



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
2008 Synod Assembly



The 2008 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin was held May 2-3, 2008 at the Marriott West Hotel in Middleton, Wisconsin under the theme, THE CHURCH FOR THE WORLD: I AM PART OF IT AND SO ARE YOU – THE CHURCH BEYOND ITSELF.

Assembly Session I

Bishop Bruce Burnside led the assembly in the Order of Service for the Opening of a Synod Assembly.

The Rev. Peter Narum greeted the members of the assembly on behalf of the Hospitality Committee.

Credentials Report #1

Jeanne Stansfield presented the first report of the Credentials Committee.

Clergy	84
Lay Female	111
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>78</u>
Voting Members	273
Visitors	22

Preliminary items

SA08.05.01 Agenda approved

VOTED to approve the assembly agenda with the treasurer's report and presentation of the 2008-09 spending plan to Friday at 2:00 p.m.

ADOPTED

Bishop Burnside brought the assembly committees to the floor.

SA08.05.02 Committees approved

VOTED to approve the assembly committees as presented with the following chairs:

Credentials Committee - Jeanne Stansfield
Elections Committee – Wayne Pinnow
Resolutions Committee – Eric Peterson

ADOPTED

Procedures

Eric Peterson, chair of the Resolutions Committee, brought the initial report of the Resolutions Committee to the floor and stated that there were four resolutions at this time. He reported that a public hearing on the Book of Faith resolution would be held during the lunch break. He explained the process and rules for submitting resolutions for this assembly.

Mary DeYoung, Synod Council secretary, explained the privileges of the floor for voting members and for others who were afforded voice at the assembly.

David Moore, the assembly parliamentarian, provided a parliamentary overview and explained the importance of the rules used for good order at the assembly.

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Keynote Speaker

Bishop Burnside introduced the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb from Bethlehem as the keynote speaker of the Synod Assembly.

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Nominations

Bishop Burnside presided as the Rev. Kurt Billings brought nominations to the floor.

Synod Vice-President

Connie Kilmark
Sally Lee

Synod Council

James Greenwald
Rev. Charles W. Miller
David Nelsestuen
Marian Krueger

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Clergy

The Rev. Jeff Pedersen
The Rev. Terry Larson
The Rev. David Berggren
The Rev. Bill White
The Rev. Robert C. Castro
The Rev. Sylvia Lee-Thompson
The Rev. Denise Anderson
The Rev. Michael Short
The Rev. Brent Campbell
The Rev. Jeff Vanden Heuvel
The Rev. Peter Heide
The Rev. Martha Nack
The Rev. Mark Gruner
The Rev. Margo Martens
The Rev. Katie Baardseth
The Rev. Elisa Brandt
The Rev. Kurt M. Billings
The Rev. Kurt Handrich
The Rev. Ronald O. Nybrotten
The Rev. Douglas Demlow
The Rev. Karen Bolton
The Rev. Steve Kottke
The Rev. Fred Rilling
The Rev. Dan Odden

Nomination from the floor:

The Rev. Deb Ohrtman

Female Lay

Francine Rask
Muriel Arms
Solvieg M. Carlson
Margie Czechowicz
Carolyn Cain

Sally Lee
Gisela Kutzbach
Mary DeYoung
Klover Schafer
Amanda Grell
Carolyn Butts
Frances L. Grugel
Bernadette Caldwell
Jennifer Frickelton
Jean Lincoln
Beth Teggatz
Mary Davis

Male Lay

Wayne Skatum
Tim Asplund
Dennis Douglas
John Pleuss
Lynn Miller
Todd R. Fossum
Dale Meyer
Eric M. Peterson
Thomas B. Martin-Erickson
Timothy Mumm
Jay Becklin
Larry Larrabee

Person of Color or Primary Language Other than English

Dan Montgomery
Winifred Brown

Youth

Christian Trygve Lund
Mara Bakken
Joshua Handrich

Bishop Burnside asked for further nominations from the floor as none were brought forward he declared nominations closed.

Procedures (continued)

Mary DeYoung brought the assembly rules to the floor.

SA08.05.03 Assembly rules approved

VOTED to approve the rules for the assembly as printed in the online Assembly 2008 book with the exclusion of the election rules.

ADOPTED

David Moore presented the election rules to the assembly. He explained that the goal of the Churchwide assembly is to have ten percent of the voting members be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. The Assembly needs to elect twenty-one voting members to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (seven clergy, seven lay female, seven lay male). The custom of the South-Central Synod has been to reserve one position for youth and one position for a person of color or whose primary language is other than English. Mr. Moore reviewed the three-page document outlining the procedure to be followed for the election.

SA08.05.04 Election rules approved

VOTED to approve the election rules for the Synod Assembly as outlined by the parliamentarian.
ADOPTED

Report of the Secretary

Mary DeYoung, the Synod Secretary brought her report to the assembly. She reminded congregations that are going to make changes to their constitutions to get them to her prior to presenting them to their congregations for approval. She reported to the Assembly the changes that the 2007 Churchwide Assembly made to synod and congregation constitutions. No action was required by the Synod Assembly.

Compensation Guidelines

Mary DeYoung brought before the assembly the 2009 Compensation Guidelines.

MOVED to approve the 2009 Compensation Guidelines

The Rev. George Carlson brought to the attention of the Synod Assembly that the base salary included the 2.8% cost of living increase as well as the \$700 step increase. Rev. Carlson brought the following amendment to the floor correcting the \$700 amount included in the base salary

VOTED to amend the 2009 Compensation Guidelines salary and benefit table to reflect a 2.8% increase on the base to be \$31,534.

ADOPTED

SA08.05.05 Compensation Guidelines adopted

VOTED to approve the 2009 Compensation Guidelines as presented with the following change to amend the salary and benefits table to have a starting salary of \$31,534.

ADOPTED

Vice-President's Report

Ms. Kilmark addressed the members of the assembly by reminding them that they are voting members until the next assembly is seated. She thanked congregations for their faithful service and support not only to the Synod but also for the wonderful things going on in congregations.

Global Sound Bite – Latin America/Caribbean

The Rev. Mary Pharmer and The Rev. Dick Blomker informed the Assembly about ministries taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Rev. Pedro Suarez led the Assembly in song.

Credentials Report #2 and First Ballot

Jeanne Stansfield presented the second report of the Credentials Committee.

Clergy	152
Lay Female	154
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>102</u>
Voting Members	408
Visitors	42

Wayne Pinnow explained the rules for balloting. Ballots will only be distributed in the voting area and only to persons wearing a white name tag. At the completion of the balloting, the Bishop declared the first ballot closed.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Burnside offered his reflections on the future direction of the Synod related to mission, word and sacrament, stewardship, and Sabbath keeping. The Bishop asked the Assembly to think about what others in their communities know about their mission and the work they do. He told the Assembly that we have work to do in how we welcome one another and show hospitality in our churches. He reported that Reggie McNeal will be a guest in our Synod on July 13-14 to offer a workshop on the theme The Present Future. Mr. McNeal notes in his book that the church in North America in the 21st century must be a church in mission. The Bishop talked about word and sacrament. He wants us to be a Book of Faith synod and actively engage in the study of scripture. In the area of stewardship the Bishop stated to the Assembly that “money talk is spiritual talk.” He highlighted the conversations that Rolfe Nervig is having with congregations about their intents and what we can learn from those who are exceeding their intents to the Synod. The Bishop also noted the Blue Ribbon Report from the ELCA which focuses on how we want to talk about financial resources in the church. The Synod is looking for a grant to provide financial retreats for pastors, AIMS, and other rostered lay leaders to help with their personal stewardship and how they can share that with their congregations. One pastor in the Synod has graciously offered to fund a pilot workshop. The Bishop talked about Sabbath keeping and the importance of pastors leading their congregations in such a way that we can embrace God’s command that we remember Sabbath and keep it holy.

The Bishop stressed the importance of our ecumenical relationships with those outside our congregations. Strengthening and keeping our ecumenical relationships is important to the Bishop. The Synod has partnership ministries with the Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church in India, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan in the Holy Land, the Caribbean Synod, and the Slovak-Zion Synod.

The Bishop reported that the Synod is in the process of writing a mentor grant to work with rural congregations. There will be a team from the Synod going to the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center for a week long training for conflict resolution. Members of the team have committed to paying half the cost of the training and then devoting three years to be a resource person for congregations experiencing conflict.

The Bishop thanked members of the Synod Council for their work. He also thanked the Rev. George Carlson and the Rev. Jon Enslin for their support and help. He especially thanked his wife, Cynthia, for keeping him on track and asking the tough questions.

Overview of Synod Ministries

Bishop Burnside introduced and recognized those involved in our partnership ministries.

Recognition of CCL/Lay School

Kim Eighmy, the Synod coordinator for the Lay School of Ministry, recognized the tenth anniversary of the Lay School. The Lay School is partnered with Wartburg Seminary and programs are being hosted at St. James in Verona and Good Shepherd in Madison. She thanked the Rev. Jon Enslin and Phyllis Wiederhoeft for their involvement in establishing the Lay School of ministry. The Rev. Jon Enslin presented a greeting on behalf of Phyllis Wiederhoeft.

Bishop Burnside recessed the assembly for lunch.

Session II

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Bishop Burnside called session II to order.

Global Synod Partnerships

The Rev. Pablo Quiñones-Berberena, brought greetings from the Caribbean Synod. Puerto Rico, that our Assembly would be uplifted and guided by the Holy Spirit. The Rev. Quiñones -Berberena reported that there has been 110 years of Lutheran presence in Puerto Rico. He also shared a video of the partnership ministry they have with McFarland Lutheran Church, McFarland.

Judy Murken, chair of the Companion Synod Team, introduced Sanchita Kisku. Ms. Kisku brought greetings from the Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church in India and also thanked the Assembly for their seminary support.

Treasurer's Report

Robert Gorsuch, the Synod treasurer, commented that the most recent financial audit dated June 30, 2007 was a certified audit and unqualified opinion that the Synod finances are in good order. Internal controls in the Synod are adequate. He reported that for the year ended June 30, 2007, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$33,000 so reserves increased. The Synod has a reserve of approximately fifteen percent of the current year's total budgeted expenditures.

SA08.05.06 Treasurer's report accepted

VOTED to accept the report of the treasurer.

ADOPTED

Mr. Gorsuch presented the 2008-09 Spending Plan to the assembly. The adoption of the plan comes later in the agenda.

Credentials Report #3

Jeanne Stansfield presented the third report of the Credentials Committee.

Clergy	156
Lay Female	157
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>104</u>
Voting Members	417
Visitors	45

Resolutions

Bishop Burside explained that the first part of the debate on each resolution would be limited to the "resolved" sections. After the resolved sections are completed then the whereas sections can be debated. Eric Peterson, chair of the Resolutions Committee, reported that no further resolutions were submitted to the Synod office so only four resolutions would be brought forward.

Resolution – Financial Support for NELC

Eric Peterson presented the resolution regarding Financial Support for NELC. The Resolutions Committee forwarded the resolution as written but recommended to refer the resolution to the Synod Council.

Resolution – Financial Support for NELC

Whereas, the entire South-Central Synod of Wisconsin is in a companion synod relationship with the Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church in India, and

Whereas, walking together in the course of mutual exchange visits we have developed relationships with the NELC, and

Whereas, through these visits we have developed an understanding and empathy for each other's resources, needs and goals, and

Whereas, part of the gift we bring to this relationship is our disproportionate wealth, and

Whereas, the ministries of the NELC have many practical needs in order to keep growing and sharing the message of the saving grace in Jesus Christ, be it

Resolved, that financial support of \$10,000 for the NELC be included in the synod budget with annual evaluation eliminating the need for special fundraising campaigns each year, and be it further

Resolved, that this information be forwarded to the NELC and a formal policy and procedure for disbursement of these funds be mutually agreed upon by the SCSW and the NELC in accordance with the accompaniment model of the ELCA Global Mission, and be it further

Resolved that the NELC will apply for this funding through a grant proposal to determine which ministries will receive funds and then will report how the funds furthered their ministry.

MOVED Resolution for Financial Support for NELC be referred to the Synod Council with instructions to continue in dialogue with the Companion Synod Ministry Team and incorporate financial support for NELC into future spending plans.

Walt Meyer asked what the effect of this motion would be. Eric Peterson replied that the motion is a recommendation for the Synod Council and the Companion Synod Ministry Team to work together to incorporate financial support for NELC into future spending plans.

SA08.05.07 Financial Support for NELC Resolution Referred to Synod Council
VOTED to refer the Resolution for Financial Support for NELC to the Synod Council with instructions to continue in dialogue with the Companion Synod Ministry Team and incorporate financial support for NELC into future spending plans.
ADOPTED

(A vote could not be determined by voice so Bishop Burnside asked the assembly to use their cards to vote.)

Resolution – Book of Faith Initiative

Eric Peterson reported that two resolutions were presented on the Book of Faith initiative, therefore a hearing was held and a substitute resolution was developed by those parties bringing the resolution forward. The Resolutions Committee recommended adoption of this resolution

MOVED Book of Faith Initiative

SA08.05.08 Book of Faith Initiative
VOTED Whereas pastors at their ordination vow to be diligent in their study of the Holy Scriptures;

Whereas all parents and sponsors covenant to place the holy scriptures in the hands of their children and nurture them in faith and prayer;

Whereas all the baptized when they affirm their baptism promise “to hear the Word of God” and “to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed”;

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

Be it resolved that we encourage all congregations to become a “Book of Faith” congregation, which will find expression by

- exploring new opportunities for engaging the Bible,
 - sending sufficient numbers of members to synod events for training as Bible study leaders,
 - including biblical study as an integral part of meetings and groups,
- in order to become more fluent in the first language of faith—the language of Scripture—that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.**

Be it further resolved that the clergy of our synod commit themselves to living in and from the Word of God in their preparations to teach and preach, as well as personally in their daily devotional practices, so that as they commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being engaged by God's Word, they lead by example in faithful service and holy living.

Be it further resolved that all voting members of this synod assembly covenant together to begin a regular practice of Bible study and prayer, gathering with others in their congregation and/or community to speak and hear the Word from one another;

Be it further resolved, that we become a "Book of Faith" synod, committing ourselves to live in and from the Word of God in our meetings, assemblies and events, so that as we regularly and increasingly hear, read, study, share and are engaged by God's Word, we lead by example in faithful service and holy living;

Be it further resolved that the bishop of our synod—who “as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church”—in coordination with the synod advocate lead this initiative personally and through collaborative programmatic work with congregations of the synod;

Be it further resolved that we celebrate and continue to support and strengthen those places where Scripture is already taught and engaged, such as Women of the ELCA Bible studies, camping and campus ministries, Lay School of Ministry, congregational councils, Sunday school, and other congregational and synod groups.

ADOPTED

The Rev. Jim Bailey spoke to the process the Synod would undertake for the Book of Faith Initiative. He explained that it is a five year process to get congregations engaged in studying the Bible in ways they haven't before. There would be a Synod advocate who would attend ELCA training in August and would then work with a Synod leadership group of ten to twelve people. The ELCA's goal is to train 15,000 leaders churchwide.

The Rev. Clint Schneklath spoke in favor of the resolution. He asked the Assembly to think about how many people read scripture daily, if clergy are reading scripture devotionally, and if our young people are reading scripture. This resolution will help strengthen our scripture basis for all members of our congregations.

Report of the Elections Committee

Bishop Burnside presided as the report from the first ballot was brought by Wayne Pinnow (names in bold are elected). There were 381 ballots cast so a majority of 191 was needed.

Synod Council (four needed)

James Greenwald	361
Rev. Charles W. Miller	364
David Nelsestuen	361
Marian Krueger	361

Bishop Burnside declared the election of James Greenwald, the Rev. Charles W. Miller, David Nelsestuen, and Marian Krueger .

Synod Vice-President

Connie Kilmark	269
Sally Lee	108

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Connie Kilmark.

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Clergy (seven needed)

The Rev. Jeff Pedersen	106
The Rev. Terry Larson	107
The Rev. David Berggren	162
The Rev. Bill White	145
The Rev. Robert C. Castro	116
The Rev. Sylvia Lee-Thompson	128
The Rev. Denise Anderson	77
The Rev. Michael Short	91
The Rev. Brent Campbell	135
The Rev. Jeff Vanden Heuvel	107
The Rev. Peter Heide	75
The Rev. Martha Nack	106
The Rev. Mark Gruner	81
The Rev. Margo Martens	90
The Rev. Katie Baardseth	114
The Rev. Elisa Brandt	71
The Rev. Kurt M. Billings	111
The Rev. Kurt Handrich	81
The Rev. Ronald O. Nybroten	88
The Rev. Douglas Demlow	55
The Rev. Karen Bolton	104
The Rev. Steve Kottke	146
The Rev. Fred Rilling	84
The Rev. Dan Odden	69
The Rev. Deb Ohrtman	81

Bishop Burnside declared no election.

Female Lay (seven needed)

Francine Rask	118
Muriel Arms	126
Solvieg M. Carlson	267
Margie Czechowicz	99
Carolyn Cain	80
Sally Lee	199
Gisela Kutzbach	97
Mary DeYoung	203
Klover Schafer	111
Amanda Grell	122
Carolyn Butts	199
Frances L. Grugel	70
Bernadette Caldwell	120
Jennifer Frickelton	118
Jean Lincoln	138
Beth Tegatz	168
Mary Davis	182

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Solvieg M. Carlson, Sally Lee, Mary DeYoung and Carolyn Butts.

Male Lay (seven needed)

Wayne Skatum	169
Tim Asplund	226

Dennis Douglas	170
John Pleuss	175
Lynn Miller	177
Todd R. Fossum	210
Dale Meyer	153
Eric M. Peterson	231
Thomas B. Martin-Erickson	185
Timothy Mumm	197
Jay Becklin	206
Larry Larrabee	219

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Tim Asplund, Todd R. Fossum, Eric M. Peterson, Timothy Mumm, Jay Becklin, and Larry Larrabee.

Person of Color or Primary Language Other than English

Dan Montgomery	137
Winifred Brown	199

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Winifred Brown.

Youth

Christian Trygve Lund	103
Mara Bakken	159
Joshua Handrich	91

Bishop Burnside declared no election.

The Assembly was given an overview of the Global Formation Workshops. The Bishop declared Session 2 closed.

Session III

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Bishop Burnside called session III to order.

Credentials Report #4

Jeanne Stansfield presented the fourth report of the Credentials Committee.

Clergy	151
Lay Female	156
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>101</u>
Voting Members	408
Visitors	45

Ballot 2 and Wisconsin Council of Churches Board

Wayne Pinnow brought the second ballot to the floor of the Assembly. At the completion of the balloting, the Bishop declared the second ballot closed.

SA08.05.09 Wisconsin Council of Churches Board

VOTED to cast a unanimous ballot to appoint Carolyn Butts and Karl Gutknecht to the Wisconsin Council of Churches Board using the card ballots.

ADOPTED

The Bishop turned the Assembly over to Vice-President Connie Kilmark so he could prepare for worship.

Resolution – Review of Health Care Options

Eric Peterson reported that the original resolution on health care options was in line with policy and procedures but did not meet the format required by the ELCA. The ELCA requires communication from the Synod Assembly in the form of memorials or communication from the Synod in the form of a resolution. The resolution committee redrafted the resolution to meet the format requirements without changing the intent of the resolution to communicate with the Board of Pensions. The substitute resolution was brought by the Resolutions Committee without recommendation.

Review of Health Care Options

MOVED

Whereas, the current health insurance package for rostered leaders and employees of the various ELCA expressions and its affiliated organizations has become a financial burden which threatens the financial health of member congregations to the point of diminishing mission in many congregations, and

Whereas, options which provide both adequate catastrophic coverage and individual market choice are available in the marketplace at a total cost which is potentially lower than the current coverage, therefore be it

Resolved that the Synod Council communicate to the ELCA Board of Pensions the following:

- Review current coverage offered in the light of the availability of flexible programs under federal and state law such as Health Savings Accounts, employee directed benefit packages, and other choice and market based options;
- Justify its current program in light of market based alternatives which are available and to take such steps as are necessary to implement market alternatives for those congregations, agencies, and expressions of the church that wish to exercise their best judgment of justice and stewardship in making use of them.

And be it further

Resolved the Synod Council request a response to these concerns from the ELCA Board of Pensions.

Walt Viner expressed a concern about the whereas section as he did not know enough about the whereas to vote on it. He asked how the information had been quantified and what evidence was behind it. He asked if there was any data to support this.

The Rev. Paul Markquart pointed out that in the compensation guidelines the member contribution is 30.5% and he is concerned about that overall cost. He stated that the high member contribution rate makes it difficult when hiring. Rev. Markquart asked if this resolution was meant in lieu of essential health care or is it a way to reduce coverage.

The Rev. Paul Anderson stated that he felt this resolution was a waste of time as we have members who live without health care or pay for their own health care costs. He stated that we should be looking at universal health care for all people.

Rebecca Alwin expressed a concern about the word justify in the first resolve as it asks the ELCA to provide alternatives. She suggested changing the word justify in the resolution.

The Rev. Dick Blomker suggested changing justify to evaluate.

VOTED

to amend the second bullet in the resolve section from justify to evaluate.

ADOPTED

One person stated that the spirit of the amendment was to look at market based alternatives.

Sue Reese suggested not just evaluation but to provide a list.

AMEND Provide a listing of health insurance alternatives and their specific coverage and evaluate its current program in light of market based alternatives which are available and to take such steps as are necessary to implement market alternatives for those congregations, agencies, and expressions of the church that wish to exercise their best judgment of justice and stewardship in making use of them.

The Rev. George Carlson spoke against the amendment as it represented a fundamental shift in the way the ELCA “bundles” benefits as they do not offer a menu of health care choices.

David Nelsestuen spoke against the amendment. He expressed concern that rostered members are portable and if they have health insurance coverage outside of the ELCA coverage they may lose that coverage if they move outside the insurance company’s area of business. He stated that it would be insurmountable for the ELCA to provide a list of private insurance companies as there are many different health care options and providers. He also questioned if the ELCA would be liable if they provided lists of insurance providers and the coverage was inadequate.

VOTED to amend the second bullet in the resolve section to begin with “Provide a listing of health insurance alternatives and their specific coverage and” before the word evaluate.
DEFEATED

The Rev. George Carlson stated that in the second whereas section the ELCA plan is far more than catastrophic coverage and would not like to indicate to the Board of Pensions that that is the only coverage wanted.

Walt Miner spoke against the resolution. He stated that the Assembly was wrestling with a problem that goes beyond wording and that this is a national problem that we are trying to address.

VOTED to call the question on the debate on the “resolve” sections.
ADOPTED

MOVED to strike catastrophic in the second whereas section.
ADOPTED

Vice-President Connie Kilmark informed the Assembly that the question was called on the resolves and a vote would be taken on the resolution unless there was another motion to amend the whereas sections.

The Rev. Ron Mach asked to speak to the resolution.

Ms. Kilmark stated that the question had been called on the resolves and that ended debate.

The Rev. Paul Markquart raised a point of order as he did not believe that the Assembly understood that they were calling the question on the resolution without any further discussion.

VOTED to appeal the original ruling to call the question and close debate.
ADOPTED

Eric Peterson informed the Assembly that it was at the order of the day so the resolution would be take up in unfinished business during the next session.

The Assembly closed for the day at the conclusion of Worship and Holy Communion.

Session IV

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Bishop Burnside called session IV to order.

Credentials Report #5

Jeanne Stansfield presented the fifth report of the Credentials Committee.

Clergy	161
Lay Female	162
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>106</u>
Voting Members	429
Visitors	49

Resolution to Review Health Care Options

Eric Peterson returned with the resolution that had been under discussion when the Assembly adjourned the previous day. He reviewed that the ruling of the chair regarding calling the question had been appealed and the Assembly was back in discussion of the main motion.

The Rev. Ron Mach spoke against the resolution as he noted that the main issue asks the Board of Pensions to do something that they can not do. He noted that congregations have three options to address this concern: hire full-time positions, share positions with another church, or offer their own health plan.

Walt Miner spoke against the resolution. He told the Assembly that the merger of the ELCA was almost derailed because of the pension issue. The LCA was made up of mostly larger congregations and had generous pension plans. The ALC had more rural, smaller congregations and therefore smaller pension plans. The merger was made possible because both churches agreed to a single plan that was between the two previous plans but somewhat toward the higher end as in the LCA.

VOTED **to call the question.**

ADOPTED

SA08.05.10 Review of Health Care Options

VOTED Whereas, the current health insurance package for rostered leaders and employees of the various ELCA expressions and its affiliated organizations has become a financial burden which threatens the financial health of member congregations to the point of diminishing mission in many congregations, and

Whereas, options which provide both adequate coverage and individual market choice are available in the marketplace at a total cost which is potentially lower than the current coverage, therefore be it

Resolved that the Synod Council communicate to the ELCA Board of Pensions the following:

- Review current coverage offered in the light of the availability of flexible programs under federal and state law such as Health Savings Accounts, employee directed benefit packages, and other choice and market based options;
- Evaluate its current program in light of market based alternatives which are available and to take such steps as are necessary to implement market alternatives for those

congregations, agencies, and expressions of the church that wish to exercise their best judgment of justice and stewardship in making use of them.

And be it further

Resolved the Synod Council request a response to these concerns from the ELCA Board of Pensions.

DEFEATED

The Bishop explained that Robert's Rules of Order allows each individual to speak for ten minutes when discussing resolutions and he asked the Assembly if they would like to reduce the time allowed. The decision was made to limit comments to four minutes.

Resolution – Board of Pensions and Domestic Partners

Eric Peterson presented the resolution about the Board of Pensions and Domestic Partners. The report of the Resolutions Committee was to adopt the resolution as it does not change the policy of the church but speaks to a small benefit at the pension level.

MOVED Board of Pensions and Domestic Partners

SA08.05.11 Board of Pensions and Domestic Partners

VOTED

Whereas, God's call for justice in Scripture is extensively clear and without boundary (e.g. Deuteronomy 24:17-18; Psalm 10:17-18; Isaiah 42:1-4; Micah 6:8; Matthew 23:23); and

Whereas, the ELCA's first Social Statement, *Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective*, affirms that "The gospel liberates from sin, death, and evil and motivates the church to care for the neighbor and the earth" and that "Faith is active in love; love calls for justice in the relationships and structures of society;" and

Whereas, that Social Statement further affirms that "As a reconciling and healing presence, this church is called to minister to human need with compassion and imagination. It strives to pioneer new ways of addressing emerging social problems;" and

Whereas, the ELCA economic Social Statement on *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, in seeking the support of stable families, calls for us to "commit ourselves as a church to:

- hire without discriminating on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, or genetic factors;
- compensate all people we call or employ at an amount sufficient for them to live in dignity;
- provide adequate pension and health benefits;" and

Whereas, many non-profit and for-profit corporations and many government departments on the state and local levels quite some time ago began to recognize domestic partnerships and make benefits available on the same basis as are available to those in traditional marriages; and

Whereas, the ELCA Board of Pensions Pension and Other Benefits program allows married partners to "unbundle" pension from other parts of the program but forbids this option for domestic partners; and

Whereas, the church is thereby not only failing to "pioneer" in this emerging social context, but is neglectfully lagging in justice; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2008 Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin call on the ELCA

Board of Pensions to change the policies of the Pension and Other Benefits Program to more justly support domestic partners by allowing them to “unbundle” pension from other benefits; and be it further

Resolved, that the Bishop of this synod contact the President and Trustees of the Board of Pensions to communicate our concern.

ADOPTED

The Rev. Nick Utphall spoke to the resolution to unbundle the pension from the insurance as it related to a staff issue at St. Stephen’s in Monona. He related that the staff member did not have a married partner so he could not separate the pension from the insurance. If the staff member chose the other person’s insurance, then he would lose his pension contribution with the ELCA.

M. L. Jacobson questioned whether or not the ELCA has recognized or approved domestic partners as an approved relationship.

Eric Peterson responded that the Board of Pensions currently allows domestic partners to have access under the insurance plan.

Report of the Elections Committee

Bishop Burnside presided as the report from the second ballot was brought by Wayne Pinnow (names in bold are elected). There were 329 ballots cast so a majority of 165 was needed.

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Clergy (seven needed)

The Rev. Jeff Pedersen	140
The Rev. Terry Larson	137
The Rev. David Berggren	201
The Rev. Bill White	165
The Rev. Robert C. Castro	101
The Rev. Sylvia Lee-Thompson	203
The Rev. Michael Short	85
The Rev. Brent Campbell	170
The Rev. Jeff Vanden Heuvel	110
The Rev. Martha Nack	162
The Rev. Katie Baardseth	172
The Rev. Kurt M. Billings	140
The Rev. Karen Bolton	138
The Rev. Steve Kottke	206

Bishop Burnside declared the election of The Rev. David Berggren, The Rev. Bill White, The Rev. Sylvia Lee-Thompson, The Rev. Brent Campbell, The Rev. Katie Baardseth, and The Rev. Steve Kottke.

Youth

Christian Trygve Lund	124
Mara Bakken	200

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Mara Bakken.

Female Lay (one needed unless the youth elected is a female then no further female lay is needed)

Beth Tegatz	159
Mary Davis	154

Bishop Burnside declared that no further election of a female lay is needed as the youth election of Mara Bakken fulfills the ELCA requirement of seven lay female.

Male Lay (one needed unless the youth elected is a male then no further female lay is needed)

Lynn Miller 131

Thomas B. Martin-Erickson 175

Bishop Burnside declared the election of Thomas B. Martin-Erickson.

Report of ELCA Churchwide Representative

The Rev. Mark Grorud brought greetings from Presiding Bishop Hanson and the ELCA. He thanked the Synod for our partnership in working together for Christ's work as well as our strong mission support and being faithful stewards. He presented a video titled God's Work – Our Hands of Presiding Bishop Hanson and what it means to be the ELCA today. Rev. Grorud emphasized in his remarks that mission support helps to build and support the framework for what the Church is doing today. He stated that we have to use our voices together in order to do the work of the Church. "We are the Church! I am a part of it and so are you!"

Global Sound Bite – India

Judy Murken, chair of the NELC Companion Synod Team, talked about renewing our covenant with NELC. The Rev. Kathy Ulrich lead the Assembly in song.

Credentials Report #6

Jeanne Stansfield presented the sixth report of the Credentials Committee with no change from the earlier report.

Clergy	161
Lay Female	162
<u>Lay Male</u>	<u>106</u>
Voting Members	429
Visitors	49

Ballot 3

Wayne Pinnow brought the third ballot to the floor of the Assembly. At the completion of the balloting, the Bishop declared the third ballot closed.

The Bishop closed Session IV so Assembly members could attend the Global Formation Workshops.

Session V

Musical Presentation

The Tim Hansen Project presented a musical interlude.

Bishop Burnside called session V to order.

Report of the Elections Committee

Bishop Burnside presided as the report from the third ballot was brought by Wayne Pinnow (names in bold are elected). There were 295 ballots cast so a majority of 148 was needed.

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Clergy (one needed)

The Rev. Jeff Pedersen 93

The Rev. Martha Nack 127

The Rev. Kurt M. Billings 75

Bishop Burnside declared no election.

Ballot 4

Wayne Pinnow brought the fourth ballot to the floor of the Assembly. At the completion of the balloting, the Bishop declared the fourth ballot closed.

Spending Plan

Mr. Bob Gorsuch returned the spending plan to the floor. He explained to the Assembly that the spending plan goes from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009. Mr. Gorsuch suggested increasing interest income by \$1,350 to \$14,350 and increasing the youth ministry expenditure to \$1,350.

VOTED to increase interest income by \$1,350 and increase youth ministry by \$1,350.
ADOPTED

The Rev. David Berggren raised a question about dropping the percentage given to ELCA. He expressed the hope that they Synod would hold ourselves to the goal we set several years ago of sixty percent. He stated that he understood about the budget but expressed concern that we keep the sixty percent goal in mind and strive to reach it in the next three to four years.

Carolyn Butts, a member of the Synod Council, reported that the Synod Council is trying hard to restore the alliances with our partnership ministries as we drastically cut our support to the Region and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. She expressed that she does not want to cut our support to Churchwide but we also need to begin to restore funding to our local partnerships.

The Rev. Geoffrey Hoy believes strongly in the 59.6% the Synod gives to mission support and being a strong synod in the ELCA. He stated that he was not happy about dropping our mission support percentage to ELCA. He stated that he believed it would be possible for the Synod to increase our ELCA support if all the leaders in our congregations accept the challenge to step forward and support our mission support.

The Rev. Jeannette Strandjord expressed concern about cutting our percentage of ELCA support. She stated that she has strong beliefs in supporting the work of the Church. She challenged the Synod to reach our current level of support.

MOVED to reinstate ELCA support to 59.6%

The Rev. Karen Locken, a member of the Synod Council, noted that in order to come up with the 59.6% the budget would have to be cut in other areas. She reported that the Synod Council looked long and hard at the budget and determined that the Region and the Wisconsin Council of Churches have been carrying our share. This budget is an attempt to balance our resources without taking advantage of our partnership ministries.

The Rev. Geoffrey Hoy asked what amount would be needed to meet the 59.6%. Bob Gorsuch responded that we would need to increase receipts by \$37,100 in order to reach the 59.6% benevolence. We would have to reduce expenses or find other funding sources.

Mark Grorud, representing ELCA churchwide, thanked the Synod for their mission support and the conversation to try to keep the sixty percent goal in our spending plan.

Jay Becklin spoke to the amendment. He too is against the motion in principle and would love to have the 59.6% to flow through to the ELCA. The challenge is to go back to our congregations and make that happen. He stated that the pressure on the budget is tremendous but the Synod has not held its fair share with our ministry partners and it would be impossible to do that if this amendment is passed.

The Rev. Robert Schaefer noted that we would need to increase our benevolence by \$51,342 and decrease our

expenditures by \$30,600 if the Assembly were to pass this amendment.

The Rev. Jeanette Strandjord stated that the principle here is to build the challenge into our budget. We need to challenge our Synod to raise the additional funds as she does not believe that we should cut our benevolence to the ELCA in order to make the Synod budget work.

The Rev. Karen Locken stated that benevolence is more than Churchwide, it is also our partnership ministries.

VOTED to call the question on the amendment.

ADOPTED

VOTED_ to reinstate the ELCA support to 59.6%.

FAILED

VOTED to call the question on the spending plan.

ADOPTED

SA08.05.12 Approve 2008-09 Spending Plan

VOTED to approve the 2008-09 Spending Plan with the change to increase interest income by \$1,350 and increase youth ministry by \$1,350.

ADOPTED

Report of the Elections Committee

Bishop Burnside presided as the report from the fourth ballot was brought by Wayne Pinnow (names in bold are elected). There were 266 ballots cast so a majority of 134 was needed.

2007 Churchwide Assembly

Clergy (one needed)

The Rev. Jeff Pedersen 110

The Rev. Martha Nack 156

Bishop Burnside declared the election of the Rev. Martha Nack.

Introductions

The Bishop asked rostered leaders new to our Synod to come forward and introduce themselves. He also asked all the interns to stand. He then introduced the seminarians assigned to our Synod and the Synod staff.

Seminarians

Beth Byrnes

Nichole Espe

Sheila Rawn

Anna Sorrenson

Patricia Vargas

Laurie Veendaal

Synod Staff

Marilon Krebs

Vicki Hanrahan

Kay Enslin

The Rev. Pedro Suarez

Rolfe Nervig

The Rev. Sara Yotter

Wayne Pinnow

The Rev. James Bailey

Kim Eighmy

The Rev. Brad Pohlman

The Rev. Blake Rohrer

The Bishop turned the Assembly over to Vice-President Connie Kilmark so he could prepare for worship.

Global Sound Bite – Europe

The Rev. Clint Schnekloth talked about the partnership ministry with the Slovakian Lutheran Church. The Rev. Bob Castro talked about the ministry with Latvia.

Report of the Bishop's Election Task Force

The Rev. Karen Locken, chair of the Bishop's Election Task Force, presented the concluding report of the work of the task force and recommendations for future elections. She presented a brief history of why the process was developed including the 2001 Synod Assembly resolution that directed a task force to look into developing a new process. Recommendations included:

1. to continue using a pre-assembly process for future bishop elections;
2. to appoint a task force to further develop and implement such a process at least two years prior to the election of a bishop;
3. to create a budget to support the work of the task force;
4. to make sure the election process is neutral and that all websites, mailings, etc. be separate from the Synod office; and
5. to encourage communication through mailings, Synod newsletters, Synod events, pre-assembly forums, and the bishop's election website. In addition congregations of the Synod should be free to hold additional forums at dates and times that they determine and should be as inclusive of other congregations and candidates as possible.

Rev. Locken thanked the members of the task force (Connie Kilmark, Mary DeYoung, John Grade, and the Rev. Pedro Suarez). She also thanked Wayne Pinnow and the Rev. Blake Rohrer for all of their work at last year's Synod Assembly to make the balloting as efficient as possible. She thanked her husband, the Rev. Douglas Locken and her co-pastor at Peace Lutheran Church, Waunakee, the Rev. Bruce Engebretson for their support, assistance, and feedback during the process. Rev. Locken extended a special thank you to Marilon Krebs for her knowledge and history of the Synod.

MOVED to accept the report and recommendations of the Bishop's Election Task Force.

SA08.05.13 Recommendations of the Bishop's Election Task Force

VOTED to accept the report and recommendations of the Bishop's Election Task Force.

ADOPTED

Campus Ministry Oversight Team

The Rev. Gil Splett presented a report to the Assembly on campus ministry. Campus ministry serves as a compass to guide our students, a conduit of new ideas, and a support system for students. Our campus ministries are struggling to survive. The goal is to have one campus minister at UW-Whitewater, one campus minister at UW-Platteville, and two campus ministers at UW-Madison.

The Assembly concluded with a Global Worship with Holy Communion and the installation of elected leaders and Synod staff. The Bishop adjourned the Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary DeYoung, Secretary
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

Protocol Documents

- 2008 Synod Assembly Book
- Rules Governing Elections
- Report of Ballot Results
- Substitute Resolution – Review of Health Care Options