

2010 Report of the Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel

Committee Members: Rev. Jane Johnston; Brian Campbell, Chair; Gary Hayungs; Rev. Gary Landsness; Susan Juilfs; Marlene Levine; Bp. Michael Last, Ex Officio; Rev. Kathy Wicks, Ex Officio; Rev. Dennis Reich, Synod Council; and Rev. Lil Johnston, Synod Council.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel (ABC Committee) is described in the Synod Constitution, Section S7.40.04. Two constitutional provisions govern assembly business and parliamentary procedure:

S7.32.01. Any voting member of the Synod Assembly desiring to add an item of new business to the agenda of the Synod Assembly shall present such an item to the chair no later than one-half hour following the close of the first plenary session of the Assembly. The chair shall immediately refer it to the Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel.

S7.40.04.e. Every motion or resolution submitted to the Synod Assembly and its Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel shall be presented to the Assembly in whole or part or by reference to the published reports. In presenting motions or resolutions, the Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel shall take one of the following actions:

- 1) to report a resolution or motion and recommend its adoption
- 2) to report a resolution or motion and recommend its adoption with amendment
- 3) to report a resolution or motion and recommend its defeat
- 4) to report a resolution or motion and offer a substitute resolution
- 5) to report a resolution or motion and recommend that the matter be referred by the bishop to an appropriate council, board, or committee
- 6) to report a resolution as information (A two-thirds vote of the Synod Assembly shall be required to consider a resolution reported as information.)

Policy for Handling Resolutions at the Synod Assembly

At its meeting on September 15, 2001, the Western Iowa Synod Council took the following action:

SC 01.09.60 TO AFFIRM the ABC Committee recommendation that any resolution not submitted prior to February 20, 2002 or through the synod council for consideration at the 2002 assembly will be referred to the appropriate committee or reported as information to the assembly. In future years, resolutions should be submitted 60 days prior to the start of the assembly to be considered at the assembly.

The Assembly Business and Council committee had asked the synod council for this affirmation. The ABC committee is instituting this change in procedure for two reasons. First, they are responding to complaints that assembly members have made in the past. Many members have been frustrated at not having enough time to consider resolutions that are not available to assembly members until the assembly has already begun to meet. They have noted that most of these last minute resolutions are not addressed to issues that have just surfaced and that they could easily have been submitted much earlier.

Secondly, at the last assembly the ABC committee itself struggled to deal with such last minute resolutions. Frequently the language needed to be reworked to communicate the intent of the authors while still making sense to assembly members. Several resolutions addressed the same issue and needed to be combined. The committee had to wrestle with the recommendations they should make to the assembly concerning these last minute resolutions. The committee believes that trying to do this on the first evening of the assembly does not allow them to do their work effectively.

Accordingly, the ABC committee is setting March 2, 2010, as the cutoff date for submitting resolutions for consideration at the 2010 assembly. This will allow these resolutions to appear in the pre-assembly report along with a recommendation from the ABC committee. Any resolutions received after that date will either be referred to the appropriate committee or submitted to the assembly as information. The only exception will be for resolutions coming to the committee from the synod council.

This change in policy is not intended to stifle the consideration of important issues at the assembly. Rather, its intent is that resolutions be handled in an orderly manner and that assembly members should have adequate time for discussion and deliberation. The committee wants to stress that the assembly still has the final say concerning resolutions it wants to consider. Any resolution that is reported as information can still be brought to the floor for consideration by a 2/3 vote of the assembly. Since recent assemblies have made changes in the agenda by a similar vote, it is not unreasonable to expect that the members could take up a resolution if they chose to do so.

1. Amend the Western Iowa Synod ELCA Constitution

Presented by Synod Council

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has conveyed to the synods of the ELCA several recommended amendments to the Constitutions for Synods; and

WHEREAS, the Western Iowa Synod Council has recommended that these changes be incorporated into the Constitution of the Western Iowa Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Constitution of the Western Iowa Synod be amended in the following way:

To amend S7.26. and add S13.40. and S13.41. to separate information about the Synod Assembly from more general information about synodically authorized worshiping communities:

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered recognized congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. ~~Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.~~

S13.40. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities

S13.41. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

To amend S8.42. to provide additional clarity:

S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

f. Giving of corporate surety in the amount determined by the Synod Council, which shall be in the custody of the secretary, and the premium therefore shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

To amend S7.22. and S.73. to make them consistent and to add voting rights for those on disability:

S7.22. The synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified

above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.23. All retired ordained ministers, all ordained ministers on leave from call, all associates in ministry on leave from call or retired, all deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on leave from call or retired, and all diaconal ministers of this church on leave from call or retired, all of whose names appear on the rosters of this synod, shall have the privilege of voice but not vote at all meetings of the Synod Assembly. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

2. Western Iowa Synod 2011 Compensation Guidelines

Presented by Board for Ministry

WHEREAS, congregations call rostered leaders “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ”; and

WHEREAS, congregations desire to provide for the financial, spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of those called to serve them; and

WHEREAS, the compensation guidelines have been developed by the Board for Ministry for congregational use;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the Western Iowa Synod ELCA adopt the proposed guidelines and urge that congregations compensate rostered leaders at the recommended levels.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

3. Adopt the Budget

Presented by Synod Council

RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the Western Iowa Synod ELCA adopt the revised budget for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2010, and the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning February 1, 2011.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

4. Authorization of Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board

Presented by Rev. James Steen

WHEREAS, in 1992 the Northeastern, the Western and the Southeastern Iowa Synods each voted, in Assembly, to create the Iowa ELCA Chaplaincy Scholarship Fund in order to raise funds in support of a scholarship that would enable two or more people to be trained each year to become institutional chaplains in Iowa; and

WHEREAS, the scholarships would “include the actual cost of the Clinical Pastoral Education and some of the living expenses for the period of training,” and

WHEREAS, this fund was turned over to the Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board of Directors upon the reorganization of Lutheran Social Services, which eliminated the chaplaincy program, and

WHEREAS, the fund of approximately \$28,000, which has not grown beyond initial contributions, has remained intact since being turned over to Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Western Iowa synod authorize the Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board of Directors to serve as administrators for all funds in the Iowa ELCA Chaplaincy Scholarship Fund as originally intended and continue to use the scholarship fund for those Lutheran pastors desiring to complete their clinical pastoral education in order to prepare to serve as certified chaplains in institutions.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

5. Raising Funds for Lutheran Chaplaincy Scholarships

Presented by Rev. James Steen

WHEREAS, as patients from throughout Iowa are served at the University of Iowa Hospitals; and

WHEREAS, it is important and efficient to have a trained ELCA chaplain available in Iowa City to serve these patients; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Western Iowa Synod urge the Synod Council to authorize funding efforts for an ELCA chaplain by the Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board at the University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City among the congregations of the Western Iowa Synod.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

6. Support and Encouragement for Waldorf College

Presented by Rev. Rod E. Hopp

Whereas Waldorf College was founded in 1903 by Lutherans as an expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has been a valued leader in Lutheran higher education since that time, and

Whereas Waldorf College has been an active partner in ministry to and with the Western Iowa Synod since the founding of the Synod, and

Whereas Waldorf College is now owned by Mayes Education Inc. a subsidiary of Columbia Southern University, and

Whereas Mayes Education Inc. is open to and welcoming of a continued Lutheran presence on the Waldorf Campus, and

Whereas the Waldorf Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit entity, has been established as a separate entity from Waldorf College to provide scholarships to Lutheran and non-Lutheran Students who attend Waldorf College, and to support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf Campus, and

Whereas the ELCA continues to explore the possibility of an on-going relationship between the ELCA and Waldorf College and/or the Waldorf Foundation, and

Whereas, Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa is open and willing to partner with the Waldorf Foundation to build and support an on campus, Campus Ministry,

Be it Resolved that the congregations of the Western Iowa Synod give prayerful, Spiritual support to Waldorf College, the Waldorf Foundation, Immanuel Lutheran Church, and the Mayes Education Inc. during this time of exploration, discovery, and transition, and

Be it Resolved that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to encourage the office of Bishop to seek ways to assist and encourage congregations of the synod to financially support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf College Campus through the Waldorf Foundation, and

Be it Resolved that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly supports and encourages the Division of Vocation and Education of the ELCA to continue to recognize Waldorf College as an Historically Lutheran College and to work to maintain a spiritual and ecclesiastical relationship with the college into the future.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

7. Resolution of Unity in Christ

Presented by Rev. Dr. David Cox, Sioux City; Rev. Delwyn L. Olivier, Sioux City; Rev. R. Paul Johnston, Sioux City; Rev. Tess Panamarow, Sioux City; Rev. Jim Davis, Gowrie; Rev. John Wolf, Inwood; Rev. John Hagberg, Sioux City; Rev. Alan Wicks, Sioux City; Rev. Beverly Wolff, Cushing; Rev. Charles Wolff, Sioux City; Rev. Lilette Johnston, Sioux City; Rev. Michael J. Schmidt, Sioux City; Rev. David Kramer, Le Mars; Rev. Paul Bengtson, Storm Lake; Rev. Matthew Martens, Fort Dodge; Rev. Jim Zuehls, Fort Dodge; Bert Burwell, Correctionville;

Whereas, we believe that the church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and our wisdom, our righteousness, sanctification and redemption; and

Whereas, we are called by the Holy Spirit to become a part of this body of faith by baptism in the Triune Name of God, and are claimed, named and marked as Christ's own people forever; and

Whereas, as a church we affirm the Bible as interpreted by the Lutheran Confessions, declaring that we are justified in God's sight not by works of the law, but by God's grace appropriated by faith in our Lord Jesus; and

Whereas, as a part of the Lutheran Movement and Confession within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church we have for centuries upheld a tradition of debate, the respect of "bound conscience," and unity in the Spirit in the bond of peace, publicly affirming as the gospel that Christ Jesus is our Lord and Savior, who calls us to seek reform and understanding as the church of Christ amidst our diversity within this creation; and

Whereas, in the words of the second chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we declare that we who were once far off from God "have been brought near in the blood of Christ, who is our peace... in his flesh having made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us...by his very presence reconciling us both to God in one body through the cross... and that we are fellow members with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone;" and

Whereas, we continue to uphold this message which we received, and in which we stand as a church in all of its expressions within the world, a message central to our understanding of salvation; and therefore be it

Resolved, within the 2010 assembly as the Western Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, that we uphold each other as members of the body of Christ, through prayer, speech, gracious and respectful interaction, whether in agreement or disagreement of the topics we consider; and be it further

Resolved, that this unity binds us together in service and support for all expressions of the ELCA, and calls the congregations of this synod and the ELCA to continued and increasing financial support of our ministry together; and be it further

Resolved, that we uphold the congregations and pastors of the Western Iowa Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the churchwide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through our communal defense and support of the neighbor, speaking well of others, defending each other in our differences, and affirming our unity in the midst of diversity as the gift of God in Christ Jesus; and be it further

Resolved, that as a sign of our unity in Christ we sing together in assembly the hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," to remind both us and the world of our common relationship in Jesus Christ, as well as our loyalty and faithfulness in the gospel and Theology of the Cross which binds us together; and be it further

Resolved, that we encourage the Western Iowa Synod Council to communicate this resolution to the ELCA Church Council, asking the ELCA Church Council to offer this resolution to other ELCA congregational and synod councils, so to reaffirm our unity in Christ through resolutions, worship, prayer and increased financial giving as we join together in the mission and ministry of Christ in the world.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and recommends its adoption.

8. A Resolution concerning 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Actions Regarding “Report on Ministry Policies”

Presented by James Fevold

WHEREAS many ELCA members believe that marriage should only be between one (1) man and one (1) woman; and

WHEREAS many ELCA members feel that the Bible does not approve of sexual activity outside of the above definition; and

WHEREAS there is question that the majority of ELCA church membership believes that people in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships should be accepted for rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS the ELCA has lost membership following the action of the Churchwide Assembly in approving the “*Report on Ministry Policies*,” be it therefore

RESOLVED that the ELCA revisit the “*Report on Ministry Policies*” and reverse the original approval of this *Report*, and that people in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships would therefore not be accepted for rostered ministry; and be it further

RESOLVED that the ELCA continue to recognize “*Vision & Expectations Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*” from 1990 and retain it as its expectations for rostered leaders; and be it further

RESOLVED that ELCA pastors will not formally recognize, officiate, nor conduct any ceremony which contradicts an understanding of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman.

The Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel reports this resolution and offers a substitute resolution.

At a Festival Assembly, the limited plenary time is designed to allow for essential business yet leave ample opportunity for ministry and mission activities. As originally offered, each Resolved could be presented as a separate resolution, and in doing so take up an extraordinary amount of plenary time. The recommended Substitute Resolution honors the intent of the presenter and seeks to preserve the schedule of a Festival Assembly.

#8A A Resolution concerning 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Actions Regarding “Report on Ministry Policies”

WHEREAS many ELCA members believe that marriage should only be between one (1) man and one (1) woman; and

WHEREAS many ELCA members feel that the Bible does not approve of sexual activity outside of the above definition; and

WHEREAS there is question that the majority of ELCA church membership believes that people in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships should be accepted for rostered leadership; and

WHEREAS the ELCA has lost membership following the action of the Churchwide Assembly in approving the “*Report on Ministry Policies*,” be it therefore

RESOLVED that the ELCA revisit the “*Report on Ministry Policies*” reversing the approval of the *Report* so that people in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationship would no longer be accepted for rostered ministry, requiring all rostered leaders to acknowledge “*Vision & Expectations Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*” from 1990 as the standard for their practice of ministry, as well as not formally recognizing, officiating, nor conducting any ceremony which contradicts an understanding of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman.