Delegates to the 2003 Lutheran World Federation Assembly

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VIII, page 4.)

Motion D was submitted by Bishop Rolf P. Wangberg [Northwestern Minnesota Synod].

Assembly **[En Bloc]**
Action
CA03.06.29 WHEREAS, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has reported that approximately 50 people from 13 different countries were unable to attend the LWF Assembly in Winnipeg, Canada, July 21-31,

2003, because they were unable to obtain Canadian visas; and

WHEREAS, all those who did not receive visas were exclusively residents of the southern hemisphere; and

WHEREAS, many of those not receiving visas were from some of the poorest countries and included in particular women, youth, and members of indigenous and marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, the denial of visas prevented many members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) from experiencing the joyful healing of the world that comes through worshiping and communing with brothers and sisters in faith from around the world; and

WHEREAS, it is especially important that the ELCA—a close neighbor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)—based in the United States, the closest neighbor to Canada, add its voice to that of Lutherans from throughout the world; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA request its presiding bishop, in consultation with National Bishop Raymond Schultz of the ELCIC, to express to the Canadian government, through appropriate diplomatic means, the ELCA’s disappointment and concern over the denial of visas to delegates to the Lutheran World Federation’s 2003 Assembly.

Motion E: Appeal for Human Rights in Laos

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 5.)

Motion E was submitted by Ms. Janet E. Thompson [Saint Paul Area Synod].

Assembly **[En Bloc]**
Action
CA03.06.30

WHEREAS, ELCA pastor Naw-Karl Mua (Light of Light Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn.) was imprisoned in Laos from June 3 to July 9, 2003, as reported in both *The Lutheran* (August and September 2003 issues) and in national secular media; and

WHEREAS, this became an occasion for people in Minnesota and throughout the country to become aware of the oppression of the Hmong people in Laos; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Churchwide Assembly express our common concern

that the basic human rights of all people of the world be protected. In that concern we convey the following to the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

a. We welcome the release on July 9, 2003, of Naw-Karl Mua, ethnic Hmong, U.S. national, and ELCA pastor; and of Thierry Falise, Belgian national, and Vincent Reynaud, French national.

b. We appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of Pa Fue Khang, Thao Moua, and Char Yang and other ethnic Hmong Lao nationals who were imprisoned and tried along with Naw-Karl Mua in a court procedure which the U.S. Department of State has determined did not meet international standards of justice.

c. We express concern about reported ill treatment of Hmong Lao nationals, and ask that they be given access to lawyers, medical treatment, and trials that meet international standards of justice.

d. We appeal to the Lao government to allow access to ethnic Hmong Lao nationals by international human rights and other organizations including Amnesty International, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Relief, the Lutheran World Federation, and other religious and humanitarian agencies.

and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge members of ELCA congregations and advocacy agencies to express these same concerns to U.S. and Lao government officials.

Motion H: Rural Ministry

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 8.)

Motion H was submitted by Mr. Steven E. Koenig [Nebraska Synod].

Assembly

Action

CA03.06.31

[En Bloc]

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly approved a plan for establishing a rural and small town ministries desk; and

WHEREAS, the desk for rural ministry resources and networking is housed in the Division for Outreach, with assistance from the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Division for Church in Society; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly referred a request to expand the staff of the desk for rural ministry resources and networking to the Church Council; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, to affirm the work and leadership of the desk for rural ministry resources and networking; and be it further

RESOLVED, to call on all units of the ELCA to realize the vitality of the rural community and acknowledge the messages coming from the affinity groups of the ELCA Small Town and Rural (STaR) Ministry Alliance; and be it further

RESOLVED, to encourage the Church Council to remember the call for a rural desk by previous Churchwide Assemblies as the evangelism strategy and strategic directions are implemented.

Motion L: Welcome for All God's People

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 12.)

Motion L was submitted by the Rev. Sandra Carlson Alexis [Delaware-Maryland Synod].

Assembly

Action

CA03.06.32

[En Bloc]

WHEREAS, Galatians 3 asserts "all of you are one in Christ Jesus"; and

WHEREAS, the Rev. Ishmael Noko correctly noted in his comments to the 2003 Churchwide Assembly that disabled people may have access to churches, but are not really included; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA reaffirm its commitment to those with mental and physical disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA continue to encourage pastors and congregations to provide a place of true welcome for all God's people.

Bishop Rev. Allan C. Bjornberg [Rocky Mountain Synod] observed that the assembly had spent time talking about issues of poverty and justice. He called attention to the "faceless,

nameless, immigrant, refugee people who serve our meals and clean our toilets.” He urged those in attendance to offer generous gratuities to those who had served them, both as a matter of justice and as a witness to faith.

The Rev. Kenneth L. Mikulasek [Sierra Pacific Synod] moved to amend the agenda.

Moved;

Seconded;

Yes-257; No-654

Defeated:

To recess at 6:00 P.M. and to resume tomorrow morning.

Motion F: Call for Suspension of Full-Communion with The Episcopal Church

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VIII.)

Ms. Young asked the assembly to deal next with the committee’s recommendation regarding Motion F, which called for suspension of full communion with The Episcopal Church. The Committee of Reference and Counsel offered the following rationale:

“Called to Common Mission” (CCM), the document that established a relationship between this church and The Episcopal Church, makes clear that decisions regarding who may serve as an ordained minister remain a matter of the internal policies of each church body (CCM, paragraph 22). Ordained ministers who wished to serve in the other church body must abide by the standards for ministerial conduct established by the receiving church body. Thus decisions made by a full-communion partner church on standards for ordained ministry were not binding on this church.

The resolution also made assertions in its “WHEREAS” clauses that did not adequately reflect decisions made by The Episcopal Church at its General Convention in August 2003. Despite reports made in the secular media about those decisions, The Episcopal Church did not “approve the ordination of people living in openly homosexual relationships.” Nor did the General Convention take an action on behalf of the whole Episcopal Church to approve “the blessing of homosexual relationships by Episcopal priests.” Finally, the sixth “WHEREAS” clause asserted that it would not be appropriate for this church to be in a relationship of full communion with a church body that had made a decision on the ordination of non-celibate gay and lesbian people and on the blessing of same-gender unions. Other church bodies with which this church shares a relationship of full communion have made decisions, both for and against, on these matters. Any decisions related to matters of human sexuality to be made by this church would be determined according to the internal processes of this church.

The Committee of Reference and Counsel recommended that the motion not be adopted.

Mr. Harvey J. Hengst [Southwestern Texas Synod] moved to substitute Motion F for the committee recommendation.

Moved;

Seconded:

WHEREAS, The Episcopal Church U.S.A. General Convention has voted to approve the ordination of people living in openly homosexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, The Episcopal Church U.S.A. General Convention has approved the blessing of homosexual relationships by Episcopal priests; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church U.S.A. have entered into a special relationship through the “Called to Common Mission”; and

WHEREAS, The Episcopal Church U.S.A. acted in a unilateral way to determine moral doctrine by legislative actions, without consultation with other full communion church bodies; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed to doing a fair and balanced study on human sexuality with the final report coming to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly for action; and

WHEREAS, to remain in a full relationship with a church that has already made its decision regarding the ordination of people who are openly homosexual and the appropriateness of blessing same-sex relationships would hinder the fair and balanced process of the ELCA study and be tantamount to our making a de facto agreement with that body before the study begins; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America temporarily suspend the full communion relationship with The Episcopal Church U.S.A. until after the conclusion of the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality are completed and the ELCA has made a decision regarding the ordination of openly homosexual pastors and bishops and until a decision regarding the blessing of same-sex relationships has been determined.

Mr. Hengst said that, as the ELCA considered issues related to homosexuality, “we do not want to be influenced by the actions of The Episcopal Church.” He urged the ELCA “to complete our own study first.”

Bishop Ronald B. Warren [Southeastern Synod] opposed the motion, saying that the ELCA “has a gift for ecumenical bridge building.” Noting that trust was important in ecumenical relationships, he suggested that the proposed action would break trust with an ecumenical partner.

Ms. Marjorie B. Streck [North Carolina Synod] moved to end debate on the matter.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-847; No-77

To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Yes-139; No-832

RESOLVED, that the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America temporarily suspend the full communion relationship with The Episcopal Church U.S.A. until after the conclusion of the ELCA Studies on Human Sexuality are completed and the ELCA has made a decision regarding the ordination of openly homosexual pastors and bishops and until a decision regarding the blessing of same-sex relationships has been determined.

Motion A: Inclusion of Synod Vice Presidents as Voting Members to Churchwide Assembly

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report: Section VIII, page 1.)

Ms. Young noted that Motion N and Motion G had been withdrawn and stated that the next item of business would be Motion A related to inclusion of synod vice presidents as voting members to the churchwide assembly. She shared the committee's view that the assembly should defer to the authority of the synods to set their own policies in this matter and should allow flexibility to synods to deal with varied circumstances.

On behalf of the committee Ms. Young moved:

Moved;

Seconded: Recognizing potential benefits, both for the life of synods and for the quality of Churchwide Assemblies, of the regular inclusion of synodical vice presidents in the delegations of voting members, the 2003 Churchwide Assembly invites each synod to consider whether a policy to make synodical vice presidents *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly with voice and vote would be appropriate and helpful in its own circumstance.

Mr. Mark S. Helmke [Southwestern Texas Synod] moved to substitute Motion A for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Moved;

Seconded: To substitute Motion A for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

WHEREAS, the vice presidents of the synods of this church:

- are the highest elected lay leaders of the synods, working in partnership with the synod bishops;
- serve as a primary source of lay leadership in daily ministry within the church;
- provide a diverse range of talents and experiences in the mission of the church; and
- offer a unique perspective and serve a critical role in facilitating communication among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization; and

WHEREAS, many synods have realized the benefits, both to the synod and to the Churchwide Assembly, of their vice presidents attending the Churchwide Assembly as voting members; and

WHEREAS, synod practices governing participation of vice presidents as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly vary widely; and

WHEREAS, the vice presidents of 45 synods of this church, gathered as an integral part of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly, strongly endorse the concept of all synod vice presidents regularly attending each meeting of the Churchwide Assembly as voting members; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the bylaws be amended as follows:

12.41.11. [First two sentences unchanged] The synodical bishop and vice president, who ~~is~~ are *ex officio* a members of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. [Remainder of section unchanged.] and

12.41.21. The officers of this church and the bishops and vice presidents of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote.

Mr. Helmke noted that the effect of the resolution would be to add approximately 20 synodical vice presidents to future assemblies. In reality, he said, the resolution would affect fewer than six percent of the seats in the assembly.

The Rev. Michael E. Pancoast [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin] moved to end debate on the matter.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-819; No-113

To move the previous question.

The Rev. Dennis R. Creswell [East-Central Synod of Wisconsin] asked whether this resolution would increase the number of voting members at the churchwide assembly. Bishop Hanson said it would not.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Yes-519; No-391

To substitute Motion A for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

A voting member moved to end debate on the matter.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-796; No-145

To move the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-570; No-366

RESOLVED, that the bylaws be amended as follows:

12.41.11. [First two sentences unchanged] The synodical bishop and vice president, who ~~is~~ are *ex officio* a members of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. [Remainder of section unchanged.] and

12.41.21. The officers of this church and the bishops and vice presidents of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote.

Mr. Luis Rodriguez [Southwestern Texas Synod] moved to suspend the rules of procedure to allow him to offer a non-germane resolution relative to the Young Adult Convocation.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Yes-407; No-495

To suspend the rules of procedure to allow a voting member to offer a non-germane resolution.

Motion K: Racial Justice and Equality

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VIII, page 11.)

Ms. Young directed the assembly's attention to Motion K relative to racial justice and equality. She said the committee was grateful for the work of the Greater Milwaukee Synod for racial justice and reconciliation and that the committee was mindful of the ELCA's long-standing commitment to racial justice. She subsequently moved:

Moved;

Seconded: To refer Motion K to the Office of the Secretary for further consideration in planning future Churchwide Assemblies.

The Rev. Frederick K. Neu [New England Synod] explained his rationale in offering his original resolution as a means to offer support to the Greater Milwaukee Synod in its struggle for racial justice in the face of continuing problems.

The Rev. Elizabeth J. Toler [North Carolina Synod] asked the presiding bishop that, if Motion K would be referred to the secretary, whether this would be an adequate expression of the assembly's grief over the killing of four unarmed African Americans by Milwaukee police officers. Bishop Hanson said that it would, because referring the motion meant that concerns of the motion would be transmitted to the indicated people.

The Rev. Gary G. Hatcher [Northeastern Iowa Synod] expressed a concern that the assembly could not know whether or not the action of the Milwaukee police officers was justified. Noting that his son was a police officer, he observed that in the U.S. a police officer died in the line of duty every 57 hours.

The Rev. Jonathan F. Jacobs [Greater Milwaukee Synod] stated his preference for Motion K over the committee recommendation. He said that the original motion offered stronger support for racial justice and harmony. He also noted that synod ministries worked to support both victims and police officers.

Mr. Hal Colston [New England Synod] said that he too preferred the original motion and related a story of how his 17-year old son was victimized by an act of racial profiling next to his own home. He said that this nation faced "an epidemic of racial profiling."

Mr. Robert Gottschalk [Northern Great Lakes Synod] asked whether support of Motion K would mean that a Churchwide Assembly would never be held in a city with racial difficulties.

Ms. Young responded on behalf of the committee. She said that assemblies were planned years in advance and could not effectively respond to concerns as recent as the Milwaukee shootings. She said that the committee's recommendation was intended to provide guidance to the Office of the Secretary.

Assembly

Action

CA03.06.33

Yes-811; No-147

To refer Motion K to the Office of the Secretary for further consideration in planning future Churchwide Assemblies.

Motion J: Review and Revision of the Annual Congregation Report Form

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VIII, page 10.)

Ms. Young continued with consideration of Motion J relative to the annual report form for congregations. Ms. Young said the committee's goal was to make sure that the proposal in the motion would "pass through proper channels." She moved:

Moved;

Seconded:

To refer Motion J to the Division for Outreach and the Office of the Secretary, with a request that a report and possible recommendation be brought to the April 2004 meeting of the Church Council.

The Rev. David W. Shockey [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] moved to substitute Motion J for the committee recommendation.

Moved;

Seconded:

To substitute Motion J for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

WHEREAS, God deserves and this church desires excellence in all our actions to glorify God; and

WHEREAS, excellence is achieved through a continual cycle of improvement, evaluation, and action; and

WHEREAS, this church especially desires to glorify God through excellent evangelism and outreach in every aspect of the strategic directions in "Faithful Yet Changing: The Plan for Mission in the ELCA," adopted by the 2003 Churchwide Assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Church Council-in consultation with the Office of the Secretary and the Division for Outreach and with input from synods-review and revise the annual report form required of congregations in order to include new evangelism- and outreach-specific categories by which evangelism and outreach goals can be measured.

Pr. Shockey said that he offered his motion in response to earlier debate on the evangelism strategy, during which the assembly acknowledged "the need to hold ourselves accountable." The motion would accomplish this, he said, and thereby strengthen the evangelism strategy.

A voting member moved to end debate on all matters before the assembly.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Two-Thirds Voted Required
Yes-847; No-76
To move the previous question on all matters before the house.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Yes-317; No-609

To substitute Motion J for the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

RESOLVED, that the Church Council-in consultation with the Office of the Secretary and

the Division for Outreach and with input from synods-review and revise the annual report form required of congregations in order to include new evangelism- and outreach-specific categories by which evangelism and outreach goals can be measured.

Assembly

Action

Yes-886; No-50

CA03.06.34

To refer Motion J to the Division for Outreach and the Office of the Secretary, with a request that a report and possible recommendation be brought to the April 2004 meeting of the Church Council.

Bishop Hanson thanked the Reference and Counsel Committee for its hard work.

Report of the Memorials Committee

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI)

Bishop Hanson invited Ms. Judy Biffle and Mr. Brian D. Rude, co-chairs of the Memorials Committee, to continue the report of the committee.

Category E3: Representation of Congregations in Voting

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, pages 44-45.)

Ms. Biffle directed the assembly's attention to Category E3 regarding representation of congregations in voting. She then introduced the recommendation on behalf of the committee, which was subsequently adopted without discussion.

Assembly

Action

Yes-813; No-46

CA03.06.35

To acknowledge the concern expressed in the Memorial of the Montana Synod that voting members of synodical and churchwide assemblies prepare thoroughly to carry out their strategic responsibilities on behalf of this whole church;

To encourage all congregations and synod to engage all members, particularly voting members of synodical and churchwide assemblies, in learning, discussion, and discernment about pending decisions by this church, actions taken, and the reasons for them;

To rejoice in the interaction that takes place in assemblies under the

guidance of the Holy Spirit when people hear and learn from one another, causing decisions to be made that consider the needs of this whole church;

To affirm the principles of organization of this church (chapter five of the ELCA constitution); and

To request that the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America convey the information (above) as the response of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the 2002 memorial of the Montana Synod.

Category E19: Proposed Amendment of Constitutional Provision 10.02.

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 79-80.)

Mr. Rude directed the assembly to Category E19 related to a proposed amendment to constitution provision 10.02. He introduced the committee's recommendation which subsequently was adopted without discussion.

Assembly

Action

Yes-851; No-22

CA03.06.36

To acknowledge the action of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on constitutional amendment 10.02. as the response of the assembly to the 2003 memorial of the Slovak Zion Synod.

Category E5: Exception to Policies on the Installation of Bishops

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, Page 56-59)

Ms. Biffle introduced the committee's recommendation on Category E5 related to the granting of exceptions in the installation of ELCA bishops.

Moved;

Seconded:

To embrace the following actions as the response of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the 2002 memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the 2003 memorial of the South Dakota Synod on local installation apart from the rite of this church of newly elected synodical bishops:

To acknowledge the action of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on bylaw 7.31.17. to permit a synodical bishop to authorize an ordination in “unusual circumstances” by a pastor other than a pastor holding the office of synodical bishop; and

To decline to comment further on the understanding of the historic episcopate because that understanding is sufficiently defined in the governing documents of this church and in the text of “Called to Common Mission,” as adopted by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (CA01.07.47).

To affirm the principles of the unity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as expressed in this church’s governing documents;

To acknowledge the action of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on Motion H in the Report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel declining to adopt proposed churchwide bylaw 10.81.01. and †S8.15. in the *Constitution for Synods* regarding exceptions for the installation of bishops in the historic episcopate; (CA01.07.48).

To affirm the commitment to the unity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as stated in the constitution of this church (5.01. and 8.11.);

To recognize the decision of the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—acting in conformity with the governing documents of this church, including the “Confession of Faith”—to enter into a relationship of full communion with The Episcopal Church as a promising step for the strengthening of the mission of Christ’s Church;

To urge that the orderly processes for decision-making within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be observed and practiced in respect for all members of this church as ongoing concerns are studied, discussed, and addressed;

To observe that ecumenical commitments and church-to-church relationships are decisions for this whole church made by the Churchwide Assembly as this church’s highest legislative authority, under the governing documents, and are not legislated on a synod-by-synod basis;

To express desire for the greatest unity possible within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with The Episcopal Church as “Called to Common Mission” is received and implemented;

To understand that unity within our churches is central to vital ministry together in order to experience the breadth of the full-communion relationship;

To express gratitude for the many wholesome ways and varied settings in which the prospect of

a relationship of full communion between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church has been studied, explored, discussed, and embraced by members throughout this church as together we seek to clarify the implications of entering into an evangelical and historic episcopate through the adoption of “Called to Common Mission” by this church; and

To be mindful amid the discussions of this time of the profound commitment by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the unity of our church for the sake of the Gospel, recognizing this unity is a gift of God and a reality to be reflected in our life together (CC00.11.64.a.23);

To reaffirm the principles of unity of the ELCA as expressed in this church’s documents; and

To decline to propose the constitutional amendment requested in the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod, but to refer the memorials of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the South Dakota Synod to the Department for Ecumenical Affairs as information.

The Rev. Janine G. Rew-Werling [South Dakota Synod] moved to amend the final paragraph by addition:

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Yes-854; No-90

To amend the final paragraph by addition: ...but to refer the memorials of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the South Dakota Synod to the Department for Ecumenical Affairs and the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee as information.

Assembly

Action

CA03.06.37

Yes-850; No-79

To embrace the following actions as the response of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the 2002 memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the 2003 memorial of the South Dakota Synod on local installation apart from the rite of this church of newly elected synodical bishops:

To acknowledge the action of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on bylaw 7.31.17. to permit a synodical bishop to

authorize an ordination in “unusual circumstances” by a pastor other than a pastor holding the office of synodical bishop; and

To decline to comment further on the understanding of the historic episcopate because that understanding is sufficiently defined in the governing documents of this church and in the text of “Called to Common Mission,” as adopted by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (CA01.07.47).

To affirm the principles of the unity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as expressed in this church’s governing documents;

To acknowledge the action of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on Motion H in the Report of the Committee of Reference and Counsel declining to adopt proposed churchwide bylaw 10.81.01. and †S8.15. in the *Constitution for Synods* regarding exceptions for the installation of bishops in the historic episcopate; (CA01.07.48).

To affirm the commitment to the unity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as stated in the constitution of this church (5.01. and 8.11.);

To recognize the decision of the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—acting in conformity with the governing documents of this church, including the “Confession of Faith”—to enter into a relationship of full communion with The Episcopal Church as a promising step for the strengthening of the mission of Christ’s Church;

To urge that the orderly processes for decision-making within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be observed and practiced in respect for all members of this church as ongoing concerns are studied, discussed, and addressed;

To observe that ecumenical commitments and church-to-church relationships are decisions for this whole church made by the Churchwide Assembly as this church’s highest legislative authority, under the governing documents, and are not legislated on a synod-by-synod basis;

To express desire for the greatest unity possible within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with The Episcopal Church as “Called to Common Mission” is received and implemented;

To understand that unity within our churches is central to vital ministry together in order to experience the breadth of the full-communion relationship;

To express gratitude for the many wholesome ways and varied settings in which the prospect of a relationship of full communion between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church has been studied, explored, discussed, and embraced by members throughout this church as together we seek to clarify the implications of entering into an evangelical and historic episcopate through the adoption of “Called to Common Mission” by this church; and

To be mindful amid the discussions of this time of the profound commitment by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the unity of our church for the sake of the Gospel, recognizing this unity is a gift of God and a reality to be reflected in our life together (CC00.11.64.a.23);

To reaffirm the principles of unity of the ELCA as expressed in this church’s documents; and

To decline to propose the constitutional amendment requested in the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod, but to refer the memorials of the Minneapolis Area Synod and the South Dakota Synod to the Department for Ecumenical Affairs and the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee as information.

En Bloc Consideration of Particular Responses to Synodical Memorials

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Report, Section VI, page 1.)

Mr. Brian D. Rude, co-chair of the Memorials Committee, introduced the *en bloc* action on remaining responses to synodical memorials. The motion was adopted without discussion.

Moved;

Seconded;

Yes-931; No-24

Carried:

To approve *en bloc*, with the exception of those memorials considered separately, the following responses to 2000 and 2001 synodical memorials printed in the Report of the Memorials Committee:

Category A1: Mobility and Congregational Membership

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 10.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.38

To thank the Southwestern Washington Synod and affirm their concern for giving all ELCA members the opportunity to stay active in a congregation of this church in the midst of a highly mobile society;

To encourage pastors and lay leaders of ELCA congregations to assist congregation members who are moving to new locations in finding a new ELCA congregation;

To commend the use of the “Find a Church” program on the ELCA Web site to assist congregation members who are moving; and

To refer this memorial to appropriate staff of the churchwide organization for consideration in the continuing implementation of the “Evangelism Strategy” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Category B1: Human Services Funding

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 13-14.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.39

To commend the Southwestern Washington Synod for raising the concern about adequate funding for human services and taxation;

To decline to initiate a social statement process on taxation, but to

encourage study and deliberation on that topic throughout this church on the basis of the social statement “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”;

To encourage this church’s advocacy offices to advocate for adequate funding for human service programs, and for the generation of necessary revenues through a system of taxation that is fair, just, and equitable in order to provide these services;

To request that the Division for Church in Society publish articles on this topic in its on-line *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*; and

To request that other ELCA publications also address this issue.

Category B2: Support for Persecuted Churches

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 14-15.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.40

To encourage members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to pray for people persecuted for their religious beliefs, and to encourage the promotion and protection of religious freedom and related human rights; and

To affirm the 1997 Churchwide Assembly resolution on religious persecution (CA97.06.48) as an appropriate response to the problem of religious intolerance, as addressed by the memorial of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod:

To [call] upon members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to pray for all victims of religious persecution, both Christians and non-Christians, and for their oppressors;

To direct the Division for Church in Society to continue its work with other appropriate churchwide units to study the matter of religious persecution and religious freedom and assist this church to respond effectively and sensitively to violations of the human right of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion;

To call on members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America to continue 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; and

To call on members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to communicate to the President of the United States, the Department of State, and both Houses of Congress, their concern for all victims of religious persecution in other parts of the world, conveying their conviction that such human rights violations are contrary to the international community's standards for freedom of conscience and religion.

Category B3: Prison Reform

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 15-17.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.41

To receive the memorials of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, and the Rocky Mountain Synod requesting a social statement on prison reform;

To encourage congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to study the social statement "The Death Penalty" and the 1994 ELCA message on "Community Violence";

To encourage this church's advocacy offices to continue to work for prison reform; and

To acknowledge the April 2003 action (CC03.04.27a and CC03.04.27b) of the ELCA Church Council as the response of this assembly to the synods' memorials:

To acknowledge the response of the Division for Church in Society to the resolution from the Greater Milwaukee Synod requesting a social statement on prisons as the response to this resolution from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin . . . ;

To commend the Greater Milwaukee Synod and the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin for raising the concern of prison reform and for calling upon their member congregations to seek creative ways to

be involved in prison ministry and to address prison issues;

To encourage ELCA congregations and members to study and use Criminal Justice Ministry: A Congregational Handbook for Jail and Prison Ministry; and

To decline to develop a social statement on prison reform at this time.

Category B7: Haiti Solidarity Week

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 25-26.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.42

To acknowledge the April 2003 action of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (CC03.04.27c) as the response of this assembly to the memorial of the Grand Canyon Synod related to Haiti Solidarity Sunday:

To recommend that the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Program continue to respond to human needs in Haiti through its historic partners: the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, and Church World Service;

To recommend that in the areas of ongoing education and advocacy regarding Haiti, the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Program periodically lift up additional Haiti resources and ministries, including efforts such as Haiti Solidarity Week and also the National Coalition for Haitian Rights;

To suggest that the ELCA World Hunger Program consider any requests for financial support that may come from Haiti Solidarity Week and its sponsoring organization, Haiti Reborn, as part of the ongoing Division for Church in Society hunger education and advocacy discretionary grants application process; and

To not recommend at this time that the ELCA World Hunger Program become a sponsor of Haiti Solidarity Week, but to continue to lift up periodically Haiti Solidarity Week as an additional resource for synods and congregations to consider.

Category B8: Gambling

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 26-27.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.43

To commend the South Dakota Synod for raising the issue of legalized gambling and underscoring the need to address it;

To encourage congregations and synods to deliberate on issues related to gambling using the study “Gambling: A Study for Congregations” as a resource;

To support advocacy opposing legalized gambling on the basis of the ELCA social statement on economic life, “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”; and

To decline to initiate a social statement process on gambling.

Category B9: Organ and Tissue Donation

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 27-28.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.44

To commend the Southwest California Synod for reminding this church that organ and tissue donation can be an expression of love for family members and neighbors;

To request that the Division for Church in Society develop a social policy resolution on this topic consistent with the teachings and social statements of this church; and

To request that the social policy resolution be brought to the April 2004 meeting of the ELCA Church Council for consideration and possible adoption by the council.

Category B10: World Hunger

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 29-30.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.45

To express appreciation to the Minneapolis Area Synod for its memorial “World Hunger Action”;

To reaffirm the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s 1999

public commitment to end chronic world hunger and to work toward the goal of a \$25 million annual World Hunger Appeal income level in order to make more financial resources available to eliminate hunger;

To commend members of the ELCA for their ongoing support of the World Hunger Appeal;

To call upon the World Hunger Appeal to seek ways to expand the ELCA’s advocacy to end world hunger, intensify its cooperation with other denominations and with Lutheran and ecumenical agencies in this regard, and work to heighten the U.S. government’s priority of ending world hunger with the aim of reducing hunger by half by 2015;

To request the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs to continue to work closely with Lutheran World Relief in advocacy work on the “Stand with Africa” campaign; and

To request that a report by the Division for Church in Society and the Division for Congregational Ministries on implementation of these recommendations be brought to the November 2004 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Category B11: Support for “People of Faith: An Urgent Call”

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 30-32.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.46

To thank the Northwestern Minnesota Synod for raising concern about the use of nuclear weapons;

To encourage congregations and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to study and support “For People of Faith: An Urgent Call” in light of the ELCA’s existing social statements; and

To request that the Division for Church in Society provide leadership for the implementation of “For People of Faith: An Urgent Call” through assisting this church to engage in

education about the growing danger posed by nuclear weapons and about practical steps to reduce that danger.

Category B13: Nonviolence

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 34-35.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.47

To thank the Northern Illinois Synod for calling this church to advocate for a course of nonviolence in overcoming tyranny and terrorism; and

To acknowledge this church's commitment to embrace, model, practice, and teach peacemaking, peacekeeping, and nonviolence.

Category C2: Distribution of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Document "Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ"

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 37.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.48

To receive the memorial of the New England Synod related to the document "Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ" of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and

To refer further consideration of the synod's request to the Division for Ministry and the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, with a report and possible recommendations to be presented to the April 2004 meeting of the Church Council.

Category E1: Designation of Budget Surpluses

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 39-40.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.49

To receive the memorial of the Southwestern Washington Synod related to debt relief for seminarians and first-call pastors;

To decline to adopt a policy committing 50 percent of any budget surplus for educational debt relief for seminarians and first-call pastors, but to affirm the responsibility of the Church Council of the Evangelical

Lutheran Church in America to determine and establish the priorities for any allocation of budget surplus or excess reserves; and

To recommend the Fund for Leaders in Mission as an opportunity for this church to provide financial support and encouragement for future ordained and lay rostered leaders of this church.

Category E2: Evangelism Strategy

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 41-44.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.50

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Montana Synod, the Grand Canyon Synod, the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, the Northern Illinois Synod, the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, the New England Synod, the Southeastern Synod, and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod on the proposed evangelism strategy for this church;

To affirm in principle the intent of these memorials to call this church to a strong evangelism presence;

To refer to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the ELCA Church Council the memorials' sections pertaining to churchwide structure for consideration in the course of developing and adopting changes to churchwide structure; and

To affirm the actions of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly on the proposed evangelism strategy, strategic plan, and 2004-2005 budget proposal as the assembly's response to these memorials.

Category E6: Exceptions to Ordinations in Unusual Circumstances

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 59-60.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.51

To refer the memorial of the New England Synod on "Exceptional Ordinations" to the Division for

Ministry as information in its ongoing review of the “Policy for Ordination in Unusual Circumstances in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.

Category E8: Requests for Consideration by the ELCA Studies on Sexuality Task Force

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 63-65.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.52 To refer the 2003 memorials of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, the Northwestern Ohio Synod, and the Allegheny Synod on the studies on human sexuality to the Division for Ministry and the Division for Church in Society for the information of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality as the members of the task force continue to provide guidance and resources to this church in the ongoing studies.

Category E9: Rules of Procedure on Studies

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 66.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.53 To refer the memorial of the Allegheny Synod related to a rule of procedure for a two-thirds vote regarding the possible ordination of gay and lesbian people in committed relationships and the blessing of same-gender unions to the Church Council for the preparation of the recommended “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for future Churchwide Assemblies.

Category E11: Responding to Sexual Abuse

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 69-70.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.54 To affirm the “ELCA Strategy for Responding to Sexual Abuse in the Church”;

To refer this memorial of the Metropolitan New York Synod to the Division for Ministry, with the request that the matter of the sexual abuse and exploitation of children be given particular attention in a review to assess the adequacy of existing resources;

To request that the Division for Ministry, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary and the Conference of Bishops, ensure that the reinstatement policy is appropriate in regard to people who are removed from the roster for reasons of sexual misconduct involving children; and

To request that a report be brought to the November 2004 meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Category E12: Term Limits for ELCA Officers

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 70.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.55 To decline to initiate amendments of the governing documents related to the terms of the churchwide officers; and

To refer the memorial of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin to the Church Council in connection with the Church Council’s ongoing review of the churchwide organization.

Category E14: Faith and Science Ministry

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 74-76.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.56 To commend the Southeastern Iowa Synod for articulating the issue of providing staff to develop resources and represent concerns throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for this church’s engagement of the multiple issues under the umbrella of faith, science, and technology;

To commend the work of the Lutheran Center Work Group on Faith

and Science and to encourage members, congregations, and synods to use its resources;

To refer the memorial of the Southeastern Iowa Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for consideration in the course of developing and adopting changes to the churchwide organizational structure, including budget implications; and

To request that the Division for Church in Society, the Division for Higher Education and Schools, and the Division for Ministry participate in this planning process to ensure a clear strategy for addressing the issues of faith and science in the life and witness of this church.

Category E15: Licensed Lay Ministers

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 76-77.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.57

To acknowledge that the subject of the memorial of the Northern Great Lakes Synod, noting that the subject previously was addressed by action of the Church Council; and

To request that the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America transmit the information (above) as the response of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the 2002 memorial of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

Category E16: The Lutheran Magazine

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, page 77.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.58

To receive the memorial of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod related to publication of stories about ELCA missionaries in *The Lutheran* magazine; and

To acknowledge the response of *The Lutheran* magazine (above) as the

response of the 2003 Churchwide Assembly to the memorial from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

Category E17: Acknowledgment of Lutherans Concerned/North America as an Independent Lutheran Organization

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 77-78.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.59

To receive the memorial of the North Carolina Synod concerning the acknowledgment by the Division for Outreach of Lutherans Concerned/North America as an independent Lutheran organization;

To request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, review the policy for acknowledging independent Lutheran organizations by units of this church, and the effect of such acknowledgment on synods; and

To request that the board of the Division for Outreach, in consultation with the Church Council, review its decision to acknowledge Lutherans Concerned/North America as an independent Lutheran organization.

Category E18: Assembly Voting Membership for New Mission Starts

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 78-79.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.60

To refer the memorial of the Central States Synod on the possibility of voting participation in synodical assemblies by participants from forming congregations to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that a report be brought to the November 2004 meeting of the Church Council, including the possible recommendation of a proposed amendment of the *Constitution for Synods* in this regard.

**Category F1: “On-Leave-from-Call” Status
for Family Leave**

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 80-82.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.61

To receive the memorial of the Eastern North Dakota Synod related to on-leave-from-call status for family leave;

To refer this memorial to the Division for Ministry as information in the continuing work of review of the on-leave-from-call policy; and

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2003 meeting of the Church Council, and that the Eastern North Dakota Synod be informed of the council’s action.

Category F2: Adjudication of Misconduct Complaints

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 81-83.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.62

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to a fair and just process providing for discipline and adjudication within this church as provided by Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To decline to adopt the memorial on the adjudication of misconduct complaints proposed by the Metropolitan New York Synod.

**Category F3: Lutheran World Federation
Clergy Reciprocity**

(Reference: 2003 Pre-Assembly Reports, Section VI, pages 83.)

Assembly

Action

[En Bloc]

CA03.06.63

To receive the memorial of the Metropolitan New York Synod related to Lutheran World Federation clergy reciprocity;

To refer the memorial to the Division for Ministry, with the request that the Division for Ministry, in

consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Lutheran World Federation, review the policy for admission of ordained ministers from another Lutheran tradition and consider revisions that would acknowledge the status of LWF ordained ministers; and

To recommend that the Division for Ministry develop a resource for synods regarding exchangeability for ordained ministers of the LWF-member churches and ELCA ordained ministers.

Bishop Hanson expressed his gratitude for the thorough work of the Memorials Committee.

The Rev. Eric O. Strom [Sierra Pacific Synod] thanked the presiding bishop for “leading the assembly through this marathon session with patience, respect, and abundant good humor.”

The Rev. Sandra L. Bentz [Northern Illinois Synod] urged the voting members to “take home” the work done at the assembly, because “that’s where the real work begins.” The evangelism strategy would not happen unless voting members took it home to their congregations, she said.

Bishop Hanson announced that a time would be set aside on Sunday morning for a quasi-committee of the whole discussion of mission funding in the ELCA. He encouraged all voting members to be present.

Recess

Following announcements by Secretary Almen and a closing prayer by Mr. Karl D. Anderson, member of the Church Council from Lakeville, Minnesota, the assembly recessed at 6:20 P.M.