

## Summary Report to the Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church Council regarding the 2019 Churchwide Assembly

### **Background**

During the week of August 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, I was one of about 30 voting members selected to represent the Minneapolis area Synod of the ELCA at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In addition to highlighting the various areas of ministry and social causes that the ELCA churchwide organization is involved with, the triennial churchwide assembly also conducts official business of the church. Voting members consist of both lay individuals and rostered clergy, with each synod given one voting member for each 6,000 baptized members, as well as one voting member for each 50 congregations. In addition to the allocation noted above, each synod is given two additional votes: one is for a youth, and one is for a person of color. In total, there were 927 total voting members at the assembly. There was a lot of business conducted at the 10 assembly sessions during the week. My report is only a brief summary of items which I think you'll find of interest.

**Day 1** – Approval of certain constitutional amendments and voting on the first ballot for presiding bishop.

**Day 2** – Election of Elizabeth Eaton to a second 6-year term as presiding bishop. Interesting fact: the ELCA consists of 65 synods, each with a bishop. The bishop of the Minneapolis area synod is Ann Svennungsen.

**Day 3** – Approved the social statement “**Faith, Sexism, Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action.**” Here is the text from the memorial.

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**To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;**

**To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO);**

**To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and**

**To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;**

**The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America declares itself a sanctuary church body; and**

**To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.**

**Day 4** – Voted to approve the three-year budget. Here is a summary.

**2020 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2020 current fund spending authorization of \$68,378,325;**

**To approve a 2020 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,500,000; and**

**To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.**

**2021 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2021 current fund income proposal of \$68,442,034;**

**To approve a 2021 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,500,000; and**

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

**2022 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2022 current fund income proposal of \$68,507,018;**

**To approve a 2022 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,500,000; and**

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

Voted to adopt the following resolutions:

- **Resolution to Establish June 17th as Emanuel 9 Feast Day of Repentance**

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- **Resolution on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to Condemn White Supremacy**

**Day 5** – Elected Sue Rothmeyer to a six-year term as secretary of the ELCA. Voted to approve the following memorials:

- Regarding *Church and State*:

**To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Minneapolis Area Synod requesting a social statement on the role of government, the nature of civic engagement, and the relationship of church and state; and**

**To authorize the development of an ELCA social statement on government, civic engagement and the relationship of church and state that will allow thorough attention to scriptural, historical, theological, and social issues as a means to probe shared convictions and establish this church’s comprehensive teaching in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018); and**

**To urgently request the ELCA Church Council to authorize a social message as a priority in the development of a social statement; this message would elaborate in one place what this church already holds regarding issues such as public church, the vocation of citizenship, the relation of church and state in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).**

- Regarding the *50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament*:

**To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Oregon, Southwest California, Western North Dakota, Northeastern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Saint Paul Area, Nebraska, Central States, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Northern Illinois, Southeastern Iowa, Western Iowa, North/West Lower Michigan, Northeastern Ohio, New Jersey, New England, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Allegheny, and Virginia synods concerning the 50th anniversary of the ELCA’s ordination of women to the ministry of Word and Sacrament;**

**To encourage all synods and congregations to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ELCA’s ordination of women in 2020 and the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women of color in the Lutheran tradition in the United States and the 10th anniversary of the ELCA’s decision to remove the barriers to ordination for people in same-gendered relationships and recognize the diversity of gifts that women’s ordination brings to this church;**

**To call upon synods, congregations and the churchwide organization to**

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**recognize the need for repentance and continued examination regarding equity for ministerial leadership and to collaborate in systemic work to address disparities based on gender and race for people in rostered ministry;**

**To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with other churchwide units, to conduct a gap analysis of rostered women, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by rostered women of color; and**

**To recognize the implementing resolutions for the proposed social statement “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action” as a response to the sexism and racism concerns raised by these memorials.**

- **Regarding Migrants:**

**To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Delaware-Maryland Synod concerning migrants and refugees;**

**To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO);**

**To encourage members of this church to review existing social teaching and policy and use these guides to take additional action toward addressing harmful political rhetoric against migrants and refugees; and**

**To request that appropriate staff in the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment specifically directed to political rhetoric and the accurate portrayal of migrants and refugees**

- **Regarding Poor People’s Campaign**

**To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Oregon, New England and Metropolitan New York synods concerning the National Poor People’s Campaign; and**

**To affirm the Church Council action [CC18.11.23u] recognizing “the importance of the Poor People’s Campaign in bringing an end to systemic racism, economic injustice, ecological devastation and related injustices; to support the vision and goals of the Poor People’s Campaign that are in alignment with this church’s social teachings; to encourage the churchwide organization, synods, congregations and members to become involved with the issues as a faithful witness to God’s call to do justice and show love for the neighbor.”**