

Memorial to Develop Social Statement on Human Disability

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability have historically faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to, “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice and develop of programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns* states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual.

Adopted 5/22/2009

Memorial for Super Majority in 2009 Churchwide Assembly's Rules of Procedure

WHEREAS, the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted "to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church"; and

WHEREAS, the Constitutional and Legal Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that "any motion to come before the Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19-10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly which would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

WHEREAS, a super majority vote – such as a two-thirds majority – would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice;

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the assembly: "Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church's current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption."

Adopted 5/22/2009

Memorial to Adopt Proposed ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2001 Churchwide Assembly voted to “initiate a process to develop a social statement on human sexuality”; and

WHEREAS, congregations, synods, and churchwide units/staff/Task Force have spent considerable time in prayer, study, and deliberation around these matters and;

WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality has paid careful attention to all responses to the draft social statement on human sexuality, reviewing 2,077 response forms (58 percent online and 42 percent on paper), two reports from each of 111 synod hearings, and approximately 800 pieces of direct correspondence or statements of varying lengths; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians are currently found in disagreement on matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians can cherish Scripture and arrive at profoundly different conclusions regarding a host of matters, including matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul recognizes the challenge of the community’s struggle to understand fully and writes: “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood” (1 Corinthians 13: 12); and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul prays for the Christian community that the “same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5) and urges it to “do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves” and to “look not only to one’s own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2: 3, 4); and

WHEREAS, the recommendation of the proposed Social Statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” before the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis on August 17-23, 2009, takes into account the wide diversity of opinion within the ELCA on matters of human sexuality and recognizes that, at the present time, the church is not in agreement on these matters; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod at its 2009 Assembly request Bishop Finck write a letter to the Task Force on Human Sexuality, commending it for its hard work, sensitivity to divergent opinions, and desire to maintain the unity of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod seek to continue clear and probing discussion around the challenging issues of human sexuality and what it means in our day to be an evangelical missional church, praying for God’s illumination in our discussion, civility and humility in our disagreements, and unity of Christ’s church; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Pacifica Synod urge churchwide leadership, synods, congregations, and individuals of the ELCA to lead by grace, praying that, one day, we will be of one mind in Jesus Christ and fully understand the gift of human sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED that the recorded vote tally shall be included with the passed memorial and transmitted to the secretary of the ELCA.

Adopted 5/22/2009
09-5a: 210 yes, 137 no

Memorial to Adopt Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies

WHEREAS, the ELCA at its 2007 Churchwide Assembly directed the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality “specifically to address and make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church”; and

WHEREAS, congregations, synods, and churchwide units/staff/Task Force have spent considerable time in prayer, study, and deliberation around these matters and;

WHEREAS, faithful Christians are currently found in disagreement on matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians can cherish Scripture and arrive at profoundly different conclusions regarding a host of matters, including matters of human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul recognizes the challenge of the community’s struggle to understand fully and writes: “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood” (1 Corinthians 13: 12); and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul prays for the Christian community that the “same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5) and urges it to “do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves” and to “look not only to one’s own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2: 3, 4); and

WHEREAS, the recommendation of “Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies” before the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis on August 17-23, 2009, takes into account the wide diversity of opinion within the ELCA on matters of human sexuality and recognizes that, at the present time, the church is not in agreement on these matters; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod at its 2009 Assembly request Bishop Finck write a letter to the Task Force on Human Sexuality, commending it for its hard work, sensitivity to divergent opinions, and desire to maintain the unity of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the Report and the Recommendation on Ministry Policies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this synod seek to continue clear and probing discussion around the challenging issues of human sexuality and what it means in our day to be an evangelical missional church, praying for God’s illumination in our discussion, civility and humility in our disagreements, and unity of Christ’s church; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Pacifica Synod urge churchwide leadership, synods, congregations, and individuals of the ELCA to lead by grace, praying that, one day, we will be of one mind in Jesus Christ and fully understand the gift of human sexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED that the recorded vote tally shall be included with the passed memorial and transmitted to the secretary of the ELCA.

Adopted 5/22/2009

09-5b: 188 yes, 151 no

Immigrant Detention Practices

WHEREAS, Scripture calls for hospitality and justice for aliens and strangers, as in Leviticus 19:33-34: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”; and

WHEREAS, the “Message on Immigration” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) calls this church “to advocate for immigration, refugee, and asylum laws that are fair and generous”; and

WHEREAS, more than 320,000 people were held in immigration detention in the United States last year at a cost of \$1.2 billion, many in county jails or privately-owned facilities sub-contracted by the federal government, costing approximately \$95 per person per day, while more humane and less costly alternatives to detention, costing as little as \$12 per person per day, have proven effective (primary source for this and the following information: Detention Watch Network - <http://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org/aboutdetention>); and

WHEREAS, persons fleeing life-threatening situations in their home country and seeking safe asylum in the United States, who have committed no crime, and who are following legal procedures to apply for asylum, are nevertheless held in the harsh conditions of detention along side criminals, (estimates are that about 20% of the persons being held in the detention center in San Diego are asylum seekers) and

WHEREAS, concern over conditions in detention centers, especially inadequate access to health care, has prompted federal inquiries aimed at addressing more than 80 preventable deaths of detainees from 2003 to 2008; and

WHEREAS, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contracts with the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), a private for-profit organization, to operate several of its detention centers, including the one in the Otay Mesa area of San Diego, and this center has received some of the most serious complaints of mistreatment and abuse of detainees; and

WHEREAS, the CCA intends to construct a replacement detention facility at its San Diego site, which would become the largest detention facility in the United States, and is attempting to evade a number of environmental protection laws and endangered species protections in this construction; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and 15 bishops of the ELCA issued a statement of concern on October 4, 2007, which expressed great concern about conditions in detention centers for immigrants and called on the U.S. government to seek “...more humane and balanced solutions to complex issues of immigration”; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Assembly of the Pacifica Synod, ELCA, instruct the Secretary of the Synod to forward a letter on our behalf to President Obama and to the United States Senators and members of the House of Representative representing the territory of Pacifica Synod in California and Hawaii asking them:

- To end the current over-reliance on detention as the primary tool of immigration control and enforcement and to make better use of less costly methods of monitoring those immigrants and asylum seekers who can expeditiously be determined to pose no threat to public safety or national security;
- To end needless detention by reaffirming and expanding prosecutorial discretion when determining the need to detain and when reviewing an individual’s eligibility for release;
- To affirm current efforts in Congress that aim to ensure civil and humane treatment of those held in detention so that their medical, social and legal welfare is respected and guarded;
- To undertake a thorough review of immigration policies which rely on indiscriminant incarceration of undocumented immigrants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Assembly of the Pacifica Synod, ELCA, instruct the Secretary of the Synod to forward a letter on our behalf to President Obama, to the United States Senators and members of the House of

Representative representing the territory of Pacifica Synod in California and Hawaii, to the heads of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Homeland Security, and to Governor Schwarzenegger asking:

- That the federal government and ICE exercise more transparent and responsible oversight and accountability of the treatment of detainees in facilities contracted out to CCA and other sub-contractors to assure that they are operated in accordance with ICE standards and that they honor the human and legal rights due immigrants; and
- That these leaders oppose the proposed construction of a new detention facility by CCA in Otay Mesa, given the history of CCA's mistreatment of detainees, lack of accountability, and disregard for the environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the congregations and rostered leaders of the Pacifica Synod be encouraged to communicate these concerns to their appropriate elected officials.

Adopted 5/22/2009

Book of Faith Initiative

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Churchwide Assembly has undertaken a long-term, ongoing Book of Faith Initiative that encourages and promotes fluency and heightened engagement with Scripture, the first language of our faith, but has purposefully placed the implementation of specific approaches, programs, courses and methods for local decisions; and

WHEREAS, at its 2008 Assembly, the Pacifica Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted to become a “Book of Faith” synod, committing itself to increasingly hear, read, study, share and become engaged by God’s written Word; and

WHEREAS, the Pacifica Synod has begun implementing the 2008 Initiative by constituting a Book of Faith Ministry Team by appointing a synod advocate and by beginning to coordinate planning and programs between Book of Faith efforts, PALLMM (Preparing Adult Lay Leaders for Mission and Ministry) programs, the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators (LACE), the Synod Council, and related organizations; and

WHEREAS, several congregations of the Pacifica Synod have themselves begun leading the way by resolving to become “Book of Faith” congregations and heightening their engagement with God’s written Word; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that all voting members of the 2009 Pacifica Synod Assembly covenant together to emphasize increasing our congregations’ engagements with Scripture through renewed and ongoing Bible reading, exploration and learning opportunities for both adult and younger learners in our congregations by

- Exploring new opportunities for reading and sharing the Scriptures--in our own congregations, in forthcoming Pacifica programs, in utilizing forthcoming Augsburg Fortress Book of Faith Initiative resources (including the new *Lutheran Study Bible*), and through participating in high quality Bible study programs consistent with Lutheran teachings
- Including Bible reading/study and/or “dwelling in the Word” efforts as an integral part of all meetings and church group functions
- Communicating and sharing our successes, together with the impact of increasing the emphasis on Holy Scripture as a part of all that we do as a church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all voting members of the 2009 Pacifica Synod Assembly commit together to encourage their own congregations to join the early leaders who have begun the synod’s engagement with the Initiative by becoming “Book of Faith” congregations ourselves; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all voting members of the 2009 Pacifica Synod Assembly commit together to encourage their congregational leaders and others to join the ELCA’s Book Of Faith “Social Network” (<http://bookoffaith.ning.com/>) and, through regular return visits and review, keep abreast of conversations and developments begun and reported there; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all voting members of the 2009 Pacifica Synod Assembly covenant together to raise up, support and equip new teachers from each of our congregations who will become capable and confident leaders of such Bible exploration and learning efforts.

Adopted 5/22/2009

**ROSTERING OF LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION
PARTNER CHURCH CLERGY IN THE ELCA**

WHEREAS, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a communion of over 140 churches from seventy-eight (78) countries united through the common confession that: A) the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are to be the only source and norm of its doctrine, life, and service; and B) the three Ecumenical Creeds and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, are pure expositions of the Word of God, and

WHEREAS, this common confession allows for altar and pulpit exchange between LWF partner churches as a sign of our communion in the one holy, catholic, and apostolic church and as a way to mutually recognize the validity of each other's orders of ministry, and

WHEREAS, for those seeking to be rostered in the ELCA, this church currently make little distinction in its requirements between those who come from other Christian traditions and those who come from LWF partner churches, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Pacifica Synod enter into dialogue with other ELCA synods to memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to direct the Vocation & Education Unit to review policies for accepting ordained ministers from partner churches of the Lutheran World Federation who are considered for ministry to serve in congregations of this church with the goal of creating a system that honors and affirms the vocational ministry of those rostered in partner churches of the Lutheran World Federation.

Adopted 5/22/2009