

***MINUTES OF THE
EIGHTEENTH REGULAR SYNOD ASSEMBLY OF THE
METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA***

**May 15-16, 2009
Melville Marriott Hotel, Melville, New York**

“GOD’S WORK, OUR HANDS”

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2009

PLENARY SESSION I

Bishop Robert A. Rimbo called to order the eighteenth synod assembly of the Metropolitan New York Synod at 10:16 a.m. EDT on May 15, 2009 at Melville Marriott hotel in Melville, New York.

Bishop Rimbo noted that seven other synods would be meeting this same weekend. He spoke of the assembly as a unique gathering of members of the synod, not as representatives of congregations or conferences, but as the synod itself.

The chaplains, Pr. Mack Smith and Pr. Brooke Swertfager, were introduced.

Report of the Committee on Registration and Attendance

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite was called upon to give the registration report. She reported the registered attendance as of 10:00 a.m.

Clergy	125		
Lay	225		
AiM	11	Total Voting Members	361
Visitors	50	Total Attendance	411

On the adoption of the report

APPROVED

Ms. Dorothy Demarest was welcomed again to our assembly.

The chair then turned the assembly’s attention to the standing rules and asked if there were any proposed amendments. Hearing none, he proceeded to the adoption of the agenda. One amendment was made to the published agenda, to schedule the consideration of the budget for F.Y 2010 at 2:15 p.m., the first item in Plenary Session IV.

Adoption of the Agenda

On the adoption of the agenda

APPROVED

Agenda

"God's Work, Our Hands"

Friday, May 15, 2009

PRE-ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES

- 8:00 Registration
9:15 Orientation for Voting Members
10:00 Opening Worship and Opening of an Assembly

PLENARY SESSION I

- 10:30 Welcome the Voting Members
Welcome and Introduction of Assembly Chaplain(s)
Registration and Attendance Report
Introduction of the Parliamentarian
Adoption of the Agenda
Rules and Procedures
Report of the Elections Committee and Additional Nominations
Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
Introduction of the ELCA Representative
Bishop's Report I
Introduction of Synod Officers and Synod Council
Synod Council Report
Report of the Treasurer
Introduction of Synod Staff
Registration and Attendance Report
Announcements
Prayer
12:30 Lunch

PLENARY SESSION II

- 1:30 Prayer
Elections Committee/Ballot(s) I
ELCA Report I
LIRS Presentation
Introduction to the ELCA Sexuality Study
Hunger Committee
Reference and Counsel

- Report of Elections Committee/Ballot II
Board of Pensions Report
Candidacy Committee Report
Project Connect
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
Announcements
Prayer
5:30 Dinner

- 7:30 Festival Eucharist at St. Peter's Lutheran Church/Huntington Station

Saturday, May 16, 2009

PLENARY SESSION III

- 7:00 Breakfast/Budget Breakfast
8:30 Morning Prayer
9:00 Call to order & Registration and Attendance Report
Elections Committee Results of Ballot II
Report of the Bishop II
Mission Interpretation
Reference and Counsel
ELCA Report II
Child, Youth and Family Ministry Committee Report
Tanzania Committee report
Announcements
Prayer
12:00 Lunch

PLENARY SESSION IV

- 1:15 Eucharist
2:15 2010 Budget
Reference and Counsel
Anniversaries
3:30 Sending Service, Installation of Synod Council,
Closing of an Assembly

Report of the Elections Committee and Additional Nominations

Pr. Paul Egensteiner

Pr. Paul Egensteiner gave the report of nominations:

2009 Churchwide Assembly Voting Member

Clergy	Pr. James Krauser	Pr. Craig A. Miller	Pr. Annemarie Noto
Lay Male	Carlos R. Lopez Jr.	Brian Reardon	

Synod Council Cycle A [unexpired term ending 2012]

Clergy	Pr. William Baum	Pr. Paul Nordeen
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The following nomination was received from the floor.

2009 Churchwide Assembly Voting Member

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite was nominated by Pr. Mack Smith.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Pr. Scott Kershner

Bishop Rimbo reported that Pr. Scott Kershner, chair of the committee, is soon to be married.

Pr. Kershner reviewed the resolutions submitted. He reported that there is an amendment offered for Item E “On Torture” and a new Item F from the World Hunger Committee.

Introduction of the ELCA Representative

Mr. Andrew Genszeler was introduced by Bishop Rimbo as this year’s representative from the ELCA. He is the Director for Advocacy in the ELCA’s Washington office. He gives an annual briefing to the bishops. He will be ordained into the office of the ministry this August. He received a Masters in Christian Ethics, writing on Melancthon and Christian Humanism. He was the former Director for Domestic policy before being appointed to his present position.

Report of the Bishop – Part 1

Bishop Robert A. Rimbo

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Introduction and Review

It is my privilege to serve as your bishop. You need to know that from the outset. This year has been filled with opportunities and challenges as we stand together at the intersection of fear and hope. Since beginning my term on August 1, through the wonderful Installation on October 12th, and in the months I have already served, I have known and felt your prayerful support and care. Thank you.

I thought it would be good to begin by quickly giving statistics on what I’ve been up to.

Much of my time has been devoted to making enriching and empowering conference visits. I have been in 14 of our 18 conferences and 144 of our 213 churches. I have visited for one-on-one conversations with 135 of our pastors and had gatherings for lay leaders in which some 500 of you participated. I have been in the pulpit in one or more of our churches on a given Sunday 85% of the time.

I have also found it helpful to become acquainted with our Lutheran institutions and agencies: Lutheran Medical Center; Wagner College; Eger Lutheran Home; Lutheran Counseling Center, Mineola; Seafarers and International House; Martin Luther High School, Maspeth, Queens; Wartburg Adult Care Community; and the Lutheran Social Services site at Grace, Uniondale.

I participated in the closing celebration for Lutheran Disaster Relief of New York. Most recently, I have become involved in the Board of Lutheran Services in New York Alliance.

I am very happy to be back in the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Lois likewise is pleased to be back with her friends in the spouses group. We meet three times a year and more often in the Bishops’ Online Meeting. It’s a remarkable community of servants of the church.

Within our own Metropolitan New York Synod, it has been my privilege to participate in the Urban Leaders Institute; the Mission Think Tank; our Black Pastors, Asian Pastors and Latino Pastors Groups; the Bishop’s Retreat and the Synod Council Retreat; the Deans’ Retreat and the regular meetings of that great group of leaders. I was a presenter at the Diakonia Retreat and

enjoyed saying Hello and then just sitting in the pews at the Asian Gospel Festival. I was honored at the Annual Dinner of Queens Lutheran School and had a great time at a Pinecrest Reunion in Lindenhurst and a "Meet the Bishop" youth event for the Western Suffolk Conference.

And it has been my distinct pleasure to preside at the commissioning of four synodical deacons – Marina Hunt, John Malone, Lori Scaffidi and Andrea Smernoff - and the ordinations of Judith Delgado, Khader Khalilia, Danielle Miller and Mark Erson.

Beyond our Lutheran sphere, I have rejoiced at opportunities to explore and improve our ecumenical and interfaith relations. I was pleased to be part of the Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic dialog in Dix Hills, Long Island, and make a presentation there. I have renewed our synod's relationship with the Council of Churches of the City of New York and the New York State Council of Churches. I was one of two ecumenical guests at the Rededication of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and was delighted to be an ecumenical greeter at the Installation of Roman Catholic Archbishop Timothy Dolan. On New Year's Eve morning, I represented our synod at Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Interfaith Breakfast, met the Mayor and enjoyed the company of a vast array of religious leaders.

On a personal note, Lois and I moved into a different apartment in the Inwood section of Manhattan in December. I hope this is our last move for a while! But prior to that, the greatest event for us was the birth of our grandson, Owen Robert, on July 12. At nine months he weighs 27 pounds and is 31 inches tall. I wonder where he gets that? I also continue to enjoy my work as a member of the ecumenical Consultation on Common Texts and the Board of Lutheran Summer Music, and I even was able to give a banquet address at Yale University for a conference of the American Guild of Organists; remarkably, other presenters were Don Saliers, Marva Dawn and Martin Marty. This is also an opportunity to thank Lois, my spouse, who is not here yet because she is working. I am so grateful for her ability to roll with the punches, make significant changes in her life, move once again and still manage to laugh with and at me.

I am pleased to have renewed my friendship with President David Benke of the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and to begin new friendships with Jon Norton, the area minister for the Reformed Church in America; Monsignor Guy Massie, ecumenical officer of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn; Monsignor Robert Robbins, ecumenical officer of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York; Rabbi Arthur Schneier, executive director of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation; and the Deputy Secretary of the United Nations, Dr. Asha Rosa Migiro, with many thanks to Pr. Percy Butiku for arranging that meeting.

In the midst of this busy year, I am pleased that our synod council has extended calls to very capable leaders to serve on the synod staff. The first appointment was Sarah Gioe who has become our Director of Communications and Interpretation. In early January, we welcomed Kathleen Schmidt, Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration. At the most recent synod council meeting, we elected to call Pr. Kathleen Koran to be Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations; Pr. Gary Mills to be Assistant to the Bishop for Global and Multicultural Mission; and Pr. Jonathan Linman to be Assistant to the Bishop for Formation. Our Synod Council leaders also participated in interviews with representatives of the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission which led to the call of Pr. Jack Horner to be Director for Evangelical Mission, or as we are calling him in our synod, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission.

I rejoice in the many gifts these servants bring to our work together. But I must also say I am sorry that the multicultural character of this synod is not adequately reflected in our executive staff. The simple fact is that of the 28 applications we received for the positions on our staff and the fact that I personally invited people from around the ELCA and beyond to apply, only three were from people of color or people whose primary language is other than English. This is

troubling, to say the least. So I have asked our staff to give attention to the need for leadership development among all our people. I have also asked that we establish “tables” for representatives of our ethnic communities to help us appreciate and empower leaders in those cultural contexts and from those various communities and learn from them.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank those who left our synod staff this year: Pr. Dianne Loufman, Pr. Robert Wollenburg, Ms. Pat Lawrence, Ms. Lily Wu, Ms. Constance Duever and Pr. David Anglada. Their service to the church has been a gift to us all and I am thankful.

In this interim we have been blessed by the presence and ministry of Pr. James Sudbrock and Pr. David Olson, both former bishops, who have not only brought energy but also wisdom and good humor to our work. I am thankful to them!

And let me also say our thanks to those others who serve with us: our extraordinary volunteer, Ms. Ardath Heard; Mr. John Litke; Ms. Mary Tennermann; Ms. Gloria Torres; Pr. Jeffrey Kolbo; Ms. Sandra Buratti; Mr. Branden Dicks; and my executive administrative assistant, Deacon Gayle Ruege, whom I affectionately call the Keeper of the Book of Life because she so capably manages my schedule. Without them we would not be able to do our work.

Finally, I wish to thank our Synod Council and the many others who work to uphold and support the ministry of this great synod. To you we owe a debt of gratitude.

Now, I don’t want to put too fine a point on this, but in some sense my activity this year has been like doing an M R I for the Metropolitan New York Synod. And this is what I have found.

Our Synod’s M R I

This synod and our entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is Missional, Relational and Incarnational. Let me talk about each in turn.

M - Missional

At our Mission Think Tank in February and in subsequent conversations I have held on to six basic points about our missional character.

First, it’s God’s Mission. The church’s mission is God’s Mission. We participate in the ongoing work of the Trinity. This is important in an age of anxiety when our major interest all too often seems to be survival. We are here to engage in the mission of God.

Second, that mission of God is to the whole world. The church is sent to fulfill God’s mission locally and globally. I rejoice that soon Lois and I, together with others from our synod, will be visiting our companions in Romania and Tanzania. I give thanks to God that we are now prepared to provide a teacher, a young man named Aaron Schutte, for our KEMPS school in the Northwestern Diocese Tanzania; we will accompany him as he moves to Tanzania in July. I am also pleased to share the news that Pastors Terri and Michael Church have accepted a call to serve as the English-speaking pastors in our cooperative ministry with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania. They will begin their ministry there, with their young son, Theodore, in September. We pray God’s rich blessings for these representatives of our synod.

Third, God’s mission is also to the Church. We are all renewed and refreshed through our participation in this mission of God and I am particularly grateful for our revitalized ecumenical relationships and the partnership in mission they promise to us.

Fourth, the church is also God’s mission to society, to all people in a great variety of ways. The walls between the sacred and secular are false divisions; all belongs to God and we are called to participate in our society fully in witness to the risen Christ.

Fifth, God loves the whole person. God's mission, working through us, encompasses the many facets of each human being: body, mind and spirit. As a church we are called to holy holistic ministry.

And sixth, the whole church does God's mission. All of the baptized are one in this call to serve as the Body of Christ in our world. It is not the pastor's job alone. It is not the council's job alone. It is our vocation as Christians in the world to participate in the Mission of God.

Now we come to the reality of our context for mission.

When the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came into being, there were 235 congregations in the Metropolitan New York Synod. Ten years later, 225. Today, 213.

They are in a variety of places, many of which I now know!

And what are these congregations like? One answer to that lies in the numbers at worship.

Sixty-nine of these centers for mission are in transition: 28 are likely to be able to call a full-time pastor and 41 are likely unable to call a full-time pastor.

In the interest of transparency, I want to share our synod's financial situation, about which you will hear more later in this assembly.

Where do we get our income? 34 % comes from congregations: your Mission Support sent in by congregations is 31%. Designated ELCA/MNYS projects is 3%; these are contributions from congregations and individuals for specific projects such as World Hunger, Disaster Relief, various social service agencies of the Lutheran Services New York Alliance, our seminaries, and so forth.

10% of what we receive comes from grants and other contributions. Sources for these funds are, for example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission; undesignated gifts and bequests; and designated gifts and bequests.

49% of our income comes from transfers from designated or restricted funds. Net proceeds from sales is 24% – this is the portion of proceeds from the sale of properties. 60% of these funds go to Mission Reinvestment for projects within our own synod; 30% is designated for support of operations; and 10% for the wider church outside the territory of the synod. 5% of our income comes from our Tanzanian Endowment Fund and our Romanian companion synod fund; the Urban Empowerment Fund grants; and other designated or temporarily restricted funds. Investments – 5%. The amount in the budget is determined each year based on the formula stipulated in the synod's endowment spending policy.

What do we spend our money on? 43% is given to Evangelical Outreach. ELCA Mission Support is 15% of our total budget – for 2009, we are sending the ELCA 47.5% of the Mission Support received from our congregations and our desire is to increase that contribution by .5% a year. Designated ELCA/MNYS Projects is 6% of our total budget. These are contributions sent in by congregations and individuals for specific projects such as World Hunger, Disaster Relief, various social service agencies of the Lutheran Services New York Alliance. 22% goes for Direct Support to Congregations including Mission Projects (13%), Partnership Grants (4%), churches under temporary Synodical Administration (2%), Stewardship efforts and other programs.

Another approach is to look at the budget from the stance of what happens in our synod office.

Global and Multicultural Mission – 8%. This includes Companion Synod programs, ethnic ministries and ELCA Global Mission.

Congregations – 5%. This includes development and administration of a proactive ministry to congregations, administration of interim pastorates and mobility of rostered leaders, and coordination of leadership training events for congregational leaders.

Formation – 8%. This includes the candidacy process; administration of official rosters of ministers; coordination of child, youth and family ministries; education grants; and Horizon internships.

Bishop's Office – 9%. This includes pastoral care and oversight for congregations, rostered leaders and deans as well as participation in the ELCA Conference of Bishops and wider ministries of the ELCA.

Administration and Shared Expenses include synod governance (4%) used for Synod Assembly, Synod Council meetings and other synod gatherings. Also included is Communications and Interpretation at 3%, which covers expenses for the synod website, public relations, the publication of the Lutheran New Yorker and other synod publications. And, lastly, in this area is included Finance and Administration at 20% which includes rent, depreciation, printing, postage and shipping, and general office services.

We have received 144 parochial reports for 2008 from our 213 congregations. You see the due date is today; there's still time. Let me remind you that this impacts funding for our ministries from other places. I must also say that I'm happy that my begging seems to have helped increase the numbers! On the other hand, we have only received 107 Mission Support commitments for 2009, and they were due on January 31.

R - Relational

In my visits in our conferences a recurring theme has been: We are Relational, and that's the R of our synodical MRI. Specific reports from each conference will be going to the dean of that conference. But in general, from conversations with pastors and leaders in our synod, I have identified 8 areas of strength and 8 areas of yearning.

From these visits I have discovered Eight Areas of Strength:

We know and praise God as our foundation and source of energy. That makes us different from other organizations.

We work with people of every age group and have found that small groups are key. Child, youth and family ministry is a major focus area and we are expanding the kinds of groups we work with to include senior youth, older post-confirmation youth, Latino youth, GLBT youth, new mothers, young adults, grandparents, men, women, and seniors.

We love to eat. (I can personally attest to that.) We feed people, spiritually and physically. Social ministry is very important to us, especially food drives and shelters. Some of us work with ex-offenders. Many of our churches are centers for 12-step programs.

We are thinking outside the box. Sunday school is not necessarily on Sunday anymore. It might not even be a school but rather a Kids' Club or an inter-generational program.

We need and appreciate our leaders. In our conference meetings, messages of deep appreciation were spoken for pastors, deacons, interim pastors, interns, volunteers and even the bishop and synod staff.

We like to cooperate. All of our conferences have strong community connections and are at work with them or yearning for more cooperative ventures.

God has given us talents to use. Musical talents are all over the place but there are also gifts in administration, planning, teaching and many other areas, not least of which are the gifts of patience and perseverance. Ministry is happening!

We are not satisfied with life as it is. There are so many needs, sorrows, hopes – we feel called to do our part in addressing them all.

I also gleaned Eight Yearnings from our conference visits.

We need to communicate better. The synod office needs to be a communications clearinghouse, a storehouse of best practices, a source of inspiration. In order for this to work, we need congregations to communicate with the synod office; it's a two-way street.

We need to work on clarifying and communicating roles of the synod staff. And members of our congregations want to find ways to improve communications within and between conferences, as well.

Let's see each other more. This has been a persistent theme: gratitude for my presence in the conferences and for the opportunity to have face-to-face conversation and interaction. We need to build on our connectedness.

And speaking of connections, let's combine our programs and efforts. Members of our congregations are eager to share ministry within our synod and with all sorts of other partners.

Our leaders, lay and ordained, also need practical help with church business, legal and technical matters, and the challenges of dwindling membership and decreasing financial resources.

Related to this is a desire for more nuts and bolts training. All sorts of ideas were shared: help with ministry, help with new missions, anger management classes, family and couples counseling, English as a second language classes, immigration struggles and financial guidance for congregations who want to be self-reliant but don't know how.

We can use technology to our advantage. The conferences urged more use of electronic communication. One specific recommendation was to develop a database of specialists such as experts in technology, recommended licensed contractors and other building maintenance resources.

We need to form leaders. The need for pastors continues to increase and attention needs to be given to our synod's call process. And the need to continually equip our pastors for ministry in the 21st century likewise was made clear.

Finally, the eighth yearning identified consistently is the desire for transparency. So let me assure you that we are committed to making clear where our money comes from and where it goes.

This concludes Part 1 of the Bishop's Report. In the next installment we will look at the "I" of our synodical MRI, the Incarnational character of our mission as the church and then I will talk with you about this intersection of fear and hope at which we live. Thank you for your attention and for your amazing partnership in the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Introduction of Synod Officers and Synod Council

Bp. Rimbo called upon the officers and council members to stand as their names were announced.

Report of the Synod Council

Mr. Hans Vogel, AiM

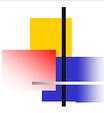
Mr. Vogel spoke of the use of "tag lines" and the ELCA's tagline "God's work, Our hands." He identified new media images developed by the ELCA.

Our synod council serves in a wide capacity. He referred to the actions taken by the synod council this year, contained in Section B of the pre-assembly report. He said that the breath of our reach is enhanced by our social ministry organizations.

He described 2008 as a year of transition and interesting partnership. He thanked bishop for including a deliberative process interacting with the executive committee and congregations in formation of the new synod staff.

Mr. Robert Buescher reviewed the financial reports for FY2008, based upon the auditor's report. [See Appendix A].

I have to cover these three topics today. As I do so, you will hear about the financial health of the Synod. On one hand you will hear that we are doing well, and on the other hand you will hear about concerns. You will probably remember Harry Truman, who complained that he could not find a one-armed economist; one that could not gesture "on the other hand".



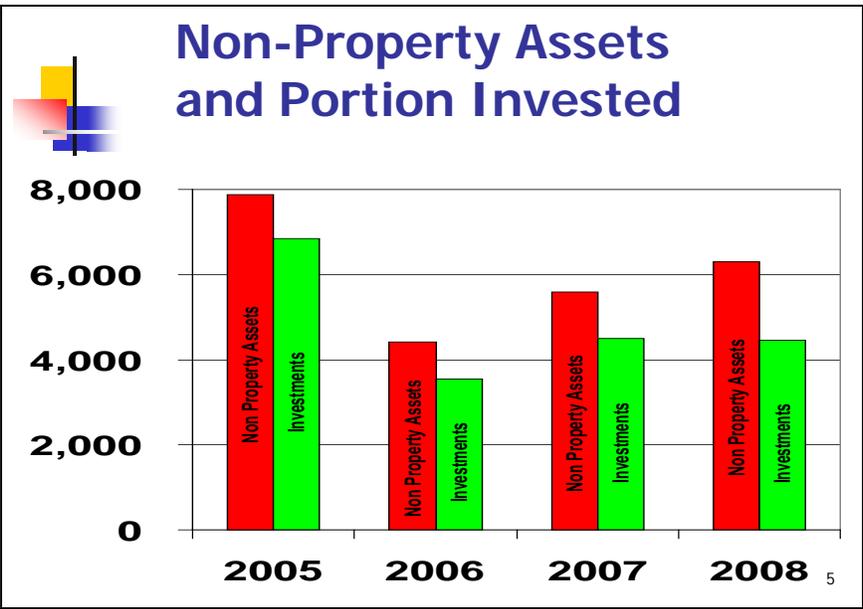
TOPIC #1

2008 Results and the Report of the Independent Auditor

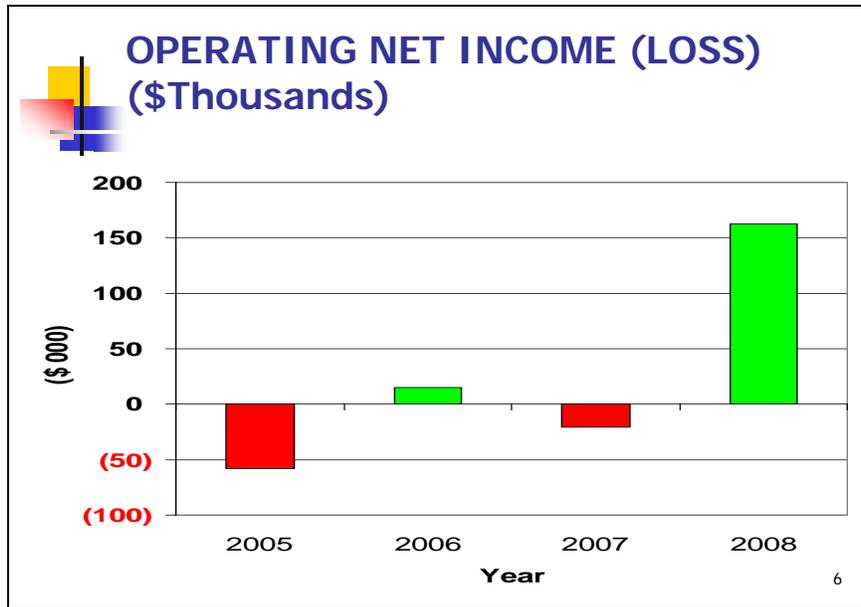
The Major Foci for an Audit is to confirm the existence and value of the Assets, and confirm the detail giving rise to the reported Revenue and Expenses

First, to our results for 2008: The Independent Auditor has again given us a complete clean opinion. They first confirmed the accuracy of the books related to assets. For ease of discourse, I have separated the assets related to our property holdings, and non property holdings.

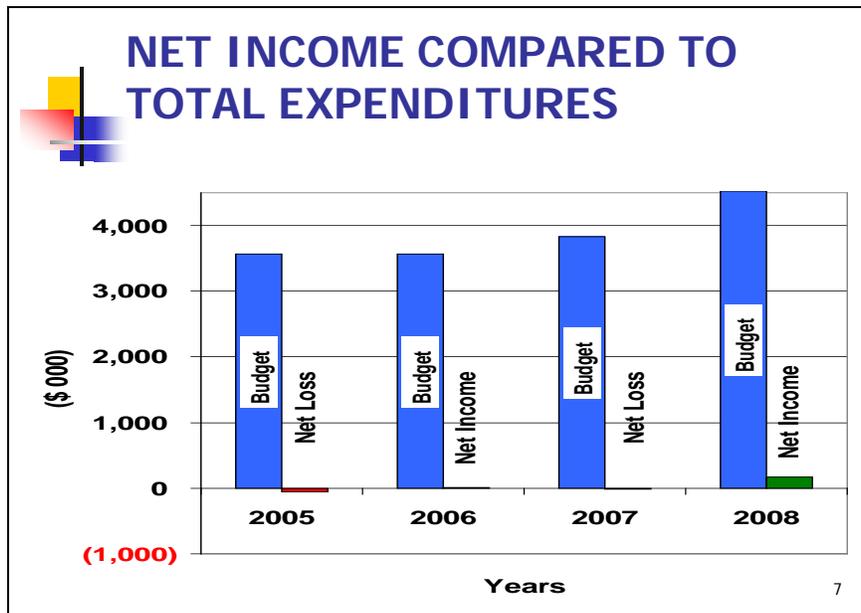
The significant analysis of the property related assets is that a portion of the total assessed value, the very top of each bar, has been expended, the green area, for repair or maintenance; and the blue area is all that is left.



The Non-Property assets, shown in red, are not all making investment income for us, shown in green. Some of that is held in our bank accounts, which draw little income. The objective is always to make as much of our non-property assets be working for us as possible. So, on one hand, we have sizeable assets, but on the other hand we are not able to utilize them fully.



The auditor also confirmed the operating income as recorded on our books. In 2008 we recorded our highest net income 4 years. One of the reasons is that we received some sizeable bequests, which were not designated, and we came out ahead even with extra spending related to the transition. On one hand, this is wonderful news, but



compared to our total expenditures, it's barely visible. But a positive net income does show that we have been able to plan and budget expenses, and then control them.

So we move to the second topic of the day, the current 10-year plan.



Topic #2

The 2008 10 Year Financial Plan

**Continues the format of the 2007
10 year plan, but is updated.**

Generating of a long-term plan for our Synod is not an easy task, and requires focusing on the long term as well as the short term. Not easy to do, since we, like any corporate entity, have more needs and desires than resources to satisfy them.

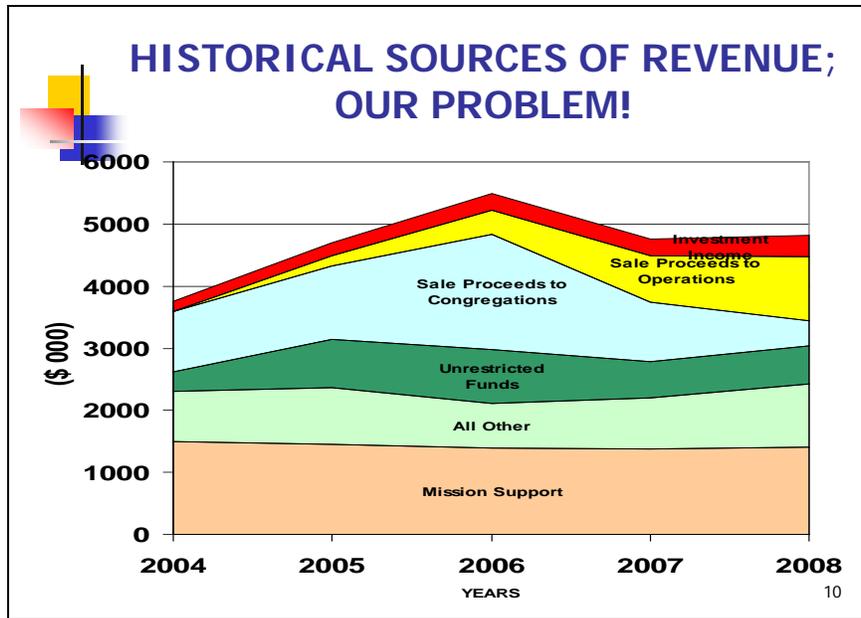
You have a detailed copy of the plan in your Assembly material, but rather than talk about the myriad of numbers, I will cut through that, and tell you what is important.



A ten-year plan has to solve some important issues that have accentuated the problems we face. It is probably not news to you that our financial support from congregations has been sliding downward for over a dozen years. The last three might indicate a stopping of that decrease, but adjusted for inflation we still have a serious drop.

We should be most thankful for the support that is evidenced, even while we must ask and encourage all to do more.

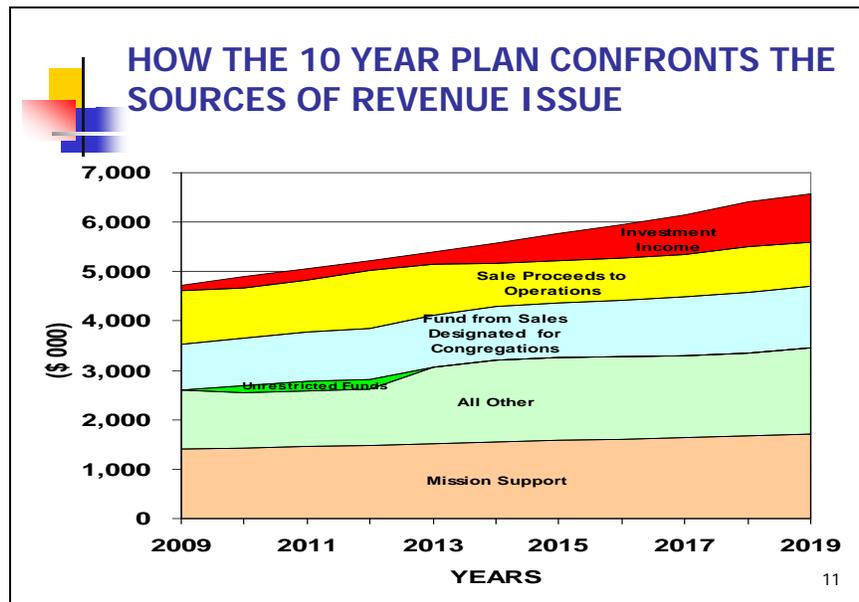
The apostle Paul certainly gave us good training in this; in every one of his letters to young churches, he always asked for money, and was quick to be thankful for the support.



But Mission Support decline is not our only problem. This chart says more about it. You can see in the brown area, the Mission Support contribution in recent years, was certainly not a growth. Going up the ladder, you can see that the green “All Other and Unrestricted Funds” were also not growing.

The blue area represents what sales proceeds we have given directly to congregations. This was growing beyond our ability to sustain that rate, and had to be necessarily limited.

With investment income, the red, being very small, we were forced to make up the difference by using, and increasing, or use of sale proceeds, shown in the yellow area to support operational costs.



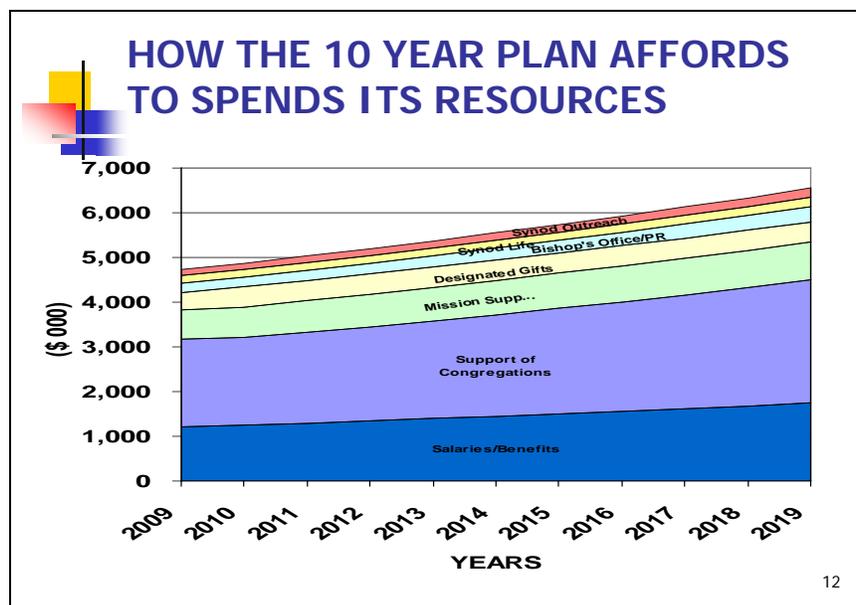
This is how the 10 year plan addresses the issues. It assumes a modest increase in Mission Support, the brown.

“All Other”, the green includes unrestricted grants and gifts designated by the donor. The gifts are all paid out to the intended recipients. Since the revenue matches the amount paid out, the size and shape of the green is of no help to our long-term health.

The blue maintains a significant transfer of sales proceeds designated for congregations, and the yellow shows decreases the use of sale proceeds to fund operations.

The key to our long-term ability to survive and grow is shifted to depend more on Investment income, shown in red, based on building our invested assets by being frugal in spending.

Achieving all of the revenue sources is fraught with risks of economy, and commitment – certainly not assured without much effort by the Synod staff, and, more important – you, the congregations of the Synod



This chart describes the plan predicts expenses. You will note that salaries, in dark blue, do not grow rapidly, nor does anything else except Support of Congregations, in light blue.

Basically we have to balance compassionate spending with the necessity of being good stewards of those funds we get.

FAVORABLE RESULTS

- The plan always has zero net income
- The use of sales proceeds for operations is limited and decreasing
- The plan continues to provide growth in direct support of congregations and new missions.

The plan continues to limit using sale proceeds to support operations, while we are doing more for outreach, while holding other costs down.



UN - FAVORABLE RESULTS

- **The plan only shows a 2% growth in Mission Support. If we want to expand support to the congregations, we need to do more.**
- **The plan requires that our longevity is dependant on investment income.**

On the other hand, it's not all a rosy and healthy picture. The plan does not emphasize that more giving by congregations is required to use less funds from sales for operations. And it relies on investment income, which in the next year of so is not likely to be reliable.

At any rate, the Council had concluded that the plan should be used as a guide in generating budgets, but allows room for office reorganization, not firm at the time of most efforts for generating the 2008 10-year plan.



TOPIC #3

- **The Adjusted 2009 and**
- **Proposed 2010 Synod Budget**

So we are off the last topic, the Adjusted 2009 Budget and the Proposed 2010 budget.



Changes in Format

- **Focuses Synod Staff Changes, with specific position descriptions**
- **Re-Arranges 2009 Budget but makes no significant changes in line items, or total Revenue and Expenses**
- **Proposed 2010 Budget reflects modest increase (2.8% Increase over 2009)**

Since the Financial Management Committee was able to put the budgets in the form consistent with the new office staffing and responsibilities.

I must tell you that none of the former detailed expense lines were left out - only moved to the appropriate area where that line item is applicable and where a specific staff member is identified as responsible.

2009/2010 REVENUE		
Total Contributions from Congregations	1,540,000	1,540,000
Total Grants and Other Contributions	451,200	381,200
Total Transfers from Other Funds	2,248,981	2,407,508
Total Other Income	288,985	329,834
TOTAL REVENUE	4,529,166	4,658,542

The Assembly will be asked to approve an adjusted budget for 2009, and the proposed budget for 2010. This slide summarizes the budgets being proposed.

The proposed adjusted 2009 budget, although in the new format, is \$100,000 lower than that approved last year.

2009/10 EXPENSES (PART A)		
EVANGELICAL OUTREACH	1,284,377	1,262,400
GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL MISSION	373,021	427,529
CONGREGATIONS	198,055	204,113
FORMATION	364,964	372,990
MISSION SUPPORT	600,000	618,000
BISHOP'S OFFICE	385,628	438,566

Here is half of the Expense side of the budgets, related titles of the new staffing responsibilities. Note that the largest expenditure is Evangelical Outreach, the most important in direct support of congregations and missions.

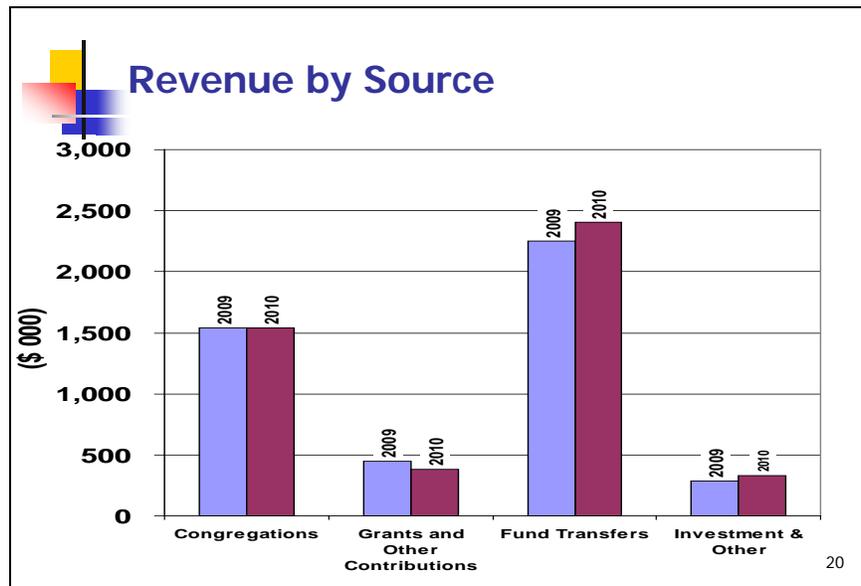
2009/10 EXPENSES (PART B)

SYNODICAL ADMINISTRATION	100,000	100,000
SYNOD GOVERNANCE	189,800	189,950
COMMUNICATIONS, PR AND INTERPRETATION	139,035	144,317
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	894,286	900,677
TOTAL EXPENSES	4,529,166	4,658,542
NET REVENUE OVER EXP	0	19

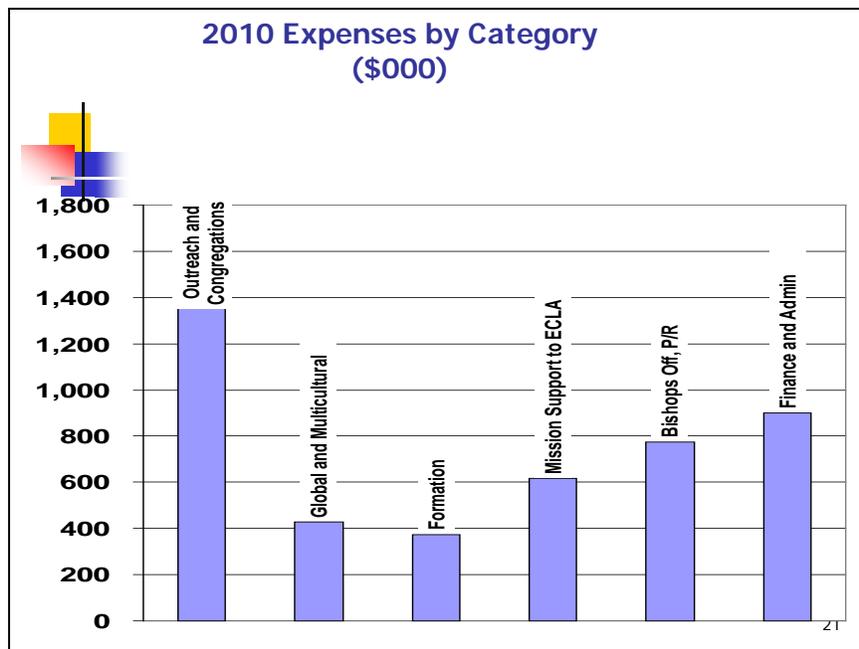
The rest of the Expense side of the budget includes more of the auxiliary functions that support the other areas. It results in a Net Excess of revenue over expenses of \$0.

You received a copy of those budgets in your packet, and extra copies of it, plus copies of the expanded detailed version are available in at the front of the room.

I would hope you can attend the "Budget Breakfast" tomorrow at 7:00 AM where Kathy Schmidt, who is the newly appointed Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration, the Chair and other members of the FMC and I will be present to discuss the detail and answer any questions you might have. I thought you would like to see a graphical representation of the relationship between the 2009 and 2010 budgets.



Shown graphically, you can see that a significant portion of revenue continues to come from various internal funds, including proceeds from sales; and that the 2009 and 2010 budgets are very similar.



Expense allocation between the 2009 and 2010 budgets are minimal by this chart shows that Outreach and support of congregations continues to top the list.

RESOLUTIONS TO BE PRESENTED

- **ACCEPT THE ADJUSTED 2009 BUDGET**
- **APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2010 BUDGET**
- **APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF TAIT, WELLER & BAKER AS SYNOD AUDITORS FOR 2010.**

Tomorrow we will ask you to approve three resolutions.

So what about the financial health of the Synod?

Sorry to say I have two hands, and although there are more good signs than bad, there are also serious concerns present.

Thank you for your interest in this important area.

Robert H. Buescher, Treasurer

On the adoption of the Auditor’s report

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.01**

Introduction of Synod Staff

Bishop Rimbo acknowledged the support staff and interim staff. He noted that Sandra Buratti and Gloria Torres were in New York holding down “the fort.” Those present at the assembly were Mr. Branden Dicks, Ms. Mary Tennermann, Deacon Gayle Ruege, Pr. Jeffrey Kolbo, Ms. Marlene Lund, Mr. John Litke, Director for Synod Administration, Pr. David Olson, Interim Candidacy, and Pr. James Sudbrock, Interim Call Process

He then introduced those appointed to senior staff positions:

- Director for Communication and Interpretation, Ms. Sarah Gioe
- Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration, Kathleen Schmidt
- Assistant to the Bishop for Global Mission Multicultural Mission, Pr. Gary Mills
- Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission, Pr. Jack Horner
- Assistant to the Bishop for Congregation, Pr. Kathleen Koran
- Assistant to the Bishop for Formation, Pr. Jonathan Linman

Report of the Committee on Registration and Attendance Pr. Brathwaite

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite was called upon to give the registration report. She reported the registered attendance as of 11:30 a.m.

Clergy	163		
Lay	255		
AiM	12	Total Voting Members	430
Visitors	52	Total Attendance	482

Following some announcements, a prayer was given by Chaplain Mack Smith. The assembly recessed for lunch at 12:02 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2009
PLENARY SESSION II

With the rap of the gavel, Bp. Rimbo called the assembly back into session at 1:38 p.m. He congratulated Manuel and Minerva Melendez on the occasion of their 49th wedding anniversary.

Before the prayer, Pr. Brooke Swertfager, co-chaplain invited members of the assembly to seek out the chaplains for any pastoral needs and concerns.

Report of the Elections Committing -- First Ballot Pr. Egensteiner

Pr. Egensteiner told the assembly that updated biographical information had been distributed during the lunch recess. He described the ballots and asked for their distribution.

Bp. Rimbo asked if there had been any additional persons had registered since the last report. Pr. Brathwaite reported that there were six additional registrations and that the registration was now 436 voting members. The bishop then instructed the members to cast their ballots.

The first ballot contained the following names

Ticket 1
Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Clergy
Craig Miller
Rosaline Brathwaite
Annemarie Noto
James Krauser

Ticket 3
Synod Council – Clergy
Paul Nordeen
William Baum

Ticket 2
Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Lay male
Carlos R. Lopez, Jr.
Brian Reardon

When it had appeared that the members had finished voting, Bp. Rimbo asked all members to turn in the ballots and declared the balloting closed.

Report of the ELCA Representative - Part 1 Mr. Andrew Genszler

Mission Support

Thank you for your partnership in the mission and churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Mission support is the portion of the offerings that of members in your congregations for synodical and churchwide mission and ministries beyond the local congregation.

In 2008, the Metropolitan New York Synod provided 46.5% of the mission support received from the congregations of this synod for mission and ministry both within the ELCA and its partners and agencies, and for our global partners. In 2008, this amounted to \$661,609. Thank you.

In late March, the Church Council had to reduce its 2009 spending authorization for the churchwide organization by \$5.6 million to \$76.8 million, and the World Hunger Appeal

spending authorization by \$1.9 million to \$18.7 million. Contingency planning in anticipation of these reductions has resulted in elimination of 23.5 full time staff and another 12 currently vacant positions.

Why do I tell you this?

To let you know that the churchwide organization is taking the contingency planning seriously and the use of mission support seriously, and to let you know how critical your support is for the work and ministries of the church.

Mission support provides more than 80% of the resources needed to fund the mission and churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Your strong support is especially critical in these difficult times which, as Bishop Hanson notes, have the potential to turn so many of us inward. Individual consumerism was among the factors plaguing our society, along with markets gone awry, that led us into financial meltdown now affecting so many families, jobs, mortgages, kitchen tables, empty garages around the country. Let us hope and pray that a new spirit of community, or shared risk, shared responsibility, shared decision-making can arise from this morass. The churches can lead the way by defining and providing example of such a community.

The times are sobering, but this church's capacity for providing hope and practical support to others, witness for others is compelling and, in some cases, amazing.

Together we are the ELCA – nearly 10,500 congregations, 65 synods and the churchwide organization. We relate to a worldwide communion, LWF, of 67 million Lutherans; we relate to three Lutheran NGO partners- LWR, LIRS, and LSA.

From my position in Washington, I can tell you that a Lutheran public witness and work is respected and solicited on everything from homeless services and housing policy to international community adaptation to weather and climate change; from health care reform to immigration reform.

None of this is possible without your support- again thank you very much indeed for your example of community, your leadership among and your example to other synods.

Churchwide Assembly/Human Sexuality

Let me say a few words about the upcoming Churchwide Assembly because it is on the minds of many people. As in past years, it will be centered on worship, prayer, and careful consideration of many, many issues of importance. We will vote on a full communion agreement with the United Methodist Church. We will consider a far-reaching strategy to address, both domestically and internationally, the HIV and AIDS pandemic. We will hear about plans to collaborate with the United Nations Foundation and our Lutheran family around the world to help eradicate malaria. (And, we understand that William Gates Senior will be present to address us on these efforts!) As the assembly approaches, you can read all about it at www.elca.org/assembly, and in August you can watch it streamed live.

Social statement

And, as many of you know, at this Churchwide Assembly we will consider a social statement - the 10th social statement in the history of the ELCA - on human sexuality. Social statements have been important means by which this church addresses social concerns. They are theological and teaching documents for both communal and individual moral deliberation. The social statement on human sexuality, entitled Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust, was mandated by voting members of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, and has been in process since then. It has been a lengthy and participatory process; the social statement will be presented to the assembly following more than 100 hearings and thousands of written responses. I urge you to read the full text of the social

Minutes of the 2009 MNYS Synod Assembly -- p. 20

statement and it's implementing resolutions. There is also an executive summary and "frequently asked questions" page available on the Web site ([www.elca.org/faithful journey](http://www.elca.org/faithful_journey)).

The document places considerable emphasis on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreement. While the subject of human sexuality can elicit divisive and even confrontational rhetoric, the task force's work demonstrates how this church can provide a constructive approach as a community of Christ.

Ministry policies

The task force also issued a Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies. The Report and Recommendation responded to a specific request of the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. The report describes the history of the ELCA with regard to the question of rostering persons in same-gender committed relationships, and it candidly addresses the current lack of consensus regarding this issue. The Recommendation proposes - and the Church Council transmitted - to the Churchwide Assembly a series of four resolutions on ministry policies.

These resolutions provide a process that could help the assembly clarify its intentions. Based on consideration of the resolutions, if this church determines to roster people in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, an approach of "structured flexibility" could be adopted. Under this approach of "structured flexibility", if approved, policies would be developed within existing structures to allow the candidacy, calling and ordination, consecration or commissioning of persons in committed, same gender relationships.

There would be consistent churchwide policies; but, as now, the policies would be applied by those authorized to make decisions. The proposed resolutions on ministry policies also recognize the importance of bearing the burden of others and recognizing the bound conscience of all.

Following action by the Church Council in March, the social statement and its implementing resolutions as well as the recommendation on ministry policies and its four resolutions will be considered by the Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis in August. They warrant prayerful consideration by everyone.

Mission Investment Fund and Fund for Leaders

The media gather around financial troubles and sex issues and feed on them and leave no room or oxygen for the many other ministries, mountains moved, and minor miracles accomplished regularly by our church body, and by our church body working with and for others. Let's talk a little about the future together.

Through the Mission Investment Fund, Lutherans and Lutheran organizations can purchase investments that earn competitive interest while seeing the principal used to make loans to new and expanding congregations for land, buildings and capital improvements. As of last year, 53 congregations and other ministries in your synod currently have \$4.6 M invested through the MIF! Currently 13 congregations and ministries are benefiting through total loans of \$2 M.

*Through the Fund for Leaders last year, 148 future pastors and rostered lay leaders received \$777,000 in tuition support- (*where was this program when I was in seminary?) An important part of this large commitment was the support provided by the Metro NY Synod Fund for Leaders Seminary Scholarship, which distributed funding in the past year to the following students from Metro NY:*

Tony Aguilar, Danielle Fey, Jeffrey Goodrich, Flora Hartford, Joseph Mantovani, Miriam Sedzro, and Mae Sheppard.

Please come back for Part Two of this report tomorrow morning to learn about and celebrate with me the work and witness of the ELCA and Lutherans around the globe. There is so much more to talk about.... Thank you.

Presentation: Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Ms. Tara Mulder

Ms. Tara Mulder, the Director for Church and Community Outreach for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service described the work of LIRS as derived from God's mandate to welcome the stranger. She stressed particularly the work among the most vulnerable of the strangers among us, including asylum seekers, torture victims and unaccompanied minors.

She gave an overview of a program of LIRS entitled "Be Not Afraid" to assist migrants, immigrants, and congregations working with them to address issues which arouse fear and concern. Through various modules, the program presents four main components: 1. Be informed; 2. Be Equipped; 3. Be Prepared; and 4. Be an Advocate.

She urged congregation to be a voice in the upcoming debate on immigration reform and directed the assembly to LIRS.org. for materials.

Introduction to the ELCA Sexuality Study

Bp. Rimbo

Bishop Rimbo provided some comment and background on the report of the task force and the proposed social statement.

He described the report of the task force as "all about relationships." He said that the statement holds out themes of trust, grace, mercy, faithfulness and God and offers hope that we may remain one, as Jesus prayed. He pointed out that most of the statement is non-controversial and addresses biblical themes.

The report of the task force was not only to be a statement but it was also charged to bring forth recommendations on the question: "Can persons in same-sex relationships serve in leadership in the church?"

The task force recommendations ask the Churchwide Assembly to vote on four separate steps and resolutions.

- Will the ELCA in principle commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships?
- Is the ELCA in principle commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church?
- Will the ELCA, in the implementation of its policy, commit itself to bearing one another's burdens, loving the neighbor, and respecting the bound consciences of all?
- Will the ELCA allow for structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship?

Bishop Rimbo said that he expects that the assembly will vote to create "space" for the ministry of partnered gay and lesbian persons. The bigger question remains whether we will find ways for faithful conscience-bound persons on both sides, bound to each other in love, because of lack of consensus, to respect our differences. He affirmed that this should not be church-dividing and that no congregations will be forced to call a leader they do not wish to call.

He said that he was personally confident our synod will remain united whatever decisions the Churchwide Assembly makes and asked for the prayerful support of the church in this period.

Report of the Hunger Committee

Ms. Karen Nurmi

Ms. Nurmi and the committee reported on the work of the Hunger Committee giving particular attention to the arrival of the Tour de Revs on the territory of the synod June 10-12, 2009, and the challenge to support the ELCA World Hunger Appeal that would come before the assembly in a resolution.

Following the report, the assembly sang the hymn “Come We That Love the Lord,” led by Pr. William Clark at the piano.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Pr. Scott Kershner

Pr. Kershner began the report with the World Hunger Committee resolution, which had not been included in the pre-assembly report.

ITEM F

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE TOUR DE REV’S

Whereas, Jesus made it crystal clear that feeding the hungry and advocating for those in poverty is of the highest priority for those who are Christ’s disciples (Matthew 25:34-35); and

Whereas, The Tour de Rev’s are setting out on a three-seater bamboo bicycle to raise awareness of the needs of the hungry and those in poverty and will arrive in Metropolitan New York Synod on June 10th and 11th, 2009; and

Whereas, The Tour de Rev’s goal is to raise \$5 million in their ride to assist the ELCA in reaching its goal of raising \$25 million annually for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal; and

Whereas, The ELCA World Hunger Program and Appeal is incredibly effective and efficient in combating hunger and its causes and deserves our support; and

Whereas, God’s people respond generously when they see and understand a real human need; now, therefore be it **RESOLVED**, that each congregation of the Metropolitan New York Synod be encouraged to offer their support and prayers for the “Tour de Rev’s” by:

- lifting up the incredible story of what our church is doing on behalf of the poor and hungry, both here and abroad;
- educating the congregation on the needs of those who live in poverty and who are hungry; and
- urging the congregation to contribute to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, with a goal of \$5 per member; and be it further

RESOLVED, that as members of a Church that fervently cares for the poor and hungry, we individually support this effort with generous gifts of our own, to eradicate hunger in our world.

Submitted by: The Metropolitan New York Synod World Hunger Committee – Al Ahlstrom (Co-Coordinator), Rosalind Braithwaite, Robert Brent, Karen Nurmi, Danielle Miller, Jim O’Hanlon, Beverly Small, James Sudbrock, Mary Tennermann, Richard Thyden, Alex Walbrodt, Sharon Wilson

Committee Recommendation: To adopt

Deacon Karen Nurmi clarified the point of the third bullet is \$5 per baptized member, noting that it is not an exorbitant amount.

There was no further discussion; the bishop called for a vote.

On the adoption of the Item F

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.02**

RESOLVED, that each congregation of the Metropolitan New York Synod be encouraged to offer their support and prayers for the “Tour de Rev’s” by:

- **lifting up the incredible story of what our church is doing on behalf of the poor and hungry, both here and abroad;**
- **educating the congregation on the needs of those who live in poverty and who are hungry; and**
- **urging the congregation to contribute to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, with a goal of \$5 per member; and be it further**

RESOLVED, that as members of a Church that fervently cares for the poor and hungry, we individually support this effort with generous gifts of our own, to eradicate hunger in our world.

ITEM A

A MEMORIAL TO THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ON A “JUSTICE FOR WOMEN” SOCIAL STATEMENT

Whereas, We are all, male and female, created in the image of God and through our baptisms united as one in Christ; and

Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) churchwide strategic plan, *Faithful Yet Changing The Plan for Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, states: “[This Church] must and will...Confront the scandalous realities of racial, of racial ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence,” and

Whereas, Sexism continues to exist in many forms in society and brings harm to all; according to the International Labor Organization

- In 2/3 of industrialized countries, the jobless rates for women are 50% to 100%, higher than men; Women work longer hours and are paid an average of 25% less than their male counterparts;
- The wage gap is not decreasing; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Justice states that

- Women are ten times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner;
- One in six women have been victims of an attempted or completed rape;
- 1.2 million women are forcibly raped by their current or former male partner;
- Every day four women die in this country as a result of domestic violence; and

Whereas, Sexism continues to exist in many forms in this church and brings harm to all. Statistics show there are nearly equal numbers of men and women enrolled in seminary programs. However,

- Fewer women serve as senior pastors or bishops;
- Women pastors still wait longer for calls;
- 10.5% of women (as compared to 4.7% of men) are on leave from call;

Whereas, Lay women, of which there are nearly 3 million in the ELCA, also experience sexism in a variety of forms within this church; only 14% of congregation presidents and only 24% of the full professors at church-related colleges are women; and

Whereas, Through the life, death and resurrection of Christ and his radical call to live out and lift up a realized vision of the reign of God; we are called to publicly address and confront significant social issues that affect the common good and seek to realize God’s justice within church and society; and

Whereas, By calling for and engaging in the social statement process, this whole church partakes in meaningful theological dialogue involving all members of this body of Christ; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorializes the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to initiate a study for a social statement on Justice for Women.

Submitted by Ms. Antonia Clemente, Pr. Ann Tiemeyer

Committee Recommendation: To adopt

Pr. Ann Tiemeyer, spoke to the importance of attention to not only what we say but how we say it. This statement would be not only a gift to the church but to the entire ecumenical movement in achieving justice for women.

She indicated that the Rocky Mountain synod has passed this resolution. The ELCA's Church in Society unit favors this resolution being presented to the coming Churchwide Assembly.

On the adoption of the Item A

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.03**

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorializes the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to initiate a study for a social statement on Justice for Women.

ITEM B

A RESOLUTION TO BECOME A BOOK OF FAITH SYNOD

Whereas, The ELCA, its synods and congregations confess in their constitutions:

"The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world"; and

Whereas, We likewise confess "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"; and

Whereas, All confirmed members of our congregations have publicly affirmed their intention to hear the word of God and proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed; and

Whereas, The Tenth Biennial Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America endorsed "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible," a five-year initiative to promote study of the Bible; and

Whereas, The ELCA has begun the Book of Faith Initiative inviting everyone to join the conversation, to make a commitment, and to become part of the initiative; and

Whereas, The purpose of the Book of Faith initiative is to increase biblical literacy and fluency for the sake of the world; and

Whereas, Each congregation and member of the synod will be renewed, enlivened, empowered and equipped for mission by becoming more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, and joining the Book of Faith Initiative; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod declares itself a "Book of Faith" synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, gathered in assembly, invites and encourages all members, expressions, institutions and partners of this synod to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing and being formed by God's Word, and that specifically

- Its members covenant together to begin a regular practice of Bible study and prayer, gathering with others in their congregations and/or community to speak and hear the Word together; and that

- Its clergy and rostered leaders affirm their commitment to diligence in their study of the Holy Scriptures in their preparations to teach and preach, and in their daily devotional practices; and that
- Its congregations join the Book of Faith Initiative in order to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word; and that
- Its bishop, as its pastor and teacher of the faith, shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the synod staff, the deans and conferences of the synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that as a “Book of Faith Synod” each synodical organization, commission, committee, or task force, together with each congregation council and committee are encouraged to begin each meeting by dwelling in the Word.

Submitted by the Metropolitan New York Synod Council

Committee Recommendation: To adopt

Pr. Gary Mills spoke in favor of the resolution, noting that many other synods addressed the Book of Faith initiative last year. Many persons in the synod have already participated in several workshops. The deacons and *diaknoia* students focused their retreat on this. Further opportunities will be available in the summer [of 2009]. He outlined planned emphases for the next five years.

On the adoption of the Item B

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.04**

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod declares itself a “Book of Faith” synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, gathered in assembly, invites and encourages all members, expressions, institutions and partners of this synod to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing and being formed by God’s Word, and that specifically

- Its members covenant together to begin a regular practice of Bible study and prayer, gathering with others in their congregations and/or community to speak and hear the Word together; and that
- Its clergy and rostered leaders affirm their commitment to diligence in their study of the Holy Scriptures in their preparations to teach and preach, and in their daily devotional practices; and that
- Its congregations join the Book of Faith Initiative in order to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word; and that
- Its bishop, as its pastor and teacher of the faith, shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church—lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with the synod staff, the deans and conferences of the synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that as a “Book of Faith Synod” each synodical organization, commission, committee, or task force, together with each congregation council and committee are encouraged to begin each meeting by dwelling in the Word.

ITEM C.1

**A RESPONSE TO THE TASKFORCE FOR ELCA STUDIES ON SEXUALITY AND
A MEMORIAL TO THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASKFORCE FOR ELCA STUDIES ON SEXUALITY**

Whereas, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with these matters for eight years, and their work models and invites mutually respectful dialogue about sexuality throughout this church; and

Whereas, the proposed Social Statement powerfully proclaims this church’s teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality, its implementing resolutions, and a Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and

Whereas, the Recommendation on Ministry Policies allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and

Whereas, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;
2. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church-body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

Submitted by The Manhattan Ministerium of the Metropolitan New York Synod

Committee Recommendation: To adopt

Rationale: The committee sees this resolution as consistent with the prior actions of our synod assemblies.

ITEM C.2

**A RESPONSE TO THE TASKFORCE FOR ELCA STUDIES ON SEXUALITY AND
A MEMORIAL TO THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASKFORCE FOR ELCA STUDIES ON SEXUALITY

- Whereas*, As Lutherans “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone”¹; and
- Whereas*, Many passages in Scripture both speak, and have been consistently throughout history heard to speak, in a plain and unambiguous voice concerning marriage and the exercise of human sexuality; and
- Whereas*, The Scriptures teach very positively of God’s design for marriage as reflected in the words of our Lord Jesus, “Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh” (Matt. 19:4-6a RSV); and
- Whereas*, A majority of ELCA members, and most Christian churches - including most in the Lutheran World Federation – believe that marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman; and
- Whereas*, The erotic expression of our sexuality is consistently taught and celebrated in Scripture as being rightly ordered to be exercised within the bounds of marriage; and
- Whereas*, Scripture also consistently prohibits any other expression of sexually erotic activity outside the bounds of the marriage; and
- Whereas*, The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality which asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships, for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and
- Whereas*, A synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of our church forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and
- Whereas*, The interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synod, and congregation expressions of the ELCA requires one Office of Ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and
- Whereas*, The ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called Vision and Expectations² and Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline which are in harmony with the plain sense of Scripture and its overwhelming understanding throughout history; therefore be it
- RESOLVED**, That the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further
- RESOLVED**, That the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposals in the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and be it further
- RESOLVED**, That the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reaffirm the ELCA’s current standards for pastors and other rostered leaders as expressed in *Vision and Expectations* and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

Submitted by: Pr. Frederick J. Schumacher, STS, Retired

Pr. Mack H. Smith Jr., Wyandanch; Pr. Eric Swensson, New Rochelle; Pr. Rodney E. Eberhardt, STS, Farmingdale; Pr. Eric A. Mathsen, STS, White Plains; Pr. Terrance Weber, STS, Maspeth; Pr. Joy Clarke, Springfield Gardens;

Pr. James R. Corgee, STS, Retired; Pr. Francis D. Bonadonna, STS, Farmingdale; Dcn. Joann Abrahamsen, White Plains; Pr. Henry Schriever, retired; Pr. Harvey von Harten, Coney Island; Pr. Glenn C. Stone, retired

Committee Recommendation: Not to adopt

¹ Formula of Concord, The Epitome, 1. – *The Book Of Concord*, Edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, Fortress Press.

² Especially pertinent are the lines: “Single ordained ministers are expected to live a chaste life. Married ordained ministers are expected to live in fidelity to their spouses, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful. Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships.”

The bishop described the process for handling these resolutions. A quasi-committee of the whole discussion will last for 30 minutes. At the end of that period we will take a vote on C.1. If C.1 passes, C.2 becomes moot; if C.1 fails we will vote on C.2. Discussion will focus on the Social Statements and Recommendation documents, for or against. Amendments may be offered after the quasi committee time ends.

Pr. Jared Stahler spoke in favor of the C.1 from the Manhattan ministerium. He noted that its provisions were consistent with prior actions of our assembly. He said the recommendations ask for the ELCA to regularize practice and pastoral care with regard to all people in relationships and thus to provide a way for all of us to live together faithfully

Pr. John McKenzie asked for clarification about the opportunity for amendments.

Pr. Frank Bonnadonna reported his discussions with religious leaders in various countries in Africa. He described his difficulty in getting an audience with one leader because of the ELCA's stance on human sexuality. He was asked "Why do American's give expression to trust in God but not obey the scriptures?" He reminded the assembly that what we do resounds across the world.

Pr. Griffin Thomas spoke of Pastor. Samuel Trexler, pioneer in the English-speaking Lutheran Church movement in Brooklyn, who founded campus ministries and served as a parish pastor and military chaplain. He was the President of the New York Ministerium. He established the Trexler fund. Pr. Thomas explained that Pastor Trexler shared his life with a male partner. Pr. Thomas observed that gay pastors have been a vital part of the ministry of this synod for a long time.

Mr. Dick Case said that he saw in the third resolution a disparity of treatment between heterosexual and homosexuals; the same standards did not apply to both groups.

Ms. Antje Katcher spoke in support of C.1 asking that everyone be wanted, that we be open.

Mr. Charles Kalhorn said that he was perplexed, as we had resolved to be a Book of Faith synod and C.1 goes against the Word of God. He urged members to reject C.1 and adopt C.2.

Pr. David Parsons observed that Jesus said "There are many things I need to say to you, but you cannot bear them now..." Pr. Parsons went on to say that the word of God continues to come to us, continues to teach us, and enriches our understanding.

Pr. Joy Clarke said that since this matter is coming before the Churchwide Assembly this year, our previous resolutions have been premature. She also expressed the need for clear definitions; she felt that because we have proceeded without definitions we have come to where we are. She raised a concern that the commission overstepped its mandate in speaking of Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgendered persons. She felt that the subjects of bisexuality and transgenderism had not been previously discussed.

Ms. Ginny Cummings expressed embarrassment about going home and saying we're voting to accept a group of persons. Jesus died for all.

Pr. Fred Schumacher said that he spoke from his conscience when he expressed his view that [resolution C.1] does not take seriously scripture and confessions. He observed that the Social Statement makes a point about conscience and focuses on this in statement—but Luther's conscience was bound to the word of God. Our commitment has been to *Sola Scriptura* not *sola Ego*.

Pr. Cathy Rosenholz said her first synod assembly was when the MNYS voted to become RIC synod. She spoke of the impact of our decisions on young people. She said they want a church that lives the justice it speaks of, a Church of all God's people.

Pr. Frank Nelson noted his ambivalence, supporting the first resolve of C.1 but not all of it and not C.2 and alternative. He said he did not believe the results of the Churchwide Assembly were a foregone conclusion. Heartened that we would be open those with whom we differ. He said that the second resolve [of C.1] compromises the honor of conscience and served notice of his intention to offer an amendment.

Mr. John Keller spoke from his experience as a doctor.

Pr. Robert Splittgerber said he supports the social statement, but not the resolution before the assembly; he wished it would be amended.

When the quasi-committee time had elapsed, Pr. McKenzie offered an amendment to add:

RESOLVED, That the Synod Council be instructed by this assembly to expedite and approve the departure of all pastors and congregations who choose to leave the ELCA as a result of the denomination's action on this matter in August.

Pr. McKenzie urged this amendment in respect for those who cannot stay in a denomination that repudiates the clear word of scripture.

Deacon Bob Rainis said there are already procedures in place to permit this and that he believes our synod council is faithful in its responsibilities.

Pr. Ahlstrom moved the previous question on the amendment. The motion was adopted by a voice vote.

On the McKenzie amendment:

Failed

Pr. Frank Nelson offered an amendment to C.1, striking "be it further" in first resolve and the entire "second resolve."

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;

2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; ~~and be it further~~
~~RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:~~
 1. ~~To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality: "To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity";~~
 2. ~~To adopt the following: "Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same gender relationships."~~

Pr. Nelson said that the language of the second resolve damages the intent of the mutual honoring of conscience.

Pr. Amandus Derr said that the struck provision seeks to establish uniformity of practice in the area structured flexibility.

Pr. Lundblad said she shared Pr. Derr's view. She said that she also understands that pastors and bishops are asking for the kinds of resources described in the resolution.

On the Nelson amendment

Failed

Pr. Splittgerber offered an amendment to add an additional resolve:

RESOLVED, to provide concise arguments from quoted scripture for each and all recommendations made in this statement which call for or imply changes to current ELCA policy, and also to give reasons for precluding previous arguments from scriptures which have undergirded previous policy.

Ms. Antje Katcher opposed the amendment.

Mr. George Clark expressed openness to the Holy Spirit but asked for something specific to show other than cultural in scripture that addresses same-sex relationships. This is a complicated and difficult issue and he was concerned that we are moving in wrong direction; we need more in depth examination of scriptures from both sides

On the Splittgerber amendment

Failed

Pr. Schumacher requested a written ballot. Second was heard.

On the motion for a written ballot.

Failed

On the adoption of the Item C.1

APPROVED

SA2009.05.05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council;
2. To adopt the four parts of the proposed Recommendation on Ministry Policies, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:

1. To adopt the following additional implementing resolution of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality: “To direct appropriate churchwide units to develop, in consultation with those most affected, resources for congregations or faith-communities and ministers that choose to do so to support same-gender relationships by holding them publicly accountable in the exchange of promises of lifelong love and fidelity”;
2. To adopt the following: “Resolved, that the Vocation and Education unit be directed to develop, and the Church Council be directed to approve, procedures for the reception from another Lutheran church-body and for the expedited reinstatement to the roster or to candidacy of those whose rostering was precluded by previous policies on same-gender relationships.”

The chair stated that with the adoption of Item C.1, Item C.2 is moot and no longer before the assembly.

In response to a question by Mr. Case, the bishop said that bylaw amendments would be taken up in the next report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Report of Elections Committee and Second Ballot

Pr. Paul Egensteiner

Pr. Egensteiner gave the following report

Ticket 1		Brian Reardon	141
Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Clergy		Total votes cast	403
		Needed to elect	202
Craig Miller	125	Invalid votes	3
Rosaline Brathwaite	160		
Annemarie Noto	42	Ticket 3	
James Krauser	88	Synod Council – Clergy	
Total votes cast	415		
Needed to elect	208	Paul Nordeen	113
		William Baum	293
Ticket 2		Total votes cast	408
Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Lay male		Needed to elect	204
Carlos R. Lopez, Jr.	262		

The chair declared Carlos Lopez and William Baum elected.

Elected on First Ballot

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.06**

Carlos R. Lopez, Jr. Churchwide Assembly Voting Member

Pr. William Baum Synod Council Member (term ending 2012)

A second ballot was taken to complete the election for Churchwide Assembly Voting Member-Clergy.

The second ballot contained the following candidates

Ticket 1 Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Clergy

Craig Miller

Rosaline Brathwaite

Presentation from the Board of Pensions

Ms. Barbara Debski

Ms. Debski began by illustrating the health of laughter. She asked if members took the health assessment. She described the Board of Pensions work in taking care of member's retirement accounts. She reported the Board's frequent communication with members.

She said that this current financial downturn might provide a good opportunity to add pre-tax dollars to one's retirement account, as a bull market often follows a bear market. She stressed the importance of speaking with a Board of Pensions retirement coach. She concluded with the observation that "In times like these, it is important to remember that there have always been times like these."

Report of the Candidacy Committee

Pr. Jeffrey Kolbo

Pr. Kolbo reported the following candidates were approved for ordination:

- o **Jeanine Duncan**, Resurrection, St. Albans (New Brunswick/LTSP) assigned to MNYS
- o **Danielle Fey**, St. Andrew's, Smithtown (Union/LTSP) assigned to MNYS
- o **Jeffrey Goodrich**, Advent, Manhattan (Union/Luther) assigned to the New England Synod
- o **Flora Hartford**, Ascension, Deer Park (LTSP) assigned to MNYS
- o **Khader Khalillia**, Salam Arabic, Brooklyn (LTSP) assigned to Sierra Pacifica Synod
- o **Joseph Mantovani**, Redeemer-St. John's, Brooklyn (LTSP) assigned to MNYS
- o **Miriam Sedzro**, St. Peter's, Springfield Gardens (LTSP) assigned to Upstate NY Synod

The following persons were approved for Entrance into the candidacy process:

- o **Fernando Otero**, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Bronx; Ordained in another Christian Tradition Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
- o **Duane Ronan**, Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Albans; Ordained in another Christian Tradition Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
- o **Peter Roy**, Dobbs Ferry Lutheran Church, Dobbs Ferry (MDiv) Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
- o **Samuel Silaban**, Huria Kristen Protestan Lutheran Church, Elmhurst; Ordained in another Lutheran Tradition Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Pr. Kolbo also acknowledged candidates approved in the current year (2009). Leila Ortiz, a graduate of LTSP, will continue at the seminary in a doctoral program. The Rev. Mark Erson, a graduate of General Theological Seminary (with study at LTSP), was approved and called to Redeemer, Queens Village. The Rev. Fernando Otero, who was entered into candidacy in 2009, was approved for admission to the ELCA roster of ordained ministers on May 9.

Presentation: Project Connect

Pr. Jonathan Hopkins

Pr. Jonathan Hopkins, Pr. Brenda Jack and Pr. Mary Chang spoke about this program, which works to raise up future leaders of the church, through discernment retreats and events, pastor “shadowing” and other activities.

Report of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia Pres. Philip Krey, Ph.D.

President Krey began his report by informing the assembly that MNYS Treasurer Robert Buescher was the 2009 recipient of the **Soli Deo Gloria** award.

He also reported that 36 MNYS students were enrolled in the current academic year at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Ms. Emma Porter, a member of our synod and the seminary board, spoke of her personal connection to the goal of growing new leaders given her congregation’s search for a new pastor. She said that she was proud of her service on the board and proud of the leadership provided by Dr. Krey.

Dr. Krey related several stories of congregations providing for new leaders by giving specific support for students at the seminary. He also made a point of acknowledging the passing of three giants of American Lutheranism. He announced the establishment of a lecture in memory of Dr. William H. Lazareth, a chair in honor of Dr. John Reumann and that funds were being sought to endow an Advent Vespers program and a lecture in memory of Dr. Robert Bornemann.

Following announcements and a prayer the assembly recessed for dinner at 5:07 p.m.

A festival Eucharist was held at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in Huntington Station at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 16, 2009
PLENARY SESSION III

Before the morning's business, members of the synod assembly had the opportunity to attend a Budget Breakfast so that they might discuss the proposed budget in an informal forum and direct questions to the Treasurer, Mr. Buescher, and the Financial Management Committee.

Following the budget breakfast, the assembly gathered to pray Morning Prayer from Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

At 9:02 a.m., Plenary Session III began with the call to order by Bishop Rimbo. Pr. Paul Milholland, chair of the Assembly Planning Committee, was congratulated on his birthday; the assembly sang to him. He then gave some announcements. Pr. Brathwaite gave an updated report on the number of persons registered and in attendance.

Report of the Committee on Registration and Attendance

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite was called upon to give the registration report. She reported the registered attendance as of 9:02 a.m.

Clergy	181		
Lay	266		
AiM	13	Total Voting Members	460
Visitors	92	Total Attendance	552

On the adoption of the report

APPROVED

Report of the Elections Committee -- Results of Ballot II

Pr. Paul Egensteiner

Pr. Paul Egensteiner reported the results of the second ballot.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Clergy

Craig Miller	164
Rosalind Brathwaite	204
Total votes cast	368
Needed to elect	185

Pr. Egensteiner thanked his committee for their work.

The chair declared Pr. Brathwaite elected and the elections closed.

Elected on Second Ballot

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite

APPROVED

SA2009.05.07

Report of the Bishop – Part 2

Bp. Rimbo

At the beginning of Part 2 of the Bishop's report, the bishop presented a video clip from Pr. William Baum's Facebook application "Take My Bishop, Please."

Following the video, Bishop Rimbo continued his address to the assembly.

Bishop's Report Part 2

I - Incarnational

In February, a group of some forty leaders from our synod gathered for a Mission Think Tank. This was designed as an event to think together about our mission on the territory of this Synod.

Three big themes came out of that conversation: Congregational Viability; Resources and Tools for Mission; and Leadership Development.

In subsequent meetings, the planning team for that event determined that the most pressing need for us at this moment was Leadership Development. At the same time, as we focus on that particular area in the coming year, we will not ignore the other two themes. But, for the next year – and I trust, beyond the next year - leaders of our synod and our synod staff will address Leadership under three sub-themes.

Synod Missional Leadership

The synod staff and I will be more actively involved in developing and supporting mission in our congregations. Together we will work at assessing opportunities and challenges; creating and articulating a strategy for congregations at risk; challenging lay, commissioned and ordained leaders to build a climate of accountability, responsibility, collegiality and collaboration including expectations for growth, development, continuing education and collegiality among rostered leaders; identifying focus-areas for mission on our territory; and helping congregations to create and submit an annual mission strategy.

Deepen Communication

We all desire increased and effective communication within the synod, from our office to your congregation, between your congregations, and from your congregations to us. We will clearly define and communicate synod staff responsibilities as we continue to recognize that the staff will serve as a team; we will engage in clear two-way communication of missional goals between synod and congregations; we will continue to build relationships through conference visits and conference or quadrant consultations; we will be transparent in synod financial planning and activities; we will work at building trust, knowing that this is an earned relationship; we will practice active listening to all of our people, including the voices of discontent and dissent; we will foster prayer partnerships; and we will elevate the importance of giving our time, talents and treasures by acknowledging congregations that are models of mission support and by helping congregations that could be challenged to improve.

Leadership Development

In this area the Mission Think Tank urged us all to encourage seminaries to actively prepare pastors to be entrepreneurial and missional congregation-builders; foster mentoring relationships between new and more experienced pastors; offer leadership development pieces at synod assembly and ministerium gatherings; utilize conference deans in leadership development roles; reconstitute events such as Worship Days and Church Days; create ministry affinity groups in which lay and clergy leaders from similar settings and congregations can learn best practices; create a “gift inventory” for those who are willing to share their knowledge and talent with others in the synod;

revitalize mission partnerships between congregations; support the development of child, youth and family ministry; and assist congregations in the development of technology resources such as websites, internet and email.

So there you have it: the agenda, if you will, for the work of our synod over the next year. And in the midst of all of this, we will continue to support our congregations and leaders in their transitions and to work in partnership with our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Perfect Storm

I said at the outset that we are living at the intersection of hope and fear, so in my concluding remarks I want to talk to you about what I see to be “The Perfect Storm.”

The convergence of the ELCA’s social statement on human sexuality, the recommendations on the ordering of ministry, the economic crisis we face, the challenges of mission in your place – you know what I’m talking about – this is a “perfect storm.”

The boat is one of the earliest and most persistent symbols of the church – a fitting image. Jesus is often in a boat with his disciples. And sometimes it can be scary to be with these people and this Lord in this boat. You know the stories. Jesus’ disciples cry out, “Teacher! We’re dyin’ here! Don’t you care?” and Jesus wakes up, rebukes the wind and waves, and a miraculous calm settles on the sea. And then our Lord says to us, his disciples, “Why are you afraid? Don’t you have faith?” At the end of the storm, after things have calmed down, the disciples are still filled with fear. Jesus does not say, as we might expect, “Why were you afraid?” but rather, “Why are you afraid? I’ve stilled the storm, I’ve calmed the waves. Why are you, even now, afraid?”

I think there are two kinds of fear. There’s the fear of “the perfect storm,” the fear we persistently face in our church and in our lives. You get a call from your doctor about your yearly physical. . .you see the towers fall, the cloud...you watch the stock market crash...you know the empty pews. . .the water and the waves. And you cry out, “Jesus! We’re dyin’ here! Don’t you care?”

Friends, that’s Good Friday fear. And it’s everywhere.

But then Jesus stands up, rebukes the wind and the waves, and it is calm. Which brings the second kind of fear: Easter fear. The kind of fear Luther urges: that we fear, love and trust God above all things. That’s the kind of fear we need in our great synod and our great church.

The gospels are full of frightened people. We have the wits scared out of us all the time. We’re working on strategies for mission in our synod, looking to a bright future. But maybe we shouldn’t bother. The mainline church is in severe decline. You can’t fight sociological determinism. The boats from Sweden have stopped coming loaded with Lutherans. The birth rate is in decline. Young people don’t like church music.

See: most of us have a better theology for Good Friday than for Easter. We expect, predict, and accommodate death. But, then, Jesus awakes, rises, rebukes the wind and the waves...and it scares the wits out of us. Who is he supposed to be? Who are we supposed to be?

There's much fear in the mainline churches these days. There's a malaise among our leaders. There's great sadness that our best days are supposedly behind us. There's anxiety that we may not have what it takes to weather the perfect storm, terror that we may go under.

But, look at what we are doing as the Metropolitan New York Synod. In the midst of this perfect storm all around us, with water, water everywhere, we boldly take some of that and wash people in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and help form them as Christians in the world!

In a society where people are excluded because of the way God made them – our sisters and brothers seeking a new life as immigrants, legal or illegal; the Gay and Lesbian members of our baptized family – we say “Welcome. All are welcome.”

And in a church in which some claim it doesn't matter what you believe so long as you are sincere we boldly say that we're Lutherans, shaped by the confession of a group of rabble-rousers from the sixteenth century who taught a theology of the cross in which life follows death.

When you witness this kind of stuff, as I have repeatedly over this past year, you have to ask, “Who is this?” This is Jesus. The Risen Lord of the perfect storm, the Lord of creation, the Lord of the church. We are traveling together in this little boat called the Metropolitan New York Synod. As we do so, let me close by sharing a piece by Martin Luther, written in 1521, that reminds us of the character of our life together.

*This life is, therefore,
not righteousness, but growth in righteousness;
not health, but healing;
not being, but becoming;
not rest, but exercise.
We are not yet what we shall be,
but we are growing toward it.
The process is not yet finished,
but it is going on.
This is not the end,
but it is the way.
All does not yet gleam in glory,
but all is being purified.*

Jesus rises, in this boat, rebukes those forces over which we have no control, and invites us to sail on with him. Which is exactly what we will do.

Thank you.

*Bishop Robert Alan Rimbo
Metropolitan New York Synod - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Presentation: Mission Interpretation

Ms. Sarah Gioe

Ms. Gioe and members of Oceanside Lutheran Church gave a presentation on the renewal of the life and mission of that congregation.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel (continued)

Pr. Scott Kershner

ITEM D

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD THEOLOGICAL DIALOG

Whereas, The Metropolitan New York Synod Christian Ethics Dialog mandated by the 2006 Synod Assembly has provided a welcome opportunity for scripturally and confessionally informed theological conversation; and

Whereas, The mandate for the Dialog has expired; be it

RESOLVED, That the 2009 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly express its gratitude for the faithful service of the Christian Ethics Dialog Steering Committee: Mr. John Litke, Pr. Stephen Hultgren, Mr. Ashley Hall, Pr. Gary Mills, Bp. Stephen Bouman, Pr. James Krauser, Pr. Amandus Derr, and convener Pr. William Baum; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Assembly establish an ongoing Metropolitan New York Synod Theological Dialog presenting minimally an annual opportunity for scripturally and confessionally focused conversation among the clergy and lay leaders of this Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the bishop appoint a Metropolitan New York Synod Theological Dialog Steering Committee reflective of the diversity of this Synod and under the direction of the Assistant to the Bishop for Formation; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That an annual budget be provided consistent with the normal cost of staging a meeting of the Metropolitan New York Ministerium.

Submitted by the Metropolitan New York Synod Council

Recommendation: To adopt

Pr. Paul Block, a participant in first round, observed that the first round was brought forward in response to sexuality; he asked if there was an intention to broaden the emphasis for future dialogues.

Pr. Baum replied that this was the intent of the resolution.

Pr. Block said that this was even greater reason to support the resolution.

On the adoption of Item D

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.08**

RESOLVED, That the 2009 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly express its gratitude for the faithful service of the Christian Ethics Dialog Steering Committee: Mr. John Litke, Pr. Stephen Hultgren, Mr. Ashley Hall, Pr. Gary Mills, Bp. Stephen Bouman, Pr. James Krauser, Pr. Amandus Derr, and convener Pr. William Baum; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Assembly establish an ongoing Metropolitan New York Synod Theological Dialog presenting minimally an annual opportunity for scripturally and confessionally focused conversation among the clergy and lay leaders of this Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the bishop appoint a Metropolitan New York Synod Theological Dialog Steering Committee reflective of the diversity of this Synod and under the direction of the Assistant to the Bishop for Formation; and be it finally
RESOLVED, That an annual budget be provided consistent with the normal cost of staging a meeting of the Metropolitan New York Ministerium.

ITEM E

ON TORTURE

Whereas, Our baptism calls us "to strive for justice and peace in all the earth³"; and
Whereas, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson (with more than 20 other denominational leaders) joined in the statement of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops "*Torture is a Moral Issue*⁴"; and
Whereas, The torture of persons is prohibited by international treaties and agreements to which the United States of America is a part; and
Whereas, President Obama has re-stated our commitment not to employ techniques of interrogation which may be regarded as torture, and
Whereas, Recently released government documents⁵ demonstrate that agents of our government engaged in acts that reasonable persons would regard as torture, and
Whereas, Our nation is committed to the rule of Law, and
Whereas, The best way to ensure that acts of torture at the hands of the United States government are not repeated is to hold those responsible for them accountable; and
Whereas, The President has said that he will not seek the prosecution of those who committed these acts on the belief that they were acting lawfully and under the authority of their superiors⁶; therefore be it
RESOLVED, The Metropolitan New York Synod calls upon the President of the United States and the Department of Justice to prosecute, to the fullest extent of the law, all those who were responsible for the development of the standards and policies that justified and permitted these egregious acts under a pretext of law the employment of techniques that may have violated laws against torture ; and to likewise prosecute all those who authorized the implementation of such standards and policies.

Recommendation: To adopt

Submitted by Pr. James Krauser, Port Jefferson Station; Pr. Leo E. Longan, Middle Village; Pr. Phil Trzynka, Manhattan; Pr. J. Barrie Lawless; Seminarian Adam Sornchai, Medford; Pr. Griffin Thomas, Brooklyn; Pr. Martin Hauser, Manhattan; Pr. Annmarie Noto, Baldwin; Pr. Gerard Gaeta, Bethlehem, PA; Pr. Gary Schulz, Bellrose, Pr. Jim O'Hanlon, Yonkers

Pr. James Krauser addressed the resolution, stressing that the use of forms of torture in interrogation by agents of our government is a unlawful and at present there is a lack of will in our government to enforce this law, which means holding those responsible for act of torture accountable. The issue should not be how our enemies behave but about how we behave. If we cannot draw the line at waterboarding, how will we ever draw the line at all?

³ Affirmation of Baptism, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

⁴ *Torture is a Moral Issue*, US Conference of Catholic Bishops

Torture violates the basic dignity of the human person that all religions, in their highest ideals, hold dear. It degrades everyone involved-policy-makers, perpetrators and victims. It contradicts our nation's most cherished values. Any policies that permit torture and inhumane treatment are shocking and morally intolerable.

Nothing less is at stake in the torture abuse crisis than the soul of our nation. What does it signify if torture is condemned in word but allowed in deed? Let America abolish torture now-without exceptions.

⁵ New York Times, April 16, 2009

⁶ New York Times, April 16, 2009

Mr. Charles Kalhorn stated that this resolution belongs in a political venue, not in our assembly. We have not called others who commit atrocities to account.

Pr. Edward Barnett said that he opposes torture and that he is not pleased with our government's action, but found the language of the resolution inadequate. He expressed concern that it suggests we are looking for a scapegoat. Pr. Barnett offered the following substitute:

RESOLVED, that as followers and members of Christ who was beaten, mocked and crucified, we declare ourselves to be in solidarity with all victims of torture, and we call upon all nations and human institution, beginning with those of our government, to formally abjure all forms of interrogation and punishment which diminish the integrity of the human person through the willful application of extreme pain or psychological abuse. We call upon all nations and institutions, beginning with our own, to confess publicly and in detail the dehumanizing actions undertaken in their name and under their authority, so that the truth may be known and reconciliation may be possible

The chair ruled the amendment substitute.

On the motion to substitute:

Approved

Pr. Leroy Ness said the substitute was as flawed as the original.

Ms. Antje Katcher offered a motion to insert original resolves into the substitute.

A point of order was raised asking if this motion was proper. The chair ruled it permissible.

Mr. Jim Daber said we do not know the [legal] definition of torture.

Pr. Katrina Foster stated that torture is a political tool. These methods are not effective. Our principles only matter when we stick with them when inconvenient. It is useful, right, and salutary for the church to speak to these issues.

Mr. Joe Campizi affirmed his opposition to torture, but had a problem with attempting to indict the country with things which in the past were acceptable. There are many things in our past which were not right. We've declared it illegal. We will not do it again.

Pr. Block could not approve the substitute as offered, and supported the addition of original resolves. He observed that the only people held to account to date common soldiers...with no one higher up being held accountable. We should not put our soldiers in these positions.

Pr. Maryanne Tomacek, referring to her experience as a former attorney with the Department of Justice, did not believe the Item E language was effectual. She said writing legal memos is not usually considered a crime and that asking for prosecution of those who did is not going to get accountability.

Pr. Jared Stahler spoke in favor of the amendment of the original resolves. He said that much of work in thinking about war and torture has been done by our church. He mentioned the ELCA Message “In time of terrorism.”

Pr. John McKenzie opposed the amendment and resolution. He said he was against criminalizing political decisions.

Mr. Robert Kemp identified himself as a historian. He described waterboarding as a Gestapo tactic. He supported the resolution because torture is a criminal act and we should enforce our laws.

Deacon Robert Rainis spoke of his experience as an interrogator.

Pr. Brooke Swertfager moved the previous question

Motion: To end debate on the amendment

Approved

On the Katcher amendment to add Item E

Failed

Pr. Ahlstrom moved to close debate on the Barnett substitute.

Approved

On the adoption of Barnett substitute for Item E

SA2009.05.09

Yes-223, No 107

RESOLVED, that as followers and members of Christ who was beaten, mocked and crucified, we declare ourselves to be in solidarity with all victims of torture, and we call upon all nations and human institution, beginning with those of our government, to formally abjure all forms of interrogation and punishment which diminish the integrity of the human person through the willful application of extreme pain or psychological abuse. We call upon all nations and institutions, beginning with our own, to confess publicly and in detail the dehumanizing actions undertaken in their name and under their authority, so that the truth may be known and reconciliation may be possible

Report of the ELCA Representative -- Part 2

Mr. Andrew Genszler

Mr. Genszler resumed his report with a slide presentation.

New Ways to Be Community

Book of Faith

Do any of you here remember read along records called “The Purple Puzzle Tree”? How about Arch Books? These were the earliest ways I interacted with the stories of our faith. Individually they are compelling and very memorable. Collectively they form a narrative of faith that is authoritative for our faith lives and life together as a church.

Take a moment and think about some of your favorite stories...

Individuals and Lutherans around the country have joined the Book of Faith Initiative with enthusiasm, embracing the initiative as an opportunity for renewal in the Word. The Initiative

began several years ago and is less a program, and more a movement of encouragement to engage and re-engage the source and common ground of all faith life- the Scriptures.

There is a book ((hold up))) by several Lutheran theologians that frames the initiative for us and describes some ideas for gathering together around the Bible.

It surprises people when I tell them, that as your advocacy director, I think the Book of Faith initiative is one of the most important projects of the ELCA. That's because I am rarely discussing or debating a policy issue with someone- from tax credits to Darfur- for longer than five minutes before what we are actually talking about is the way we read the Scriptures.

I really encourage you to check this out and am so glad to see a formal resolution that reinforces the importance of the initiative.

Congregation Initiatives- New and Renewing

The development of new congregations is a high priority in the ELCA. The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit in Chicago works with local and synod leaders to plan for initiate, and nurture new Word and Sacrament ministries and worshipping communities. It connects, engages and accompanies these leaders in their role of making new disciples for Jesus Christ who use their gifts for God's kingdom in the church and in the world.

There are currently 204 congregations under development across the country- with several in the Metro New York area- and another 19 more congregations and worshipping communities already approved in 2009. 47% of these are Anglo, 20% are Latino/Hispanic community, 14% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 7% are African National, and 6% are African-American.

43% are suburban, 41% are urban, 16% are rural and small town, and several are in prison.

45% are classified as middle class, 16% upper middle class, and 38% working class or communities in poverty.

In addition to the focused work on new starts, there is intentional focus also on renewing existing congregations, and growing discipleship within congregations and building the faith gifts and practices of members and among members. All three focuses equip congregations to be healthy, evangelizing, missional, multiplying and prophetic- working not for their own preservation but for peace and justice.

New Lutheran congregation starts could not happen without the support of MIF- the Mission Investment Fund and the Fund for Leaders. As I did yesterday, I want to take a moment and thank you again for Metro New York Synod for your very generous support for both.

Communication Services

Congregational Outreach led the churchwide effort to dramatically redesign ELCA web presence and architecture.

The new pages are easier to navigate, and are supported by a new search engine and new content management system. The move to the new elca.org comprised transferring and revising 2,200 pages. To present, over nine months, there have been over 1 M visits and 4 M page views.

The time spent by the visitors viewing the home page has tripled from 23 to 59 seconds. This doesn't seem like a long time or big difference to me who went through most of college without personal computers. But apparently, this is light years for today's technology.

After various combinations of the key words "ELCA", "Lutheran", and "church", "prayer" is the most commonly used search term by visitors to find us. Of the prayer visitors, 85% are first-time viewers, and 13% go to the Prayer Center and ask that someone pray for them. The site has more visitors from India, than it does from Norway, Sweden and Finland combined.

Finally, Communication Services has filmed two TV spots that began airing in 2009 on CNN, Fox, DIY channel, and HGTV. The ads feature the tagline “God’s Work. Our Hands.” They are meant to emphasize what God is doing in and through the ELCA for the sake of the world.

“First Course: Dignity” begins with what looks like a commercial for a nice restaurant or chef reality show and ends with Lutherans serving supper at what turns out to be a homeless ministry.

“First Subject: Hope” begins with a mother walking a daughter to school in a rural setting in Africa. It ends with both in separate classes in a Lutheran Mission school, the mother learning about starting her own business. You can view both on the Communications website at elca.org

Advocacy

4.7 Million people; 10,500 congregations; 65 synods; 3 pan-Lutheran partners, including the largest health and human services network in the country; World Hunger, Disaster Response, global companion synod relationships, community development, local and national grants, relief and development, refugee resettlement, social services of all kinds. This is our story as Lutherans, it is your story!

As your advocacy director, I can tell you that our best policy advocacy is telling the stories of ministry and people in the ELCA. This is our voice as Lutherans; it is your voice.

I work with our office in Washington, here in New York at the U.N., Corporate Social Responsibility, and a network of 18 state offices, one in Albany.

We are good at middle managing in the ELCA but I’ll bet there are more Lutherans familiar with the virtual community of Lake Wobegon than the real communities where they live. We need to clear our throats, dust off our tradition and speak for those we know who go without, those who are not counted, and the ministries that bring us together with them.

Good Advocacy is scriptural- I won’t rehearse the long record in the bible of being called by God to speak to those in power but it is there. Our office works daily to bring back a full range of biblical values to public debate-- hospitality to strangers from Leviticus, peace and reconciliation from Paul’s letters, and care for creation from Genesis and end to poverty and hunger from just about anywhere in the bible.

The judgment in Matthew 25 between sheep and goats is not about individual set of acts, but a judgment of nations and how nations treat those least able to fend for themselves.

Good advocacy is Confessional and Lutheran- the preface of the Augsburg Confession is a verse from Psalm 119 “I will speak of your testimony also before kings and not be put to shame...” Article XVI of the Confession talks about Christians making use of government as naturally as they breathe the air.

Luther and Melancthon and others developed a theology about governance as God’s gift and instrument for us when it works for the common good.

Luther’s Large Catechism on the Lord’s Prayer “Give us this day or daily bread” attributes peace, fair markets and good fields- necessities for enjoying daily bread- to good government and tells us to “That chiefly through it does God provide for us”.

The reformers wrote hundreds of letters to town councils. Burghers and princes about a community chest, public education and public health care.

Finally good advocacy is about discipleship. We are not your hired professionals in Washington or Albany doing our technical thing. We link Lutheran advocacy to the wide variety of ministries and volunteering in the ELCA and their public impact.

Most important we link advocacy to you- Lutherans living daily lives of faith in discipleship willing to speak for their neighbors. We tell Members of Congress that you are going to call them or visit them locally to tell them why you care about an issue based on your faith! When you join the e-advocacy network, you are joining 29,800 Lutherans around the country who link their faith with public witness. You could put us over the 30,000!

Jesus left his disciples a gift...Tell the ELCA story- claim your identity as an advocate, as a Lutheran Christian.

“Tell how the father sent the son to save us, tell of the son who life and freedom gave us. Tell how the Spirit calls from every nation a new creation.”

Report of the Child, Youth and Family Ministry Committee **Mr. Charlie Germain**

Dcn. Charles Germain reported on the work of this committee. He said that we need to make a paradigm shift from “teaching religion” to focus on “faith development.” He said that this takes place primarily around the kitchen table and that the programs of education and enrichment by the church must serve to aid families in sharing their faith between the generations.

Pr. Frederick McElderry presented the Heart of Ministry Award of Distinction to St. Philip’s, Brooklyn and Pr. Karen Kuttler, for its inter-cultural, inter-denominational ministry among the Guyanese community

Deacon Germain concluded the report by describing the “visiting teams” program of the CYFM committee to assist congregations in developing child, youth and family ministry in their context.

Report of the Tanzania Committee **Pr. Carol Fryer**

Pr. Carol Fryer reminded the assembly that while we have reached the goal of \$1,000,000 for the Tanzanian Endowment, the fund is still welcomes to new donations to build it for its ongoing work. This endowment is designed primarily to fund two teachers for the Kibeta English Medium Primary School. One new teacher had already been recruited for the coming year. An additional teacher is being sought; she asked the assembly’s assistance in identifying a potential teacher.

She announced the designation of September 27, 2009 as the “Udugu [Partnership] Sunday” of emphasis to celebrate and teach about our relationship with the NW Diocese of the ELCT in our congregations. Congregations were also told they could choose a different date if more convenient.

She concluded her report with the announcement of the next planned synodical visit to Tanzania in February/March of 2010.

Announcements and prayer concluded the plenary session which recessed at 12.09pm for lunch.

PLENARY SESSION IV

The afternoon session began with a Eucharist. Following the Eucharist and a brief break, Bishop Rimbo called the assembly to order.

Report of the Committee on Registration and Attendance

Pr. Rosalind Brathwaite gave the registration report. She reported the registered attendance as of 2:00 p.m.

Clergy	185		
Lay	271		
AiM	13	Total Voting Members	469
Visitors	98	Total Attendance	567

On the adoption of the report

APPROVED

Adoption of the Budget

Treasurer Robert Buescher moved the adoption of the ratification of changes to the budget for the 2009 fiscal year and the adoption of a budget for fiscal year 2010. The bishop invited discussion. Seeing no one rise to seek recognition, he put the motions before the assembly for a vote.

On the motion to ratify the changes to the F.Y. 2009 budget

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.10**

On the motion to approve the F. Y. 2010 budget

**APPROVED
SA2009.05.11**

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel (continued) Pr. Scott Kershner

The remaining business under the Committee on Reference and Counsel concerned the changes to the governing documents.

On the motion to Amend the governing documents

SA2009.05.12

On the amendment of S.10.12.01

APPROVED

On the amendments en bloc

APPROVED

Recognition of Pastors New to the Synod, Anniversaries and Deaths Pr. Gary Mills

Pr. Mills announced then names of pastors new to synod, non-Lutheran pastors serving on territory and new deacons. He asked them to stand and be recognized as their names were read.

Congregation Anniversaries

50 Years

Church of the Holy Redeemer, Brooklyn

Resurrection, Bronx

100 Years

Advent, Brooklyn

Christ/Cristo, Freeport

150 Years

Atonement, Saugerties

St. John's-St. Matthew's-Emanuel

St. Peter's, Port Jervis

Synodical Deacons

Five Years

Deacon Clifford Armogan
Deacon Cathy Boyce
Deacon Penny Liles
Deacon Roberta Paulik
Deacon Victoria Struss

Ten Years

Deacon Joann Abrahamsen
Deacon Mary Barberio
Deacon Marie Biedinger
Deacon Leslie Budke
Deacon Franklin Clum
Deacon Mauricio Dominguez
Deacon Barbara Goetz
Deacon Frances Middlemiss
Deacon William Sullivan
Deacon Christine Thompson
Deacon Raymond Veit

Associates in Ministry

Ten Years

Ms. Nadine Cordes

Twenty-Five Years

Ms. Janet Scheiper
Mr. Hans Vogel

ELCA Deaconess

Thirty years

Sister Melinda Lando

Ordained Ministers

Five Years

The Rev. Eduardo F. Arias
The Rev. Haiko Behrens
The Rev. Melinda Bjorkman
The Rev. Stephen Hultgren
The Rev. Jeffrey Koenig
The Rev. Laurence McFarland
The Rev. Elena Perez
The Rev. Yvette Schock
The Rev. R. Griffin Thomas, Jr.

Ten Years

The Rev. Faith Ballenger
The Rev. Rose Ann Vita

Fifteen Years

The Rev. Samuel Cruz
The Rev. Katrina Foster
The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski
The Rev. Melinda Quivik

Twenty Years

The Rev. James Klockau
The Rev. Abraham Lu
The Rev. Paul Milholland
The Rev. Gary Schulz
The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer
The Rev. Diane Wildow

Twenty-Five Years

The Rev. Sarah Brown
The Rev. Paul Egensteiner
The Rev. Dennis Eichelberger
The Rev. William Eschen
The Rev. Paul Knudsen
The Rev. Gary Mills
The Rev. Laris Salins
The Rev. Elsie Smith

Thirty Years

The Rev. Christine Anderson
The Rev. William Damrow
The Rev. Michael Dickson
The Rev. Rodney Eberhardt
The Rev. Remo Madsen
The Rev. Richard Mueller
The Rev. Donald Stiger
The Rev. Gregory Sutterlin

Thirty-Five Years

The Rev. Ronald Gothberg
The Rev. Marvin Henk
The Rev. Timothy Kennedy
The Rev. David Lotz
The Rev. David Meyers
The Rev. Richard Virgil
The Rev. Robert Wollenburg

Forty Years

The Rev. Kai Borner
The Rev. John Krahn
The Rev. Richard Jeske
The Rev. Roy Lloyd
The Rev. Harvey von Harten

Forty-Five Years

The Rev. Dale Lind
The Rev. Frederick Schumacher
The Rev. E. Phillip Sebastian

Fifty Years

The Rev. James Gunther
The Rev. Kjell Jordheim
The Rev. Thomas Mugavero
The Rev. Paul Pfadenhauer
The Rev. Frederick Puelle
The Rev. Roy Roderick

Fifty-Five Years

The Rev. John Dragelin
The Rev. Theodore Warren

Ordained Ministers who died since the last assembly.

The Rev. Ed Balint	+ June 9, 2008
The Rev. Henry Ressmeyer	+ July 24, 2008
The Rev. Robert T. Neilssen	+ September 27, 2008
The Rev. William B. Gillespie	+ February 26, 2009
The Rev. Gerald M. Gundersen	+ March 12, 2009
The Rev. Joel Kuznik	+ April 3, 2009
The Rev. Darrell Helmers	+ April 10, 2009
The Rev. Frank Wilhelm	+ April 22, 2009

Bishop Rimbo offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the life and ministry of these servants of God.

Before the final order the bishop expressed his thanks to the assembly committees and volunteers for their faithful and hard work handed, to the people of King of Kings, Melville for the preparing the assembly packets and to people of St. Peter's, Huntington Station for their hospitality in the Festival Eucharist.

Plenary Session IV concluded at 3.18 p.m. followed by a sending service with the installation of the Synod Council and the order for the Closing of an Assembly led by Bishop Rimbo.

The assembly closed at 3:30 p.m.

The Rev. James G. Krauser, Secretary