

***SUMMARY OF ACTIONS***  
***SEVENTEENTH REGULAR ASSEMBLY OF THE***  
***METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD***

*TARRYTOWN, NEW YORK MAY 15-17, 2008*

**COMPANION COVENANTS**

**SA2008.05.02** **To affirm the Companion Covenant Between  
The North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania  
and the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

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*RESOLVED*, That the North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the Metropolitan New York Synod now affirm the Companion Covenant of April 4, 1998, hereby committing Diocese and Synod to

- X Pray for, witness to and encourage one another as both bodies seek to serve Christ in our localities.
- X Learn more about one another, as friends, partners and fellow members of the one body of Christ.
- X Share our struggles, challenges, joys and new possibilities for the mutual upbuilding of the People of God.
- X Provide opportunities for mutual exchange of lay people, clergy and judicatory staff in order for us to sincerely know one another as friends and Christians.
- X Expand our understanding that the body of Christ has no geographical boundaries, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or socio-economic status and seeks mutuality among partners.

**SA2008.05.03** **To adopt the Companion Covenant Between  
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania  
and the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod adopt by acclamation the following covenant with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania :

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We join in this Covenant, Diocese and Synod, to:

- X Provide opportunities for both Church bodies to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ that will be mutually beneficial. As such, we will jointly work to begin an English-language Lutheran ministry in Cluj and a Lutheran outreach to Hungarian and Romanian-speaking peoples in New York;
- X Work together to develop new models for Diaconal Ministry that will assist the Social Ministry programs for both Church bodies, with special emphasis upon assisting the Romanian Church in developing ways and models of ministry that will build up the Body of Christ in Transylvania and that will be sustainable;
- X Provide opportunities that will enhance and strengthen the Youth and Family Ministry programs of both Church bodies, with special emphasis upon travel exchanges for young people and their leaders;
- X Provide opportunities to strengthen theological education in both Church bodies, and look for ways in which to have travel and pedagogical exchanges for the clergy of both, especially to the

seminary in Cluj. We would hope that this aspect of the Covenant would also include the German-speaking Church in Transylvania and its seminary in Sibiu;

- X Develop Theological Ministeriums and Conferences using long-distance learning and other techniques, as well as be represented at one another's Ministeriums and Synodical Assemblies;
- X Expand our understanding that the Body of Christ has no geographical boundaries through the development and establishment of Congregation to Congregation relationships;
- X Commit ourselves to regular and fervent prayers for one another, and will designate one Sunday per year in which all congregations from both Church bodies will specifically lift one another up and remember our partnership in special ways during the Sunday worship services.

## RESOLUTIONS

**SA2008.05.04**

### **To Establish an *Ad Hoc* Commission to Review Our Election Process for Bishop**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod establish an *ad hoc* commission on the use of the ecclesiastical ballot as described in the governing documents of the synod for the election of the bishop of the synod; and that

- This commission shall be chaired by the Secretary of the Synod and consist of ten additional members, four lay and six clergy, chosen by the Synod Council,
- This commission survey other synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and other church bodies as to their election processes for bishop and present an interim report of their findings to the 2010 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly;
- This commission lead a synod-wide study process leading to a final report, accompanied by recommended changes, if any, in governing documents to be acted to the 2012 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly.

**SA2008.05.05**

### **On Parsonage Properties**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod urges congregations to consider the long-term implications of the sale of real property, particularly parsonages; and be it

*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod make use of the parsonage properties of disbanded congregations whenever possible for housing to rostered persons within the synod; and be it

*RESOLVED*, That congregations are encouraged to adopt bylaws requiring consultation with the Synod concerning the sale of properties and that these bylaws also contain one or both of the following provisions in addition to consultation:

- That an affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of the voting members present and voting at a legally called meeting of the congregation be required for the sale of a parsonage.
- That before the sale of parsonage properties by the congregation it request the Synod Council to review the proposed sale and by majority vote take "no exception" to the sale of the parsonage.

**SA2008.05.06****On Forming a Strategic Planning Process**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly

1. Affirm its commitment to the following core principles to be used in forming a strategic plan that addresses the needs of local ministries:
  - God is actively engaged in the mission of reconciling the world to God's Self.
  - God established the Church to carry out this mission and authorizes the priesthood of all believers to carry it out.
  - God provides the church with the means to fulfill God's mission—the Gospel, church leaders, material resources, and empowers God's people with spiritual gifts.
  - God's mission is carried out locally, through individual disciples, through local congregations, conferences, and other ministries, and through the synod, the churchwide expression, and ecumenical partners who are willing to work together collaboratively in the power of God's Spirit.
2. Reaffirm its commitment to being a Great Commission Synod by urging our bishop, the Synod Council, and synod staff to begin drawing together the diverse resources of our synod to develop a strategic plan for the future of our synod as soon as feasible and to report on the progress of this planning process to the Synod Council and to succeeding Synod Assemblies.

**SA2008.05.10****To Create a Clergy Emergency Need Treasury [CENT]**

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*RESOLVED*, The Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA create a specific fund to assist pastors in the Synod in cases of emergency, called the Clergy Emergency Need Treasury (CENT).

- Congregations are encouraged to contribute 1/8 of one percent (.00125) of their annual budget to CENT in addition to the congregation's regular mission support.
- Clergy shall be eligible to apply for funds, renewable for up to three years.
- The evaluation of applications and distribution of funds shall be left to the discretion of the Bishop.

**SA2008.05.11****Against Violence and Discrimination  
on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

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*RESOLVED*, That this Synod, meeting in Assembly, deplore in the name of Jesus Christ all violence, crime, and discrimination perpetrated on account of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

*RESOLVED*, That this Synod, meeting in Assembly, direct the Synod Council to submit a resolution to the Church Council to amend Church Council Action CC93.03.37 so that it incorporates gender identity along with sexual orientation in terms of the ELCA's (a) opposition to harassment or assault as well as (b) support for legislation protecting civil rights and prohibiting discrimination in housing, employment, and public services and accommodations; and be it further

*RESOLVED*, That this Synod, meeting in Assembly, call upon federal and state legislatures to include sexual orientation and gender identity among the categories by which a crime can be defined as a hate crime; and be it further

*RESOLVED*, That this Synod, meeting in Assembly, call upon federal and state legislatures to include sexual orientation and gender identity among the categories in which discrimination is forbidden in employment, housing, and public services and accommodations; and be it finally

*RESOLVED*, That this Synod's bishop express the preceding positions, on behalf of the Synod, in writing or in person, to each federal and state legislator, including the governor and president representing part of this Synod's territory.

**SA2008.05.12****Establishing an Environmental Stewardship Committee**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod will:

- Educate our churches and members on issues of environmental integrity and creation care,
- Encourage celebrations commemorating, Earth Day, Rogation Days, Arbor Day and any other environmentally conscious events as may be appropriate for Christian churches,
- Promote and encourage specific actions each church community and its members can take to act with greater environmental responsibility, and
- Promote and encourage actions synod-wide to “green” our operations, including energy audits, adopting cleaner and renewable energy sources, increasing our commitment to recycling and using recycled materials, reducing the amount of waste we produce, and working to protect the precious shared environmental resources of land, air, and water.

*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, in support of the above ongoing efforts, will establish a standing committee on Environmental Stewardship. The Environmental Stewardship Committee may be formed immediately, but will be unfunded for the 2009 year. It will be financed out of the general budget beginning with the 2010 budget cycle.

**SA2008.05.13****To Enhance Community-Police Relations**

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*RESOLVED*, That the Metropolitan New York Synod, request the Synod Council of the Metropolitan New York Synod to organize an ‘ecumenical’ taskforce that will develop strategies to enhance community / Police relations in light of cases that suggest that racial profiling may be a factor in such cases.

**OTHER ACTIONS****SA2008.05.08****Approved a \$4,539,233 Budget for Fiscal Year 2009****ELECTED****SA2008.05.07.****First Common Ballot**

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**Churchwide Assembly Voting Members**

Marva Jenkins  
 Louise Litke  
 Allison Guttu

Raymond Ormond  
 Dorothy Scholz-Bayer  
 Robert Busch

**Consultation Committee [6 yrs.]**

Kathleen Koran  
 James Thomas  
 Mary Heller

**Discipline Committee** [4 years]  
 Edward Barnett

**Discipline Committee** [2 years]  
 Robert Schoepflin

**Discipline Committee [6 years]**

Marva Jenkins

**Mission Development Board** [4 years]  
 Craig Miller

**Synod Council** [4 years]

Rosalind Braithwaite  
Scott Kershner  
Albert Ahlstrom  
Jack Horner  
Barbara Holm  
Janet Siry

Grace Yukich  
Brian Reardon  
Robert Rainis  
William Anderson  
Barbara Johnson  
Jonathan Westerlund [2 years]

**SA2008.05.09.**

**Second Common Ballot**

**Churchwide Assembly Voting Members**

William Baum  
Connie Duever  
Manuel Melendez  
Paul Lumpkin  
Dave Ehlers

John Prosen  
Homer Alexander

**Consultation Committee** [6 yrs.]

Ralph Barberio

**SA2008.05.15.**

**Third Common Ballot**

**Churchwide Assembly Voting Members**

Paul Milholland  
Katrina Foster

Ann Tiemeyer  
Lynn Hansen  
Meg Fielding

**SA2008.05.16**

**Fifth Ballot**

**Bishop**

Robert A. Rimbo