

**)MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
TEXAS-LOUISIANA GULF COAST SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
June 2-4, 2005
The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel**

**Thursday, June 2, 2005
Business Session One**

A video welcome was shown featuring Assembly Co-chairs, Pastor John Boldt and Joe Cox.

Bishop Blom led the Litany for the Opening of the Assembly.

Announcements and Introductions

Bishop Blom introduced the following persons to the Assembly: Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich, executive assistant to ELCA Presiding Bishop Hanson and the Churchwide Representative to this Assembly; Pastor David Daubert, ELCA Division of Outreach; Glenndy Sculley, Bishop's Associate, Minneapolis Area Synod, ELCA; the Rev. Richard Stadelmann, Parliamentarian; Pastor John Boldt and Joe Cox, Assembly Co-chairs; John Marsh, Assembly worship planner ; Jean Kirkeby, ELCA Board of Pensions; Joey-Rose Jester, Augsburg Fortress; Kevin Giesecke and Bruce Maniscalco, audio-visual specialists; and Pamela Brouker and Brad Otto, seminarians assigned to the synod.

Thanks were extended to the Assembly Planning Committee; Lord of Life Lutheran Church, The Woodlands, for hosting the Assembly Eucharist Service; the members of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, The Woodlands, for putting together the Assembly packets; and the facilitators.

Credentials Committee Report #1

Darrell Reimer, chair, reported that at 2:02 p.m., there were 211 voting members registered, of which 62 were male clergy, 9 were female clergy, 60 male lay members, 80 female lay members. The composition of the assembly was 66.35 percent laity and 33.65 percent clergy. There were 34 visitors registered.

Motion: by Darrell Reimer

SA.05.06.01 to accept the Credentials Committee report. Seconded and ADOPTED

Motion: SA05.06.02 to adopt the agenda for the Assembly. Seconded and ADOPTED.

Motion: SA05.06.03 to adopt the Standing Rules for the Assembly. Seconded and ADOPTED

Nominating Committee Report: Pastor Harvey Bongers, chair.

The names of persons nominated for various synod positions were read.

SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT (Four year term; Laity, male or female)

Douglas "Woody" Lyons, Jr.

Erika Soechting

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

SYNOD COUNCIL POSITIONS

Member-At-Large (Three Year Term) Clergy, Male

The Rev. Tom Glasoe

The Rev. Pedro E. Lopez, Jr.

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (Three Year Term) Laity, Female

Wendy Lambeth

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (Three Year Term) Laity, Female

Sue Moehring

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (Three Year Term) Laity, Male

Kurt H. Goedecke

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (One Year Term) Laity, Male

Darrell Reimer

Ron Siemers

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (One Year Term) Laity, Female

Dorothy Menke Smith

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Member-At-Large (One Year Term) Laity, Female

Nancy Cook

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE (Six Year Term)

Position 3 – Laity, Male

Arnold Kaestner

Vic Fair

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Position 6 – Clergy, Female

The Rev. Jennifer Bohls

The Rev. Kathy Haueisen

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Position 8 – Laity, Female

Lynette Bartel

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Position 12 – Clergy, Male
The Rev. Jason Korthauer
The Rev. John DeYoung

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (Six Year Term)

Place 6 – Laity, Female
Sister Anne Hall

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Place 7 – Laity, Male
Carl Albers

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Place 11 – Clergy, Male
The Rev. Tom Glasoe
The Rev. Norm Albertson

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Place 12 – Clergy, Female
The Rev. Jennie Jones
The Rev. Barbara Ann Simmers

Bishop Blom declared nominations for this position closed.

Theme presentation “Claimed” Pastor David Daubert presented this topic and provided for small group discussions.

Mission Moment – video about Global Mission Events this coming summer

Bible Study “Claimed” Glenndy Sculley presented a Bible Study and provided for small group discussions.

Distribution of Ballots

Ballot #1 was distributed. Voting members were to cast their ballots by 6:00 pm in one of the Ballot Boxes on the Facilitators’ Table.

Assembly in recess

After sharing appropriate announcements the Assembly was declared to be in recess until 8:00 am on Friday, June 3.

Assembly Eucharist Service was held at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 3801 S. Panther Creek Drive, The Woodlands, beginning at 7:30 pm.

Friday, June 3, 2005
Business Session Two

Devotions were led by Pastor Tom Glasoe of Porch Light Lutheran Church, a new ministry beginning in Sienna Plantation, Texas.

Credentials Committee Report #2

Darrell Reimer, chair reported that at 8:02 am, there were 311 voting members registered, of which 96 were male clergy, 14 were female clergy, 82 male lay members, and 119, female lay members. The composition of the Assembly was 64.63 percent laity and 35.37 percent clergy. There were 39 visitors registered.

Motion: by Darrell Reimer

SA05.06.04 to accept the Credentials Committee report. Seconded and ADOPTED

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair of Reference and Counsel Committee

SA05.06.05 to grant the privilege of voice without vote to Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich, Pastor David Daubert, and Glenndy Sculley. ADOPTED

Report of Ballot # 1: Pastor Stephen A. Springer, chair of the Elections Committee, The results of the first ballot were reported:

SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT

Votes cast 266; 134 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Douglas "Woody" Lyons, Jr. received 105 votes

Erika Soechting received 161 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Erika Soechting elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Clergy, Male; 3 year term)

Votes cast 269; 135 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

The Rev. Pedro E. Lopez, Jr. received 195 votes

The Rev. Tom Glasoe received 74 votes.

Bishop Blom declared the Rev. Pedro E. Lopez, Jr. elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Female, 3 year term)

Votes cast 258; 130 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Wendy Lambeth received 258 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Wendy Lambeth elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Female, 3 year term)

Votes cast 257; 129 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Sue Moehring received 257 votes

Bishop Blom declared Sue Moehring elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Male, 3 year term)

Votes cast 249; 125 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Kurt H. Goedecke received 249 votes

Bishop Blom declared Kurt H. Goedecke elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Male, 1 year term)

Votes cast 262; 132 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Ron Siemers received 94 votes

Darrell Reimer received 168 votes

Bishop Blom declared Darrell Reimer elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Female; 1 year term)

Votes cast 253; 127 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Dorothy Menke Smith received 253 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Dorothy Menke Smith elected.

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER-AT-LARGE (Laity, Female; 1 year term)

Votes cast 252; 127 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Nancy Cook received 252 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Nancy Cook elected.

COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE (Six Year Term)

Position 3 – Laity, Male

Votes cast 257; 129 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Vic Fair received 123 votes

Arnold Kaestner received 134 votes

Bishop Blom declared Arnold Kaestner elected.

Position 6 – Clergy, Female

Votes cast 257; 129 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

The Rev, Jennifer Bohls received 106 votes

The Rev. Kathy Haueisen received 151 votes

Bishop Blom declared the Rev. Kathy Haueisen elected.

Position 9 – Laity, Female

Votes cast 247; 124 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Lynette Bartel received 247 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Lynette Bartel elected.

Position 12 – Clergy, Male

Votes cast 266; 134 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

The Rev. John DeYoung received 113 votes

The Rev. Jason Korthauer received 153 votes.

Bishop Blom declared the Rev. Jason Korthauer elected.

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (Six Year Term)

Place 6 – Laity, Female

Votes cast 241; 121 votes needed to elect; no invalid votes

Sister Anne Hall received 241 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Sister Anne Hall elected.

Place 7 – Laity, Male

Votes cast 241; 121 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots

Carl Albers received 241 votes.

Bishop Blom declared Carl Albers elected.

Place 11- Clergy, Male

Votes cast 263; 132 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots
The Rev. Tom Glasoe received 125 votes
The Rev. Norm Albertson received 138 votes

Bishop Blom declared the Rev. Norm Albertson elected.

Place 12 – Clergy, Female

Votes cast 263; 132 votes needed to elect; no invalid ballots
The Rev. Jennie Jones received 161 votes
The Rev. Barbara Ann Simmers received 102 votes.

Bishop Blom declared the Rev. Jennie Jones elected.

Report of the Vice President

Bill Krejci reviewed his four years of service. He cited the governance and operating reforms under which the Synod Council and the Office of the Bishop now function. He offered some departing comments including a reminder that the Synod Council is now concerned with results rather than the means of fulfilling mission together. The primary goal adopted by the Synod Council is to grow healthy, mission oriented congregation.

Mission Moment: A video “A Call to Prayer” was shown. This was written by Pastors John and Robin McCullough Bade. Copies were made available to each congregation.

Mission Investment Fund Report and Presentations

Larry Petershagen gave the report and presented checks to Dry Bones Coffee House (new ministry in mid-town Houston) for the training of staff (\$6,000); to Joyful Life Church (new ministry in The Woodlands) for publicity (\$3,000); and to Porch Light Church (new ministry in Sienna Plantation) for publicity. (\$3,000).

Reference and Counsel Report

Resolution #1 presented by Susan Giesecke (Global Mission Task Force)
Requesting support for Safe House for Peru and Women’s Center in Central African Republic (CAR)

WHEREAS, God has created all things and declared them good;

WHEREAS, the ELCA has established the Companion Synod Program;

WHEREAS, the Gulf Coast Synod has developed significant relationships to mutual benefit of those involved with both our Companion Synod in Peru and in Central African Republic;

WHEREAS, the Global Mission Task Force has discovered great interest in our Synod for global work on the congregational level and that providing more Companion Synod opportunities seems to encourage creative response on the congregational level and

WHEREAS, a desire exists to develop projects, in co-operation with our Companion Synods in Peru and CAR and with the Division for Global Mission on a synod to synod basis, for Peru, a Safe House Project and for the CAR, a “Women’s Center”, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod congregations seek to inform themselves about our Companion Synods in the Central African Republic and Peru, become educated about the needs of our Companion Synods for a Women's Shelter and Safe House, respectively, and consider ways to raise money to assist these Synods in this outreach into their communities

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel
SA05.06.06 to adopt Resolution #1 as modified by Reference and Counsel. ADOPTED

Resolution #2 presented by Susan Giesecke (Global Mission Task Force)
Requesting Companion Relationship be established with the Lutheran Church in Hungary

WHEREAS, God has created all things and declared them good;

WHEREAS, the ELCA has established the Companion Synod Program;

WHEREAS, the Gulf Coast Synod has developed significant relationships to the mutual benefit of those involved with both our Companion Synod in Peru and in Central African Republic;

WHEREAS, the Global Mission Task Force has discovered great interest in our Synod for global work on the congregation level and that providing more Companion Synod opportunities seems to encourage creative responses on the congregational level and

WHEREAS, a desire exists among some congregations to develop a relationship with our brothers and sisters in Hungary thus providing opportunity for cross-cultural exchanges as well as mutual prayer and support, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2005 Synod Assembly of the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod accepts the Lutheran Church in Hungary as a Companion Synod.

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel
SA05.06.07 to adopt Resolution #2 as modified by Reference and Counsel ADOPTED

Resolution #6 presented by the Executive Committee of the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod.

Requesting support of purchasing Augsburg Fortress Material

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress is the publishing ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress is funded solely through sales revenue;

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress is called to provide products and services that communicate the gospel, enhance faith, and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective and

WHEREAS, any revenue in excess of expenses is reinvested in the development and delivery of ministry resources for the ELCA and other Christian communities, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the ELCA members, congregations, and related institutions of the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod carefully consider the stewardship aspects of their purchases of faith formation, worship, and church supply resources; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members, congregations and related institutions of the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, in support of the ministry of the Church, examine Augsburg Fortress resources for quality, price, and level of services and consider such resources whenever purchasing decisions are made.

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel
SA05.06.08 to adopt the resolution as modified by Reference and Counsel. ADOPTED

Secretary's Report

Motion: by Pastor Akerman, Secretary
SA05.06.09 that two copies of the Minutes of the 2004 Synod Assembly of the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which have been certified by the bishop and secretary, be approved as the official protocol of the assembly and be placed in the synod archives. Seconded and ADOPTED

Theme Presentation "Gathered" by Pastor David Daubert. Small group discussions followed.

Mission Moment a video was shown on the forthcoming "ELCA Youth Gathering" in San Antonio.

Bible Study "Gathered" by Glenndy Sculley. Small group discussions followed.

Business Session Three

Devotions were led by members of the Dry Bones Coffee House (a new ministry in the Houston mid-town area).

Credentials Committee Report #3

Darrell Reimer, chair, reported that at 1:09 p.m., there were 319 voting members registered, of which 101 were male clergy, 15 were female clergy; 83 male lay members, and 120 female lay members. The composition of the assembly was 63.64 percent laity and 36.36 percent clergy. There were 40 visitors registered.

Motion by Darrell Reimer
SA05.06.10 to adopt the Credentials Committee Report. Seconded and ADOPTED

Greetings:

Synod WELCA President JoAnn Fuchs called attention to the WELCA Triennial Convention in San Antonio in July and the Synod Assembly in Brenham in October.

Judy Biffle, ELCA Church Council member, spoke of matters on the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, in August.

Churchwide Report: Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich presented the report which included a video presentation featuring ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.

Ministry Milestones Recognitions

Congregation Anniversaries

25 years: House of Prayer, Harvey, Louisiana; Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Atascocita, Humble, Texas

50 years: Holy Cross, Houston, Texas; Peace, Rosenberg, Texas; Salem, Houston, Texas

75 years: Trinity, Orange, Texas

150 years: Trinity, Frelsburg, New Ulm, Texas; Eben Ezer of Berlin, Brenham, Texas

New Ministries Under Development:

Joyful Life, The Woodlands, Texas; Dry Bones Coffee House at First Evangelical Lutheran, Houston, Texas; The Porch Light Lutheran Church, Sienna Plantation, New Hope, Missouri City, Texas

Newly Ordained:

Jason Korthauer, July 10, 2004

Newly Commissioned Associate in Ministry:

Marcia Kugler, April 24, 2005

Ordination Anniversaries

25 years: Craig Borchardt; Joel D. Burkholder; Erich M. Schaefer

30 years: James L. Berggren; James A Giannatonio; Douglas Guthier; Grant Housewright

35 years: Laird A. Engle

40 years: Nathan Huang

45 years: Robert Hildebrandt; David Hoh; Walter Schindehette; Gerald G. Westerbuhr

50 years: Milroy A. Gregor; Rudy A. Kelling; Marlo D. Petersen; Roy C. Timeaus

60 years: Levon J. Spath

Clergy Retired

Alton R. Koenning (35 years); Charles C. Kindsvatter (36 years); Winston C. Hold (30 years)

Associate in Ministry Retired

Billie Navarro (40 years)

Death

Sylvia Dale

Synod Council Members Completion of Term

Stan Eckermann; Peri Katherine "P.K." McCary; Sue Moehring

Treasurer's Report

Arwin Strehlow, Treasurer, reported that the audit for the year ended January, 31, 2005, was completed by the firm Cederberg, Riley, Franks and Company. A copy of the audit will be included in the Minutes booklet.

Motion: by Arwin Strehlow

SA05.06.11 to accept the audit report of Cederberg, Riley, Franks and Company for the year ended January 31, 2005, be accepted as presented. Seconded ADOPTED

Reference and Counsel Report

Motion: by James Lehmann

SA05.06.12 that the procedure to be used in voting on Resolutions #3, #4, #5, and #7 be by secret ballot. Seconded ADOPTED

(Bishop Blom commented that “secret” ballot was a ballot in written form and that time would be allowed for the Elections Committee to count each ballot.)

Resolution #3 presented by Daniel Sigmon, Sherri Mass and Heidi Good of New Hope, Missouri City, Texas.

Allowing Pastors to Perform Same-Gender Relationship Blessings

WHEREAS, the ELCA Human Sexuality Task Force has characterized the 1993 pastoral statement by the Conference of Bishops to have “pointed the way by treating such decisions as matter of pastor...”;

WHEREAS, the understanding of the 1993 pastoral statement by the Conference of Bishops varies widely throughout the ELCA;

WHEREAS, Presiding Bishop Herbert Chilstrom stated on February 16, 1995, that “this statement by the Conference of Bishops is a statement of advice. It is not binding on pastors, nor is it grounds for discipline in our church”;

WHEREAS, the Task Force said, “With respect to the matter of blessing same-sex couples who have entered into long term monogamous covenants of love and care, the ELCA currently has no legislative policy...,” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Human Sexuality Task Force “believes that pastors and congregations can and should be trusted by this church to exercise the wisdom of discretion in their ministry to same-sex couples and their natural and congregational families,” therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod memorializes the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following as the policy of this church:

It shall be the policy of the ELCA, that for the sake of outreach, ministry, mission and prayerful support, a congregation may choose to give its pastor or pastors discretion to perform services of [covenanting] [blessing of covenanted] same-gender relationships.

David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel reported that Reference and Counsel made no recommendation concerning Resolution #3 as it is presented with minor modifications by the committee.

Motion: by Pastor John Boldt

SA05.06.13 to discuss and debate Resolution #3 as modified by Reference and Council. (seconded)

Heidi Good, one of the original presenters of Resolution #3, received consent to amend the text [covenanting] [blessing of covenanted] be changed to read “perform services of

covenanting or blessing of covenanted same-gender relationship” by deleting the brackets and inserting the word “or.”

Motion:

SA05.06.14 to move the previous question (seconded and ADOPTED)

Ballots were cast.

The result of the vote was reported as:

Votes cast 284; necessary votes to pass 143; no invalid ballots

YES received 134

NO received 150

Resolution #3 was DEFEATED.

Resolution #4 presented by Jerry Daniels, Alan Lowe, Sherri Mass, and Heidi B. Good of New Hope Lutheran Church, Missouri City, Texas

Directing ELCA to Develop Materials for Same-Gender Relationship Blessings

WHEREAS, the resolution known as The Definition and Blessing of Committed Same-gender Relationships (CA.01.06.28) by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly, directed the Division for Ministry in consultation with the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Conference of Bishops to identify and make available materials and resources to assist and support pastors as they provide counseling and pastoral support for persons seeking same-gender blessings,

WHEREAS, the ELCA Human Sexuality Task Force believes that pastors and congregations can and should be trusted to exercise the wisdom of discretion in their ministry to same-sex couples and their natural and congregational families, and

WHEREAS, this Church has yet to begin the task of identifying and making available such resources, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod memorializes the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following:

“That the ELCA Church Council direct the appropriate unit(s) of the church to identify and make available materials to assist and support pastors as they provide pastoral care and counseling homosexual persons seeking same gender blessings.” (CA01.06.28)

David Hollrah, chair of Reference and Counsel, reported that Reference and Counsel made no recommendation concerning Resolution #4 as presented with minor modifications by the committee.

Motion: by Pastor Don Carlson

SA05.06.15 to adopt Resolution #4 as modified by Reference and Counsel (seconded)

Motion: by Marcie Sandall

SA05.06.16 to amend by deleting the last four words, “seeking same sex blessings,” and inserting the words, “same-gender oriented” between words “for and persons” at the end of the sentence. (seconded and ADOPTED)

Motion:

SA05.06.17 to move the previous question as amended. (seconded and ADOPTED)

Ballots were cast.

The result of the vote was announced.

Votes cast 289; necessary votes to pass 145; no invalid ballots

YES received 184 votes

NO received 105 votes.

Resolution #4 as amended was ADOPTED

Resolution #5 presented by Heidi B. Good, Alan Lowe, Sherri Maas, and Jerry Daniels of New Hope Lutheran Church, Missouri City, Texas

WHEREAS, the ELCA Human Sexuality Task Force has stated “that the disagreement over these issues before the church is deep, pervasive, multi-faceted, and multi-layered. This church is not of one mind,”

WHEREAS, the Task Force has recommended “that the ELCA concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of our disagreements,”

WHEREAS, the Task Force’s Recommendation Three does not ensure a uniform response across the church,

WHEREAS, the Task Force’s Recommendation Three does not provide for a uniform way for those gay and lesbian persons across this church who are in covenanted relationship and who are also called to ministry to live faithfully in the midst of these congregations,

WHEREAS, some members of the Task Force have taken the position as expressed in dissenting position two calling for removal of “the last sentence of the subsection Sexual Conduct which states: ‘Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships’,”

WHEREAS, the original resolution, Assembly Action CA01.06.36, directed this church: “To respond to the memorials of the Saint Paul Area and Metropolitan Chicago synods by requesting that the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and the Division for Ministry create a specific plan and timeline leading to a decision concerning the rostering of homosexual persons who give expression to sexual intimacy only in a relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful, including but not limited to:

- 1) changes in “Vision and Expectations”;
- 2) changes in “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline”;
- 3) amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and
- 4) changes in all other related governing documents.”

And directed, that, “in the event any of the above mentioned changes require approval of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, such actions shall be placed before the 2005 Churchwide Assembly for adoption or ratification,” and

WHEREAS, no congregation of the ELCA is compelled to consider or call any candidate for a rostered position, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod memorializes the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt the following:

That it shall be the policy of this church that there be no policy barrier to rostered service for otherwise qualified persons in same-gender covenanted relationship that are “mutual, chaste, and faithful,” (Visions & Expectations page 13), and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division for Ministry in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and through action of the Church Council revise Visions & Expectations and Definition and Guidelines for Discipline, accordingly, as directed in 2001.

David Hollrah, chair of Reference and Counsel, reported that Reference and Counsel made no recommendation concerning Resolution #5 as presented with minor modifications by the committee.

Motion: presented by Heidi B. Good

SA05.06.18 to adopt Resolution #5 as modified by Reference and Counsel. (seconded)

Motion:

SA05.06.19 to move the previous question. (seconded and ADOPTED)

Ballots were cast.

The results of the vote was announced,

Votes cast 292; necessary votes to pass 147; no invalid votes

YES received 127 votes.

NO received 165 votes

Resolution #5 as modified was DEFEATED.

Resolution #7 presented by Pastor Bruce Booher

Continuing with Current Policies

WHEREAS, the *Journey Together Faithfully* Study Guide, prepared by the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality, states as a conclusion “All would agree that respecting the Church’s tradition is important to the continuity of this church’s witness to the Christian faith. Though changes happen for good reasons, the burden of proof is on the proposal to change traditional teaching.” (page 22), and

WHEREAS, the *Report and Recommendations* of this Task Force states “The task force members came to recognize that the biblical-theological case for wholesale change in this church’s current standards has not been made to the satisfaction of the majority of participants in the study. This judgment correlates with other data of ELCA opinion on matters of sexuality from correspondence, e-mail; hearings, forums and communications with bishops and other leaders. It also corresponds to the weight of opinion among our ecumenical partner churches of the Lutheran World Federation.” (page 10); therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod memorializes the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to continue without change the current policy as expressed in *Visions and Expectations* that “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 relationships.” And that this policy be upheld; and that the ELCA continue to respect the pastoral guidance of the 1993 Conference of Bishops against blessing same-sex unions.

David Hollrah, chair of Reference and Counsel, reported that Reference and Counsel has no recommendation for Resolution #7 as modified by the committee.

Motion: by Pastor Bruce Booher
SA05.06.20 to adopt Resolution #7 as modified by Reference and Counsel (seconded)

Motion:
SA05.06.21 to move the previous question. (seconded and ADOPTED)

Ballots were cast

The result of the vote was announced.

Votes cast 281; votes needed to pass 141; no invalid ballots.

YES received 135 votes.

NO received 146 votes.

Resolution #7 was DEFEATED

“**Sent**” Abbreviated presentations were made by Pastor David Daubert and Glenndy Scullery.

Assembly in recess

Lutherhill Ministries Corporation Meeting

Philip Oestreich, chair, Lutherhill Corporation called the meeting to order.

Philip Oestreich and Evan M. Moilan, Lutherhill Ministries Executive Director, gave a State of the Camp report and reviewed the financial status of the Camp.

Motion: by Philip Oestreich

LH05.06.01 to elect the following to three year terms on the Lutherhill Ministries Board of Directors: Pastor Kevin Meyer; Philip Oestreich; Ken Weiss, and Rozella White.

seconded and ADOPTED

An opportunity was given for Question and Answer time.

The Lutherhill Ministries Corporation meeting was adjourned.

Saturday, June 4

Business Session Four

Devotions were led by Pastor Scott Cigich, of new ministry Joyful Life Lutheran Church in The Woodlands, Texas.

Credentials Committee Report #4

Darrell Reimer , chair, reported that at 7:57 a.m., there were 320 voting members registered, of which 101 were male clergy; 15 were female clergy; 83 male lay members; 121 female lay members. The composition of the assembly was 63.75 percent laity and 36.25 percent clergy. There were 41 visitors registered.

Motion: by Darrell Reimer

SA05.06.22 to accept the Credentials Committee report. Seconded and ADOPTED.

Staff Report “How the TELLing Synod Claims, Gathers, and Sends”

Bishop Blom, Pastor Robert Moore and Peggy Contos This report was unique because each person spoke of how the synodical budget supports the different areas of ministry. A goal was suggested that every congregation would share at least a tithe of undesignated bequests and offerings with the synod and the wider church.

2006 Budget Presentation

Motion: by Larry Petershagen

SA05.06.23 to adopt the 2006 General Fund Budget of \$1,631,000 and the 2006 Capital Expenditures Budget of \$51,000 as recommended by the Synod Council. Seconded and ADOPTED

Motion: by Larry Petershagen

SA05.06.24 that the Assembly strongly encouraged each congregation to support the “Above and Beyond” ministries as a part of its other benevolence. Seconded and ADOPTED

Mission Moment: presented on video.

Compensation Guidelines

Motion: by Pastor George Bement

SA05.06.25 to adopt the Compensation Guidelines. Seconded and ADOPTED

Churchwide Report, Part Two

Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich responded to the written questions that had been submitted.

Reference and Counsel Report

Resolution #8 presented by Pastor Patrick Keen

WHEREAS, the call of the ELCA, our Synod and our congregations is to be diverse and inclusive in our ministry,

WHEREAS, the synod also recognizes the need for a more ethnically diverse base in our congregations and our synod,

WHEREAS, there has been no meaningful resources utilized or developed to build up African American ministries in this synod,

WHEREAS, there exist only three (3) African American Congregations in this synod, one (1) in the entire state of Louisiana, and two (2) Rostered called pastors, and

WHEREAS, the population in our urban centers are ripe for mission in this synod,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod empower a mission Development Strategy for the purpose of building up African American ministry within our synod as reflected in other ethnic communities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Synod Council seek adequate financial resources To enable this mission development strategy.

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel
SA05.06.26 to adopt Resolution #8 ADOPTED

Resolution of Thanks

David Hollrah presented a humorous resolution thanking Bishop Blom, Secretary Akerman, Parliamentarian Stadelmann, the Assembly Planning Committee, the various Assembly Committees including the Reference and Counsel members and the Elections members, the Synod Office Staff, and the Hotel and Convention Staff.

Motion: by David Hollrah, chair, Reference and Counsel
SA05.06.27 to adopt the Resolution of Thanks ADOPTED with applause.

Installation of those newly elected

Bishop Blom conducted the Installation of those present.

Assembly Closing Litany

Video Closing featuring Assembly Co-chairs, Joe Cox and Pastor John Boldt

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor H. Eldon Akerman,
Secretary

(The 2006 Assembly will be at the Marriott in Sugarland, Texas, June 1-3.)