



Preliminary Minutes

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Tenth Biennial Churchwide Assembly
August 6–11, 2007—Chicago, Illinois

Plenary Session Two

Tuesday, August 7, 2007

8:30 A.M.—11:00 A.M.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called the second plenary session of the tenth Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to order at 8:39 A.M. Central Daylight Time on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, in Exhibition Hall A at Navy Pier, Chicago, Illinois.

The presiding bishop rang the bells and lit a candle, then called upon the Rev. Joseph G. Crippen, member of the Church Council from Northfield, Minn., to lead in the order for Morning Prayer. Pr. Crippen invited the assembly to stand and sing “Golden Breaks the Dawn.” The first stanza was sung in Mandarin by a soloist, followed by the assembly singing the hymn in English. Pr. Crippen then led in a litany and prayer.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the musicians who would be leading the assembly in song throughout the week. He also expressed appreciation to the assembly for the good beginning that had been made in the first plenary session. He reminded the assembly that there would be two plenary sessions on Tuesday, a morning worship service, and hearings in the afternoon and evening.

Bishop Hanson reported that the offering for the Campus Ministry Foundation taken at opening worship on Monday had totaled \$12,386.81. He thanked the assembly for its generosity. He stated that Secretary Lowell G. Almen would give more information about the Good Gifts catalog that voting members would be receiving and how they could add to this offering in the course of the assembly.

The presiding bishop asked all who had joined the Board of Pensions for the morning “Walk, Run, and Roll” to raise their hands. He noted that the number of participants was approximately the same as the number of Jesus’ disciples and exhorted members to greater participation. He then asked how many had joined the Rev. Murray D. Finck, bishop of the Pacifica Synod, for “Stretch and Pray” that morning, and observed that there were many more than the number of disciples.

Addressing the business of the day, Presiding Bishop Hanson pointed out that each day of the assembly was generally organized around one of the five strategic directions in the ELCA’s Plan for Mission. Tuesday would focus on evangelical outreach with consideration of the “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible” initiative and a greeting from the military chaplains of this church. Wednesday’s business would be related to public church, and would include a keynote address from Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro and

consideration of memorials. Other days would focus on ecumenical and global perspectives, with reports from partners in mission and the World Hunger program. The emphasis on congregations would be represented by reports from the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, and the Lutheran Youth Organization. A report on leadership initiatives related to multicultural ministry and evangelism would make the connection to the strategic direction on leadership.

Report of the Vice President and the Church Council

(Reference: 2007 *Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, pages 20, 25, and 31.)

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that there would be a delay in the report of the first ballot for the election of a presiding bishop due to a problem with photocopying the results for voting members. He called upon Mr. Carlos E. Peña, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to report on behalf of the Church Council. The presiding bishop informed the assembly that Mr. Peña, who occupies the highest elective office held by a lay person in this church, had been the most requested person to speak at Synod Assemblies over the preceding two years.

The chair reminded members that the actions taken by the Church Council over the last biennium were reported in Section IX of the 2007 *Pre-Assembly Report*, while action items recommended by the council were to be found in Section IV.

Mr. Peña began by saying that Diane was his wife, Steven and Stephanie were his children, that he attended First Lutheran Church in Galveston, Texas, that he owned a business in Galveston, and “lives here.” He commented that this was how he recently had introduced himself to his wife and children because of all the traveling he has done in his role as vice president of the ELCA. He said that he got a blank stare as he walked in the back door, and that it was a wonder the dog had not bitten him. He took a moment of personal privilege to introduce his wife Diane, his children Stephanie and Steven, and his son’s fiancée. He noted that his family has given him much love and support because they, too, realize what a privilege it is for him to serve as vice president.

The vice president reported that he had attended 12 synod assemblies in the last biennium, had traveled as far south as Brazil and as far north as Winnipeg, and had met with religious leaders throughout Europe. In his travels and meetings, he said, he had seen all sorts of God’s people sharing the love of God in the world.

Vice President Peña stated that when he had first become involved in a Lutheran church 30 years before, he had felt a closeness he had not felt previously. He had known little of the work of Lutherans outside of his community, but as he became

involved with his synod he began to learn what was happening synod-wide and throughout the world. He characterized his service as vice president as “a remarkable journey,” and stated that Lutherans were more united than it might appear, sharing hopes and dreams from congregations to synods to the churchwide expression. Lutherans everywhere had the same goals and were carrying out the same mission for the sake of the world, he reported.

Mr. Peña described the work of the Church Council, speaking of the time that its members devote to study and discussion of issues facing this church and discerning God’s will for it. He asked the members of the council to stand and requested that the assembly thank them for their service. The assembly responded with applause.

The vice president reminded the assembly that the Church Council serves as the interim legislative authority between Churchwide Assemblies. It had spent the last biennium responding to 2005 Churchwide Assembly actions and preparing for the 2007 assembly. He highlighted the topics of a number of actions and recommendations that would be coming to this assembly from the council:

- “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible,” an initiative to commit to hearing God’s Word and fostering a deeper use and understanding of Scripture;
- Reception of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, which provides guidance for the ministry of Word and Sacrament and for the renewal of the worship life of this church;
- The Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding recommendation, which calls for a renewed commitment to mission support and stewardship education;
- “Our Calling in Education,” the social statement on education begun in 2003, which outlines a Lutheran vision for education at all levels;
- The World Hunger Appeal, which invites renewed efforts by members and congregations to reach and surpass a goal of \$25,000,000 in annual giving;
- A churchwide strategy on HIV and AIDS, which seeks to address this human tragedy of massive proportions, affecting people on all continents, by stating this church’s commitment to work with the Lutheran World Federation and ecumenical partners to respond to the AIDS pandemic;
- Extension of the relationship of full communion to additional provinces of the Moravian Church in America;
- Budget proposals for 2008 and 2009 to allocate financial resources to strengthen this church’s outreach in mission; and
- Proposed amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

The vice president closed his report by thanking the members of the assembly for all they do to make Christ known in communities throughout the world, stating that the prayers and love of this church make a difference. He reiterated that it had been a privilege to serve as vice president of this church for the previous four years, indicating that it had been a once-in-a-lifetime experience through which he had grown spiritually. He stated, “I am truly living in God’s amazing grace. Thanks be to God!” The assembly responded with sustained applause.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Vice President Peña and reported that the action items Mr. Peña had described would be the subject of the assembly’s consideration in the coming days, with hearings on several of the topics taking place on Tuesday evening. He also took the opportunity to announce that the offering for World Hunger at the Worship Jubilee that had taken place at Navy Pier before the beginning of the assembly had totaled \$3,472.62.

Reception of Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(Reference: 2007 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, page 9.)

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson reported that the 2005 Churchwide Assembly had affirmed the outcomes of the five-year Renewing Worship project and anticipated the 2006 publication of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)*. *ELW* was released October 3, 2006, as the primary resource in an unfolding family of new worship resources in print and electronic form. So far, the presiding bishop said, initial sales had been “wonderful”—approximately 725,000 copies of *ELW* had been distributed and the book was now in its fifth printing.

Following applause by the assembly, Presiding Bishop Hanson called on the Rev. Michael L. Burk, executive for worship and liturgical resources in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, who had shepherded the project, to make some brief remarks. He asked the assembly to turn to section IV, page 9 of the 2007 *Pre-Assembly Report*.

Pr. Burk reported that introductory events for *ELW* had been held in every synod, led by local people, and that the response had been “extraordinary,” with more than 40,000 participants in these events. He stated that it was important to note the gratitude expressed by those who had been using *ELW*. He acknowledged that with the introduction of a new book of worship, there had been those who had expressed disappointment, but that these comments expressed a truth about this church: that its people care deeply about what happens as they gather around the means of grace. However, he added, he was confident that *ELW* upholds the teachings of this church and that it does so in ways that provide freedom and flexibility to meet worship needs throughout the ELCA.

Pr. Burk reported that materials to surround *ELW* were already unfolding. He described *ELW* as a sign of members’ connection to one another and to God’s own mission. He concluded by saying that a book of worship does not hold this church together, but, at its best, reminds this church that in Christ Jesus the members are both connected and held, and, to the extent that *ELW* could help in that regard, Pr. Burk declared, “Thanks be to God!”

Presiding Bishop Hanson called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to read the Church Council’s motion regarding *ELW*.

Moved;

Seconded: 1. To remember with joy that one of the six primary purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to “worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service” (ELCA constitutional provision 4.02.d.);

2. To applaud the 1997 statement of this church, *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, for the way that statement has contributed to the development of worship resources and continues to provide guidance for the ministry of Word and Sacrament;
3. To recall with gratitude the action of the Church Council in 2000 that authorized the “ELCA Next Generation of Worship Resources,” the churchwide effort that came to be known as *Renewing Worship*;
4. To acknowledge the subsequent action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly regarding the ways in which the *Renewing Worship* effort:
 - a. reinforced the importance of widespread participation in the ongoing work of worship renewal;
 - b. affirmed a collaborative approach to the development of worship resources, drawing on the wisdom of individuals, congregations, pastors, musicians, synodical bishops, teaching theologians, and other leaders, institutions, and agencies;
 - c. demonstrated this church's commitment to thorough liturgical and theological review of materials intended for use in worshipping assemblies; and
 - d. encouraged and allowed for the completion of the new primary book of worship, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
5. To express gratitude for:
 - a. those who have provided leadership and oversight for the various facets of the development of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
 - b. the widespread participation in introductory events; and
 - c. the many individuals and synodical teams who have provided leadership in introducing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
6. To convey appreciation—through the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada—to the pastors, bishops, and many individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who contributed to the development and introduction of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
7. To receive with thanksgiving *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and celebrate the ways in which it:
 - a. bears the rich tradition of Christian worship practiced among Lutherans and, at the same time, seeks to renew that tradition in response to a generation of change in the Church and in the world;
 - b. reflects a body of prayer and song that are worthy to hold in common, consistent with the commitment to the treasury of Christian worship affirmed in the Lutheran confessions;
 - c. is grounded in Lutheran convictions about the centrality of the means of grace;
 - d. continues to emphasize that freedom and flexibility in worship is a Lutheran inheritance; the book, therefore, is designed to make more transparent the principle of fostering unity without imposing uniformity;
 - e. represents the gifts of the breadth of the Church of Christ, and prizes the words and songs Lutherans hold in common with other Christians, while at the same time extending the particular accents of the Lutheran heritage as gifts to the whole Church; and
 - f. reflects the understanding that worship is fundamentally about what God does, bringing to expression how God nourishes the people of the Church for mission and accompanies them as they bear the creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world; and
8. To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ongoing work of renewing worship, understanding that:
 - a. worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;
 - b. each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and
 - c. worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the Church is called to serve.

Noting that there were no speakers to the motion, Presiding Bishop Hanson called for a vote. Because there was a problem with the electronic vote timer, he requested that the voting machines be reset so that voting could occur again.

Assembly

Action:

Yes-965; No-71

CA07.02.04

1. **To remember with joy that one of the six primary purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to “worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service” (ELCA constitutional provision 4.02.d.);**

2. To applaud the 1997 statement of this church, *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, for the way that statement has contributed to the development of worship resources and continues to provide guidance for the ministry of Word and Sacrament;
3. To recall with gratitude the action of the Church Council in 2000 that authorized the “ELCA Next Generation of Worship Resources,” the churchwide effort that came to be known as Renewing Worship;
4. To acknowledge the subsequent action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly regarding the ways in which the Renewing Worship effort:
 - a. reinforced the importance of widespread participation in the ongoing work of worship renewal;
 - b. affirmed a collaborative approach to the development of worship resources, drawing on the wisdom of individuals, congregations, pastors, musicians, synodical bishops, teaching theologians, and other leaders, institutions, and agencies;
 - c. demonstrated this church's commitment to thorough liturgical and theological review of materials intended for use in worshiping assemblies; and
 - d. encouraged and allowed for the completion of the new primary book of worship, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
5. To express gratitude for:
 - a. those who have provided leadership and oversight for the various facets of the development of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
 - b. the widespread participation in introductory events; and
 - c. the many individuals and synodical teams who have provided leadership in introducing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
6. To convey appreciation—through the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada—to the pastors, bishops, and many individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who contributed to the development and introduction of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
7. To receive with thanksgiving *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and celebrate the ways in which it:
 - a. bears the rich tradition of Christian worship practiced among Lutherans and, at the same time, seeks to renew that tradition in response to a generation of change in the Church and in the world;
- b. reflects a body of prayer and song that are worthy to hold in common, consistent with the commitment to the treasury of Christian worship affirmed in the Lutheran confessions;
- c. is grounded in Lutheran convictions about the centrality of the means of grace;
- d. continues to emphasize that freedom and flexibility in worship is a Lutheran inheritance; the book, therefore, is designed to make more transparent the principle of fostering unity without imposing uniformity;
- e. represents the gifts of the breadth of the Church of Christ, and prizes the words and songs Lutherans hold in common with other Christians, while at the same time extending the particular accents of the Lutheran heritage as gifts to the whole Church; and
- f. reflects the understanding that worship is fundamentally about what God does, bringing to expression how God nourishes the people of the Church for mission and accompanies them as they bear the creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world; and
8. To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ongoing work of renewing worship, understanding that:
 - a. worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;
 - b. each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and
 - c. worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the Church is called to serve.

The motion was approved. Presiding Bishop Hanson asked that the assembly thank God for *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and pray for God’s blessing upon its use at this assembly and in worshiping communities throughout this church and beyond it. He invited assembly participants to hold up their copies of *ELW* as he prayed. Following the prayer, he invited the assembly to stand and sing “Voices Raised to You” from *ELW*. He instructed participants to carry the copies of *ELW* with them to worship that day, and informed them that at the end of the assembly the copies used by the assembly would be sent to mission congregations for use in their worship.

Elections:

Report on the First Ballot for Presiding Bishop

(Reference: 2007 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 1 and 2; Section I, pages 17-19.)

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson yielded the chair to Vice President Carlos E. Peña for the report on the first ballot for the election of the presiding bishop. Mr. Peña called on Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, to bring the report.

Mr. Harris first apologized for the delay in delivering the report of the first ballot and said that copies of the report would be distributed within five minutes. He then reported orally, stating that 1,022 votes were cast, including nine illegal votes, and noting that 75 percent of votes cast (767 ballots) were required for an election. He reported that there was no election because no nominee had received 75 percent of the votes cast. He stated that 101 clergy persons had received votes on the first ballot and with the assembly's assent read the results only for those nominees receiving more than three votes:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Votes</i>
Mark S. Hanson	765
Karl Donfried	42
Donald J. McCoid	17
April Larson	12
Richard J. Foss	10
Stephen Bouman	9
Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl	6
Michael Cooper-White	6
Ebert R. Riley	6
Lowell Almen	5
Jon Anderson	5
Margaret Payne	5
Gregory Pile	5
Peter Rogness	5
James Nestingen	4
Gary Wollersheim	3
Robert Berg	3
Ernie Hinojosa	3
James Stuck	3

Mr. Harris noted that 17 persons received two votes each, and 65 persons received one vote each. Because of the delay in reporting the results, he suggested that the deadline for nominees to withdraw their names from consideration be extended to 9:45 A.M. The assembly gave its assent. Those who wished their names removed from the ballot were then instructed to present themselves to the secretary's deputy to fill out a withdrawal form by the revised deadline. Mr. Harris also asked voting members to retain their copy of the printed report so they would have the names of remaining nominees eligible for the second ballot.

Rising to a point of personal privilege, the Rev. John S. Douglas Jr. [Lower Susquehanna Synod] asked when questions could be asked concerning the report of the Church Council. Vice President Peña responded that there would be time for questions and comments as each of the recommendations came to the floor.

While waiting for the written report of the first ballot to be passed out, the assembly stood and sang "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

Mr. Peña announced once more that nominees had until 9:45 A.M. to remove their names from the ballot. He returned the chair to Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson.

Consideration: "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible"

(Reference: 2007 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, page 6.)

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson called the attention of the Churchwide Assembly to an initiative that began life as a memorial from the North Carolina Synod in 2005: "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible." He explained that this was a five-year initiative that invited this whole church to become fluent in the first language of faith—the language of Scripture—and to be renewed for lives of witness and service as the Holy Spirit engages each person.

The presiding bishop invited the Rev. Stanley N. Olson, executive director of the Vocation and Education program unit, and Professor Diane Jacobson, professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn., to come forward, adding that Prof. Jacobson would serve as director of the "Book of Faith" initiative. The Rev. Leonard H. Bolick, bishop of the North Carolina Synod, and Ms. Beth A. Lewis, president and chief executive officer of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, joined them on the stage.

The presentation began with a video about the initiative. Pr. Olson explained that "Book of Faith" is about opening Scripture and joining the conversation. The initiative is designed to invite all into a renewed experience of the power of the Word of God. He invited those present to join the conversation that God initiates. Already, he stated, many congregations, synods, and other institutions and agencies were talking about joining this conversation and what that would mean to them. The first partners were members of a grass-roots group from the North Carolina Synod, who were represented by Bp. Bolick. He and others brought the resolution that Presiding Bishop Hanson had mentioned that came before the 2005 Churchwide Assembly. From that request had grown the intent to study and experience the authority of Scripture. Another set of enthusiastic supporters of the initiative were staff members of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, who had been energetic and enthusiastic about developing resources to help carry it out.

Pr. Olson reported that Presiding Bishop Hanson had called together 90 persons from across this church for a consultation in January 2007, to discuss what it could mean to be part of the initiative. The Church Council had strongly affirmed the proposal and had put two resolutions before the assembly. The first would affirm this church's strong confessional commitments, acknowledging that the members of this church are joyfully and intentionally subject to God's Word. The second would establish the "Book of Faith" initiative, inviting the whole of the ELCA into broad and deep engagement with the Bible.

In anticipation of approval of the resolutions, the Vocation and Education program unit had asked Prof. Jacobson to become the half-time director of the initiative, serving as resource person, advocate, and coordinator, as well as one who would say, "Let the

Word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Pr. Olson introduced Prof. Jacobson to the assembly.

Prof. Jacobson stated that she was delighted and honored to be present and looked forward to many years of fruitful engagement throughout the ELCA as the members of this church read the Bible together. The vision of the “Book of Faith” initiative is that the whole church would become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that the members might live into their calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word. She said that this vision calls each person to experience more fully the power of the Word and to learn together about Lutheran approaches to Scripture, which have been so fruitful across the centuries. It also calls for a conversation that is deep and broad, including people of all ages and across many cultures that shape who the members are as people of God. The fulfillment of this vision depends on each individual, congregation, and other church-related organizations to join the conversation and make a commitment to become part of the initiative.

Prof. Jacobson pointed out ways in which persons could become involved with the initiative. First, she encouraged those present to visit the “Book of Faith” Web site (<http://www.elca.org/bookoffaith/>), where they could explore the various resources already available. Once there, one can contribute to the “Book of Faith” blog to help build the initiative together. One also could share biblical resources. New resources will be developed. Later in the year, the Web site would allow joining as a “Book of Faith” congregation, synod, or organization. Members would be asked to identify three commitments for the year to come.

Prof. Jacobson stated that God had already blessed the undertaking richly and would, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continue to bless it as this church becomes more deeply engaged with Scripture. She said, “I can think of nothing more exciting than helping our church move into this initiative,” and invited all to open the Scripture and join the conversation.

The presiding bishop thanked Pr. Olson, Prof. Jacobson, and others for their efforts. He informed the assembly that there were two motions related to the “Book of Faith” initiative—the first in Section IV, page 6, the second on page 7. Because of the length of the motions, he asked the assembly’s consent to suspend the reading of the motions. There was no objection.

Moved;

- Seconded:**
1. To rejoice with the whole Church of Jesus Christ in the revelation of God's Word conveyed to the people of every generation, declaring God's gifts of mercy and grace, forgiveness and hope, reconciliation and peace, and to confess that we often have failed to hear and heed the Word of God and to benefit from God's gifts;
 2. To give thanks for the Bible through which the Word of God has spoken to God's people throughout the ages;
 3. To remember with enduring esteem the multitudes throughout the ages who embraced the tradition received by the community of the

faithful and passed to succeeding generations the glad news of God's steadfast love;

4. To recall with gratitude the work of Martin Luther and that of the other reformers whose Word-inspired renewal grew from their study of Scripture;
5. To acknowledge with joy the power of the Word of God in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, evident in many ways, including:
 - a. The affirmations of the constitutional Confession of Faith that:
 - (1) “Jesus Christ is the Word of God,”
 - (2) “The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God. . . .,”
 - (3) “The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God” (provision 2.02.a., b., and c.), and
 - (4) “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life” (provision 2.03.);
 - b. The empowered proclamation, study, teaching, worship, meditation, song, community, and service through which the people of this church daily hear, share, and live the witness of Scripture;
 - c. The members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, agencies, institutions, and networks of this church, and their planning and programs, including the ELCA Plan for Mission adopted in 2005, which are undergirded by the Bible and seek faithfully to express God's Word;
6. To recognize that one of the six constitutionally stated purposes for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies is to nurture members “in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world” (provision 4.02.e.);
7. To embrace the passion and commitment that is richly shared among people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the witness of Scripture in forming and guiding the members of this church individually and corporately in daily life;

8. To express the hope and desire that—in the time leading up to the ELCA's 25th anniversary in 2012 and to the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017—this church will be sustained and renewed by the Word of God, thereby fostering deeper and broader use and understanding of Scripture of its members, equipping them for the life of disciples;
9. To recognize and give thanks that the Word of God speaks and is valued throughout Christ's Church and that, globally and ecumenically, there are other movements and occasions for renewed attention to the authority of the Bible that will inform and enhance our own understanding, including the work already begun and anticipated in the Lutheran World Federation, the recent proposal among the U.S. Reformed churches for a Lutheran-Reformed consultation on the authority and role of the Word of God in the life of the churches, and the Roman Catholic Church's intention to celebrate in 2015 the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II statement *Dei Verbum*; and
10. To acknowledge with gratitude the action of the 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly in memorializing this church to undertake a renewed study of the authority of Scripture in the life of the Church.

The chair declared the first resolution to be on the floor. He pointed out that the recommendation came from the Church Council and did not require a second. Seeing no debate, he called for the vote.

Assembly

Action: Yes-1,000; No-19
CA07.02.05

1. To rejoice with the whole Church of Jesus Christ in the revelation of God's Word conveyed to the people of every generation, declaring God's gifts of mercy and grace, forgiveness and hope, reconciliation and peace, and to confess that we often have failed to hear and heed the Word of God and to benefit from God's gifts;
2. To give thanks for the Bible through which the Word of God has spoken to God's people throughout the ages;
3. To remember with enduring esteem the multitudes throughout the ages who embraced the tradition received by the community of the faithful and passed to succeeding generations the glad news of God's steadfast love;
4. To recall with gratitude the work of Martin Luther and that of the other reformers whose

Word-inspired renewal grew from their study of Scripture;

5. To acknowledge with joy the power of the Word of God in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, evident in many ways, including:
 - a. The affirmations of the constitutional Confession of Faith that:
 - (1) "Jesus Christ is the Word of God,"
 - (2) "The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God. . . ."
 - (3) "The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God" (provision 2.02.a., b., and c.), and
 - (4) "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life" (provision 2.03.);
 - b. The empowered proclamation, study, teaching, worship, meditation, song, community, and service through which the people of this church daily hear, share, and live the witness of Scripture;
 - c. The members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, agencies, institutions, and networks of this church, and their planning and programs, including the ELCA Plan for Mission adopted in 2005, which are undergirded by the Bible and seek faithfully to express God's Word;
6. To recognize that one of the six constitutionally stated purposes for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and related institutions and agencies is to nurture members "in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world" (provision 4.02.e.);
7. To embrace the passion and commitment that is richly shared among people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the witness of Scripture in forming and guiding the members of this church individually and corporately in daily life;
8. To express the hope and desire that—in the time leading up to the ELCA's 25th anniversary in 2012 and to the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017—this church will be sustained and

renewed by the Word of God, thereby fostering deeper and broader use and understanding of Scripture of its members, equipping them for the life of disciples;

9. To recognize and give thanks that the Word of God speaks and is valued throughout Christ's Church and that, globally and ecumenically, there are other movements and occasions for renewed attention to the authority of the Bible that will inform and enhance our own understanding, including the work already begun and anticipated in the Lutheran World Federation, the recent proposal among the U.S. Reformed churches for a Lutheran-Reformed consultation on the authority and role of the Word of God in the life of the churches, and the Roman Catholic Church's intention to celebrate in 2015 the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II statement *Dei Verbum*; and
10. To acknowledge with gratitude the action of the 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly in memorializing this church to undertake a renewed study of the authority of Scripture in the life of the Church.

The recommendation was adopted.

The chair announced that the second of the two resolutions on "Book of Faith" was now on the floor. Again, the reading was suspended.

Moved;

- Seconded:**
1. To invite and encourage all members, expressions, institutions, and partners of this church to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being formed by God's Word;
 2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible"—with the goal of raising to a new level this church's individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture;
 3. To urge that this initiative be designed and carried out in ways that affirm the Bible's power through the work of the Holy Spirit to speak in all settings and to all ages, with attention to individual and corporate use of the Bible by members and leaders in worship, devotion, study, proclamation, teaching, moral formation, addressing social issues, and evangelizing;

4. To commit the churchwide organization to substantial engagement in this initiative in extensive collaboration with synods and congregations;
5. To request that the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—who "as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church" (provision 13.21.)—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the Vocation and Education unit in partnership with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, as the publishing ministry of this church, and many others;
6. To anticipate the wide availability and use of a rich constellation of existing and new resources as well as the creative use of new means of communication, mindful of the global and ecumenical context, in exploration of the nature and authority of Scripture in the life of individuals and the whole Church;
7. To affirm funding of the churchwide organization's share of this "Book of Faith" initiative primarily through the regular operating budget in recognition not only that this initiative is of foundational and ongoing importance, but also in confidence that support for mission will grow from congregations through synods for churchwide ministries; and
8. To look beyond the time and scope of the "Book of Faith" initiative to what can be built on that work and to other ways in which God's Word will continually renew this church.

Mr. John D. Litke [Metropolitan New York Synod] moved to amend the motion by addition.

Moved;

Seconded: To amend by addition of the following after paragraph 2, and to renumber subsequent paragraphs:

To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore ways to reform culture and customs in this church that will open it to a new level of valuing and being shaped by the power of the Word.

Speaking to his amendment, Mr. Litke said that he applauded the initiative as a longtime teacher and stated that he saw it as an excellent goal. But, he asserted, the goal is not knowledge, but shaping each person as a servant of God through the written Word. In his opinion, the most important statement in the entire report in the 2007 *Pre-Assembly Report* was the last sentence in the first paragraph under "The 'Book of Faith' Initiative" on page 5,

second column: “The intent is to form culture and customs in this church that will open it to a new level of valuing and being shaped by the power of the Word.” The goal of reforming culture, he said, was missing from the resolution, and he saw inserting as the most important thing the assembly could do.

Hearing no further discussion, the chair called for a vote on Mr. Litke’s amendment.

Moved;

Seconded;

Yes-735; No-282

Carried:

To amend by addition of the following after paragraph 2, and to renumber subsequent paragraphs:

To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore ways to reform culture and customs in this church that will open it to a new level of valuing and being shaped by the power of the Word.

The amendment was adopted. The main motion as amended was now on the floor.

The Rev. Steven E. King [Southwest Minnesota Synod] offered an amendment.

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend by deletion and substitution in paragraph 2:

2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring sinners to repentance and salvation in Christ;

Speaking to his amendment, Pr. King said that one of the greatest promises of the way Lutherans approach Scripture is that God is the user of Scripture. In Baptism, he argued, it is not a question of “how much water,” but rather is a matter of God working through water as a means to bring about God’s purpose. Similarly, God is working through Scripture. The focus is thus on God’s use, not ours, and that is what God is doing in Christ, Pr. King stated.

Ms. Katie K. Abercrombie [Florida-Bahamas Synod], speaking in favor of the amendment, said that she was a Bible teacher, confirmation mentor, and a serious student of the Bible, and was excited about Pr. King’s amendment. She said that there is a popular belief in academic circles that a text has no meaning

except for the meaning a reader gives it. However, she said, Lutherans believe God has a purpose and meaning in giving us his Word to show us our need for a Savior and to draw us to him.

The Rev. David Weeks [Southwestern Minnesota Synod] spoke in favor of amendment and resolution, stating that he was excited about the initiative. He said that he had seen a resurgence of interest in Scripture in his congregation and that people want to read the Bible and hear what it says. Luther’s Reformation began when he heard Scripture speak to him. Lutherans believe that God’s Word is a living Word that will not return empty, but will do what it sets out to do.

The Rev. Bruce H. Burnside, bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, spoke against the amendment because he believes that Lutherans understand that Scripture is the living Word of God. In his opinion, the amendment would narrow the focus and put in place people’s own intention to determine what God’s will and purpose in Scripture is. He argued that the amendment served to undo what the language said it was doing.

Ms. Sylvia C. Bull [Montana Synod] argued that the language of the amendment narrowed the intention of the motion as a whole and urged that the assembly defeat the amendment. She stressed, however, that she was very much in favor of the initiative itself.

The Rev. Warren D. Freiheit, bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, proposed an amendment to Pr. King’s amendment by changing the word “sinners” to “all.”

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend the King amendment by deletion and substitution:

2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring ~~sinners~~ all to repentance and salvation in Christ;

Bp. Freiheit noted that in the past the word “sinner” had been used in very unfortunate ways, so thought that his amendment would give a clearer sense of how all people are seen in God’s eyes.

Mr. Gerry Keefe [Greater Milwaukee Synod] spoke in support of Bp. Freiheit’s amendment.

The Rev. Callon W. Holloway Jr., bishop of the Southern Ohio Synod, spoke in favor of Bp. Freiheit’s amendment for its clarifying language, adding that he saw this wording as more generous and clear regarding the purposes of this church.

Presiding Bishop Hanson, seeing no further speakers, called for the vote on Bp. Freiheit’s amendment.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:

Yes-887; No-139

- To amend the King amendment by deletion and substitution:
2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to repentance and salvation in Christ;

The motion on the floor was now Pr. King’s amendment as amended.

The Rev. Steven L. Ullestad, bishop of the Northeast Iowa Synod, spoke against the amendment, arguing that the word “distinctive” was not helpful. He argued further that the amendment narrowed the use of Scripture as the source and norm for all matters of faith and life.

The Rev. Michelle C. Fischer [Upstate New York Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment, but moved to amend by addition.

Moved;
Seconded:

- To amend by addition:
2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to repentance and salvation and relationship in Christ;

Pr. Fischer suggested that this addition would broaden the intent of the motion and encourage relationship with Christ.

The Rev. April Ulring Larson, bishop of the La Crosse Area Synod, rose to a point of order to report that voting members in her section could not hear Bp. Ullestad, and asked that he restate what he had said. She further requested that adjustments be made to the audio system.

The chair responded that the assembly first had to deal with Pr. Fischer’s amendment. Hearing no discussion, he called for the vote.

Moved;
Second;
Defeated :

Yes-444; No-555

- To amend by addition:
2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to repentance and salvation and relationship in Christ;

The amendment was defeated.

Presiding Bishop Hanson asked those members at the microphones to stay where they were until the sound issues were investigated. He then asked Bp. Ullestad to repeat his earlier comments. Bp. Ullestad said that he objected to the amendment for two reasons: First, he said, any number of the ecumenical partners could take issue with the notion that the Lutheran view of Scripture is “distinctive.” Second, the bishop argued that the proposed amendment narrowed the understanding in the Lutheran Confessions that Scripture is source and norm for all of faith and life, not just for one part. He stated that he was speaking against the amendment so that the members of this church could make full use of Scripture in daily life.

The Rev. Marcus C. Lohrmann, bishop of the Northwestern Ohio Synod, voiced his support for the amendment, because he believed that it pointed to Jesus Christ, who opens the Scripture to show us the horror and evil of the crucifixion and the joy of the resurrection.

The Rev. Rani Abdulmasih [Southeast Michigan Synod] spoke in opposition, saying that God is the author of Scripture and not the user of Scripture. He added that, although he thought the amendment was well intended in its effort to vest authority in God’s Word, it nonetheless opened the way for people to “put words in God’s mouth,” to substitute their interpretation for God’s Word. He believed that the amendment emphasized humans’ use and understanding of Scripture, not God’s.

Mr. David B. Olson [Saint Paul Area Synod] spoke in favor of the amendment on the basis of the great heritage of the Lutheran tradition. He urged the assembly not to lose sight of that heritage.

The Rev. E. Roy Riley Jr., bishop of the New Jersey Synod, stated that he was less concerned about the amendment itself than about the fact that it deleted the words “Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture” because he believed that there are indeed Lutheran principles and approaches that this church should be looking to identify. He suggested that this church would lose something if the language of the amendment were adopted.

Mr. Jason Day [Delaware-Maryland Synod] proposed an amendment to replace the word “repentance” with “faith.”

Moved;

Seconded: To amend by deletion and substitution:

2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to repentance faith and salvation in Christ;

Speaking to his amendment, Mr. Day recounted that in confirmation class, the first thing he had learned was that salvation is through faith, and that repentance is part of faith but not necessarily the means of salvation, so people needed to be encouraged to faith and not to repentance.

Responding to noise in the assembly hall, the presiding bishop asked persons on the floor to refrain from private conversations.

An unidentified voting member called the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded: To end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate on the amendment.

Moved;

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded;

Yes- 853; No-129

Carried:

To end debate.

Debate was closed. Presiding Bishop instructed the assembly to vote on Mr. Day’s amendment.

Moved;

Seconded;

Yes-535; No-451

Carried:

To amend by deletion and substitution:

2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to faith and salvation in Christ;

Mr. Day’s amendment was adopted. Pr. King’s original amendment, twice amended, was now on the floor.

The Rev. Melinda J. Wagner [Oregon Synod] spoke in opposition to the motion, saying that her congregation was in a highly secular setting mission setting in Oregon. She said that people were coming to her congregation not knowing the story of Scripture at all, not knowing the story of Christ or the foundational stories of the Old Testament. She said she believes that Lutherans have a unique contribution to offer those who are searching and that the interpretation of Scripture is controversial and varied in our society. She argued against deletion of the phrase concerning the more profound interpretation of Scripture.

Mr. Kevin S. Bardonner [Indiana-Kentucky Synod] called the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded: To end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate on the amendment.

Moved;

Two-Thirds Vote Required

Seconded;

Yes-949; No-68

Carried:

To end debate.

Debate was closed. Presiding Bishop Hanson directed the assembly to vote on Pr. King’s twice-amended resolution.

Moved;

Seconded;

Yes-296; No-725

Defeated:

To amend by deletion and substitution in paragraph 2:

2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church’s individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of ~~Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture~~ the distinctive Lutheran focus on God’s use of Scripture to bring all to faith and salvation in Christ;

Presiding Bishop Hanson announced that the amendment was defeated and that discussion on the main motion, as amended earlier, would continue.

Mr. Patrick L. Monroe [Central/Southern Illinois Synod] called the previous question.

Moved;

Seconded: To end debate.

The chair called for a vote on the motion to end debate.

Moved; Two-Thirds Vote Required
Seconded; Yes-950; No-71
Carried: To end debate.

Debate was closed. Presiding Bishop Hanson directed the assembly to vote on the recommendation on page 7, Section IV, as amended, with new paragraph 3 and the subsequent re-numbering of the remaining paragraphs.

Assembly
Action: Yes-956 ; No-68
CA07.02.06

1. To invite and encourage all members, expressions, institutions, and partners of this church to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being formed by God's Word;
2. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative—identified as “Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible”—with the goal of raising to a new level this church's individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency, deeper worship and devotion, and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture;
3. To call members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore ways to reform culture and customs in this church that will open it to a new level of valuing and being shaped by the power of the Word.
4. To urge that this initiative be designed and carried out in ways that affirm the Bible's power through the work of the Holy Spirit to speak in all settings and to all ages, with attention to individual and corporate use of the Bible by members and leaders in worship, devotion, study, proclamation, teaching, moral formation, addressing social issues, and evangelizing;
5. To commit the churchwide organization to substantial engagement in this initiative in extensive collaboration with synods and congregations;
6. To request that the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—who “as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church” (provision 13.21.)—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the Vocation and

Education unit in partnership with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, as the publishing ministry of this church, and many others;

7. To anticipate the wide availability and use of a rich constellation of existing and new resources as well as the creative use of new means of communication, mindful of the global and ecumenical context, in exploration of the nature and authority of Scripture in the life of individuals and the whole Church;
8. To affirm funding of the churchwide organization's share of this “Book of Faith” initiative primarily through the regular operating budget in recognition not only that this initiative is of foundational and ongoing importance, but also in confidence that support for mission will grow from congregations through synods for churchwide ministries; and
9. To look beyond the time and scope of the “Book of Faith” initiative to what can be built on that work and to other ways in which God's Word will continually renew this church.

The presiding bishop called on the Rev. Leonard H. Bolick, bishop of the North Carolina Synod, to offer a prayer of thanks.

Greeting: Military Chaplains

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson asked the federal and military chaplains present in the plenary hall to stand so the assembly could express its support for them. The assembly stood and applauded.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked the Rev. Darrell D. Morton, the ELCA's executive for federal chaplaincy ministries, who helps to coordinate this important ministry of this church. The presiding bishop called to the podium Chaplain Peter K. Muschinske. The bishop noted that Pr. Muschinske, a chaplain in the Naval Reserves, had left his flock in Marshfield, Wisc., when he was deployed to Iraq. He had returned to his congregation for six months, then had left again when he answered a call from the ELCA Church Council to serve as a chaplain in the United States Navy. The assembly stood and applauded as Chaplain Muschinske stood at the podium.

Chaplain Muschinske thanked the assembly on behalf of all federal chaplains for the affirmation demonstrated by the voting members. He explained that pastors of the ELCA are called to wear uniforms of all branches of the military and are sent around the world to advise commanders, to provide for the free practice of religion of all faiths, and to encourage soldiers and sailors to behave in ethical ways even during times of war. He felt it a privilege to serve Christ and represent this church at the front lines of ministry, wherever they might be. He recounted an experience with engineers in the Anbar province of Iraq, who were searching for water in the desert sands. Drawing a parallel, he stated that some deployed personnel may be seeking the living water, Jesus Christ, and chaplains might be the ones to help them find living water in many circumstances.

The chaplain said that he and his colleagues bring unique gifts and qualities to this ministry as Lutherans with their understandings of the reality of the cross, of evil and suffering, and of resurrection. He thanked Presiding Bishop Hanson and Secretary Almen for their presence with, and support of, chaplains. He also expressed gratitude to the assembly for finding ways to support service people and their families and encouraged support for those being called up from the National Guard and reserves. He encouraged voting members to be community to the families of those in military service and to be there for soldiers when they come back and readjust to their lives.

Chaplain Muschinske then spoke of an Islamic holy site where Abraham and his family are supposed to have stopped to rest on their way to the Fertile Crescent. If someone wanted a tour of that site, one of the chaplains, of whatever faith, would lead the tour to assure a sense of the sacred. That was a taste of living in God's amazing grace, the chaplain said: to walk in the midst of the desert, yet to hear birds singing, see the lush vegetation, and walk on the ground on which a father of the faith had walked.

He concluded by saying that it is a gift of grace to be allowed to continue to offer up that blessing and to keep on serving up the living water that is Jesus Christ.

In honor of military chaplains throughout the world, Bp. Hanson invited the assembly to stand and join in singing the Navy hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save," then thanked Chaplain Muschinske and asked God's blessings upon him.

2008-2009 Budget Proposal: First Presentation

(Reference: 2007 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pages 47-74; Section I, pages 6, 10, and 15-16.)

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson announced that the Rev. Charles S. Miller, executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, would be retiring at the end of October. He praised Pr. Miller's gifts of leadership and his service to this church—the last six years as executive for administration. He remarked upon Pr. Miller's great gifts for overseeing churchwide staff, strategic planning, and development of the budget, and asked the assembly to join him in expressing gratitude to God for Pr. Miller. The assembly stood and applauded.

Pr. Miller thanked the assembly. He observed that there were many ways to present a budget, but that he had decided to begin with 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, which he described as the Apostle Paul's "course on mission-support funding." He spoke of Paul's collection project, his "famine relief appeal." Pr. Miller's favorite was the saint-to-saint support given by the church at Corinth to the church in Jerusalem. No matter what one calls these efforts, he said, they are essential reading for anyone associated with developing, managing, or adopting a budget. Paul's foundation course in 2 Corinthians on mission funding is both very theological and very practical. Theologically, Paul seemed to be making these points:

- Being related to God in mission evokes commitment to undergird the mission with all we are and all we have, even through funding the mission.

- Generosity in funding God's mission is founded in abundant joy, and the grace of God and our generosity produces thanksgiving to God.

The presence of the word *koinonia*, used several times in these chapters, reminds the reader that mission funding is a tangible expression of partnership in Christ and affection among those claimed, gathered, and sent by God for the sake of the world.

Pr. Miller pointed out that Paul adds some very practical thoughts about funding the mission:

- Money is needed to carry out mission.
- He is excited about mission, his zeal is evident to everyone, and his excitement is contagious.
- Paul is an advocate of planned giving and proportionate sharing of financial resources, and is genuinely committed to love of neighbor inherent in the mission, so he feels free to stir up the church because of the good that will come of it.
- Mission is always about people and their encounter with the grace and love of God in Christ.

It was in the spirit of Paul's "crash course" on funding the church, Pr. Miller said, that he presented the 2008-2009 budget proposal. He said that many of the Apostle Paul's themes would be heard as the presentation unfolded. He thanked the assembly for its faithfulness and expressed gratefulness for the many ways in which partnership in Christ had been expressed over the past biennium, mission-support gifts being one major way. He praised the zeal of the people of this church for funding the mission.

Pr. Miller reported that the 2008-2009 budget was \$100,920,000. The current fund was 81 percent (\$81,670,000) of that and 19 percent (\$19,250,000) was designated for World Hunger. The single most important source of income is mission support, which is 80 percent of the current fund budget, and is the indispensable anchor of the entire churchwide budget.

Pr. Miller stated that the budget was brought for approval with the strong conviction that it was reflective of the theological and practical vision advocated by the Apostle Paul for funding the mission to which God sends us. It is a budget, he said, with people at the center—people in congregations, people seeking a community of faith, leaders from every corner of this church, people in companion churches across the world, people in full-communion partner churches, people in poverty, and students on campuses. It is a budget, he stated, with mission as its goal, especially related to the five strategic directions and four commitments for implementation. A complementary lens in developing the budget was the report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding, he added.

He stated that this was a budget reflective of this church's understanding of interdependence in partnership among congregations, synods, institutions and agencies, and global and ecumenical partners. He described it as a radical, countercultural budget with a high reliance on gifts entrusted to the entirety of churchwide ministries, and not just a designated portion.

Pr. Miller showed slides depicting the allocation of the budget according to the five strategic directions of the churchwide Plan for Mission and other essential services of the churchwide organization:

- To support congregations in their call to be faithful and generous and assisting in their growth in evangelical outreach: \$22.2 million. This includes starting 45 new congregations in 2008 in cooperation with synods and

existing congregations; sustaining new congregations already planted; assisting 300 congregations with transformational experiences; development and production of worship resources; collaboration with synods to provide evangelism resources; and advancement of the five ethnic-ministry strategies.

- To step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God's love for all that God has created: \$18 million in funds for hunger-related ministries and \$4.9 million for this priority from current funds. This sum will enable this church to respond generously and courageously to hungry people through relief, health care, and sustainable development efforts; to provide education for this church's members on the causes of hunger and the ways in which this church participates in global efforts to overcome hunger; to advocate in Washington, D.C., the United Nations, and many states for peace, justice, and care of creation for the common good; to undertake efforts for synods to stand with people living in poverty; to confront boldly sexism in this church and in society; to provide partnership and grant support to Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the Lutheran World Federation, and Lutheran World Relief; and to study social issues that are of concern to this church's members, such as education, sexuality, and bioethics.
- To deepen and extend this church's global and ecumenical and interfaith partnerships: \$14.6 million. This priority comes alive, Pr. Miller said, as the people of this church together send 285 missionaries and volunteers to accompany 84 churches across the world; to accompany companion churches; to support financially and engage actively as a member of the Lutheran World Federation; to participate in this church's ecumenical vision by doing ministry with its full-communion partners and conciliar partners like the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.
- To assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world: \$12.2 million. Together with \$5 million of synodical support for this church's eight seminaries and with \$4 million in churchwide support, to convene key leaders and nurture networks for theological education; to support the 28 colleges and universities; to stand with this church's ministry on 600 campuses and 140 outdoor ministries through grant support and leadership development; and to encourage and facilitate youth ministry across this church, working with congregations, synods, and other partners.

Woven through these five strategic directions are four commitments on how this work will be done. Pr. Miller stated that this church is committed to lively and creative exchange of ideas; the vital contributions of institutions, agencies, and Lutheran and ecumenical and interfaith partners confronting a host of scandalous realities that manifest themselves in hunger and poverty; and the growth and full inclusion in this church of youth, young adults, and people of color and those whose primary languages are other than English.

Pr. Miller pointed to several other budget elements related to the work of this church:

- Stewardship and mission funding: \$7.5 million. This money will support the World Hunger Appeal and other resource development services, including the ELCA Foundation, as well as provide for evaluation of this church's stewardship.
- Governance: \$1.7 million. These funds support expenses associated with the Churchwide Assembly, meetings of the Church Council, and program committees.
- Coordination and support: \$20 million. This figure encompasses the work of the offices of the presiding bishop, secretary, and treasurer; communication efforts; support for the Conference of Bishops; information technology; archives; research and evaluation; and expenses associated with the Lutheran Center.

More detail is found in Section IV of the *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*.

Pr. Miller concluded by saying that his enthusiasm for this \$100 million budget proposal arose from the conviction that it would make a great difference for this church, which has been claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.

Presiding Bishop Hanson thanked Pr. Miller for his report and noted that any amendments to the budget would need to be submitted by 8:30 A.M., Friday, August 10.

The chair asked if the assembly would extend the current plenary session to allow for the second ballot for bishop and for announcements from Secretary Lowell G. Almen. Hearing no objections, the presiding bishop so ordered and yielded the chair to Vice President Carlos E. Peña.

Report of the Credentials Committee

(Reference: *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I, pages 9 and 33.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon Mr. David A. Ullrich, member of the Elections Committee and vice chair of the Credentials Committee, who reported that 1,056 voting members were registered.

Elections:

Second Ballot for Presiding Bishop

(Reference: *2007 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section IV, pages 1 and 2; Section I, pages 17-19.)

Vice President Carlos E. Peña announced that the assembly would move to the second ballot for presiding bishop. He requested that all voting members make their credentials visible to the pages, and told members that they must be seated at their seats in the assembly hall in order to be able to vote. He reminded voting members that they had the printed report of the first ballot, and then called upon Mr. Phillip H. Harris, chair of the Elections Committee, to announce the names of those persons who had withdrawn from consideration.

Mr. Harris instructed voting members to vote only for those who had not withdrawn and whose names were thus on the ballot. They included: Mark S. Hanson, Karl Donfried, James Nestingen, Ernie Hinojosa, Larry Clark, Michael Foss, Phillip Haugen, Barbara Lundblad, David Tiede, Roy Almquist, James Capers, Kevin Clark, Michel Clark, Stephen Cowen, Paul Egertsen, Bruce Ewen, Kenneth Fauty, John Gorder, Scott Grorud, Jarrett Hansen, Ralph Hill, Don Homstrom, John Holt, Todd Iverson, Louise N. Johnson, Mark L. Johnson, Larry Jorstad, Erica Kennedy, Mark Kolden, Gary Landsness, David Lose, Stephen Marsh, Glenn W. Nycklemoe, Mark R. Ramseth, Glenn Schoonover, Frank Senn, Sue Sheffer-Meyer, Rachel Tune, Norman Wahl, and Michael Walters.

Mr. Peña announced that election on the second ballot would require 75 percent of the votes. He asked voting members to listen carefully to the instructions for casting their ballots. They were to take out the blue second ballot but not mark it yet. When the vote was taken, members were to write in the name of the person as it appeared on the first ballot; otherwise, the ballot would be invalid. He said that the results would be announced after the afternoon Bible study. If there were no election, the vice president asked that the seven top nominees submit biographical information immediately thereafter. He called for questions from voting members. Seeing no speakers at the microphones, Vice President Peña asked the assembly to sing "Gracious Spirit, Hear our Pleading." He then called upon Secretary Lowell G. Almen to pray.

Following Secretary Almen's prayer, Vice President Peña instructed voting members to vote by printing the name of the nominee on the ballot and then to pass the ballot face-down to the pages. After allowing time for the vote, he declared the second ballot for presiding bishop closed, and called on Secretary Almen for announcements.

Recess

Secretary Lowell G. Almen announced that worship would follow in Assembly Hall B and asked members, as they left the hall, to take all copies of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* with them to worship, and then to leave the books on chairs in the worship

space for use throughout the rest of the week. Secretary Almen announced that, following the assembly, these books would be given to new mission starts through the ELCA. He also announced instructions for the noon meal and for various luncheons being held.

The secretary reminded voting members that the offering from the Worship Jubilee was designated for the World Hunger Appeal. He explained that members would receive Good Gifts catalogs at their tables and that gifts could then be contributed at the Registration Area. Such gifts, for example, he said, would help build a reservoir for irrigation in Peru. He told members to watch for the September issue of *The Lutheran* magazine, which would include a report on this assembly.

Secretary Almen also pointed out that some voting members had not turned in their registration forms to the cashier's booth, and should do so as soon as possible. He announced that a reception in honor of the Rev. Munib A. Younan, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, would be held from 8:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M. in the Comiskey Room at the Hyatt Hotel. Seminary cluster meetings also would be held that evening after hearings at the Hyatt Hotel. The third Plenary Session would begin at 2:00 P.M.

Vice President Carlos E. Peña called upon the Rev. Sarah J. Stumme, member of the Church Council from Northbrook, Ill., to lead the assembly in a closing prayer. At 11:14 A.M., the assembly was declared in recess until 2:00 P.M.

[This page left blank intentionally.]