

The following are the minutes of the 2017 Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The 2017 Synod Assembly met on June 16 and 17, 2017, at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia.

The minutes were prepared in the current form by the Secretary of the Synod and the Synod staff, reviewed by the Synod Council, and recommended for approval by the 2018 Synod Assembly.

Kevin D. Anderson
Secretary of the Synod

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE 2017 SYNOD ASSEMBLY
THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, JUNE 16 AND 17, 2017
NATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER - LEESBURG, VIRGINIA**

Introductory Activity

Prior to the opening of the Synod Assembly, a Synod Council meeting was conducted. Katharyn Wheeler organized Registration. An Orientation for New Voting Members was conducted by Mr. Richard Ahlberg, Synod Assembly Parliamentarian, and the Rev. Margrethe Kleiber. Training was also conducted for Worship Assistants in advance of the Festive Eucharist.

**Plenary Session 1
Friday, June 16, 2017
National Conference Center
Leesburg, Virginia**

Opening of Assembly

Bishop Graham called the Assembly to order at 11:30 AM.

Report of the Registrar

Bishop Graham called upon Secretary Kevin Anderson to give the report of the registrar.

Present:	Lay Voting Members	141
	Rostered Voting Members	<u>80</u>
	Total Voting Members	221
	Visitors	27

Adoption of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the seating of voting members, the approval of absences from the Assembly, the adoption of the agenda as set forth in Section 1.2R of the meeting materials for the Assembly, the adoption of rules of procedure, and approval of the minutes of the 2016 Synod Assembly as set forth in Section 9.1 of the meeting materials for the Assembly.

2017 Synod Assembly Rules of Procedure

01. To the extent consistent with the following rules of procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern.

Voice and vote

02. All persons under call, on leave from call, and retired on the roster of this Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod, in attendance at this assembly, shall have voice and vote at the proceedings of this assembly. All interim pastors serving congregations of this synod, at the time of the assembly, shall have voice and vote.
03. Alternate lay members shall be seated if the regular lay members are unable to serve.
04. Persons giving reports during this assembly's proceedings who are not members shall be given voice, no vote, during that portion of the assembly.
05. The parliamentarian appointed by the Synod Council shall be given voice, no vote (unless a member) during the proceedings of this assembly.
06. The Presiding Bishop, or his or her representative(s), and ecumenical representatives shall be given voice, no vote during the proceedings of this assembly.
07. Duly elected and serving members of the Synod Council shall have both voice and vote at the synod assembly, in accordance with S7.28 of the constitution of the synod.

Quorum

08. One-half (1/2) of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

Proxy

09. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.

Items of Business

10. With the consent of this assembly, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order is deemed by the chair most expedient for the conduct of assembly business. The chair shall limit discussions to items germane to the issues before the assembly.

Resolutions

11. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Synod. In order to assure the resolution going to the floor of this assembly, such resolutions shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Synod prior to the promulgated deadline, which shall not be less than 30 days prior to the beginning of the assembly. The Secretary shall refer them to the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Committee shall report to this assembly with its recommendations regarding the resolutions submitted, which shall constitute a motion to the floor of this assembly.
12. Any resolutions submitted after this date are not guaranteed a place on the agenda and must receive a two-thirds vote in order to be heard. Any resolution not receiving a two-thirds vote will be referred to the Synod Council for disposition.
13. Multimedia presentations will not be part of floor debate on resolutions.

Motions

14. All main motions, to be made, shall be in writing and presented to the Secretary of the Synod immediately (Constitution and Bylaw amendments require five (5) signatures of members).
15. A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s).
16. A motion to end debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion. A motion to end debate on all matters on the floor or more than the immediately preceding question is not in order.
17. When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted as the original motion or be rejected.
18. Debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes per person, per speech.

Elections

19. Ballots shall be accepted only from those members who are seated within designated areas of the assembly hall. In cases where electronic voting is used,

a voting device shall be issued to, and may be used only by, voting members present at the assembly.

20. Nominations from the floor shall be accompanied by the copy-ready vita and the consent of the person to be nominated, both to be submitted to the secretary at the time of the nomination.

Minutes

21. Minutes of this assembly shall be available for review by Synod Council by the September 30 immediately following the assembly.

Applications for Displays

22. The Assembly Planning Committee shall determine the amount of space available for displays at each assembly site, year by year, and shall determine the fees charged for displays that are and are not directly related to the offices and divisions of this synod in coordination with the Synod Council.

Applications will be reviewed by the planning committee for content of display and how it relates to the Synod Assembly theme. Permission or license for displays at each assembly shall be given in light of the following priorities:

First Priority: Synod tables, teams, and committees.

Second Priority: Agencies and ministries directly affiliated with this synod, its congregations and/or the ELCA, including 1517 Media (f/k/a Augsburg Fortress).

Third Priority: Independent organizations, services, or ministries related or useful to the ministry of this church (e.g., church fund raising organizations, ecclesiastical arts agencies).

In principle, display authorization at this synod's assemblies shall always be considered a privilege and shall never be considered a right of any organization not officially affiliated with this synod and/or the ELCA.

In accord with available "third party space," the Assembly Planning Committee shall choose as many as seems appropriate from among the applicants. Organizations whose prior behavior or whose styles of ministry are thought to be or have been demonstrated to be demeaning of persons of differing viewpoints as to their worth as individuals, or their worthiness to hear the Gospel or to live in community with other believers, shall not be permitted the privilege of display at

assemblies of this synod. Decisions of the Assembly Planning Committee in this regard are considered final.

Excused Absences of Rostered Leaders

The Rev. Eleanor Abarno
Dcn. Mitzi Budde
The Rev. Heidi Eickstadt
The Rev. Gregory Gaertner
The Rev. Karis Graham
The Rev. Jane Halpern
The Rev. Kristin Johnston Largen
The Rev. Sandy Kessinger
The Rev. Lowell Knauff
The Rev. Jan Lookingbill
The Rev. Daniel Martensen
Dcn. Jeffrey Pannebaker
Dcn. Wayne Ralston
Dcn. Harold Seargent
The Rev. Glen A. Sea
The Rev. Michael Wilker

The Rev. Robert Abarno
The Rev. Anne Duggins
The Rev. Craig Endicott
Dcn. Kathy Garrison
The Rev. Mike Gutzler
The Rev. Raymond H. Hartzell
The Rev. Travis Kern
The Rev. Alexis King
The Rev. Gordon Lathrop
The Rev. Michael Magwire
The Rev. Ray Michener
Dcn. Linda Pannebaker
Dcn. Alfie Rulis
The Rev. Theodore Schneider
The Rev. Amy Sevimli

Moved:

Seconded: To adopt the consent agenda as presented to the 2017 Synod Assembly.

VOTED

SA17.06.01 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Recognition of Ecumenical Guests

Bishop Graham introduced three ecumenical guests: Father Charles Cortinovis, Executive Director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the Archdiocese of Washington; Rabbi Gerry Serotta, director of the InterFaith Conference of Washington, D.C.; and the Reverend Olaf Wassmuth, Pastor of the German Lutheran Church of Washington, D.C.

The New Connections Campaign

Bishop Graham introduced Christy Hartigan to provide the report of the New Connections Campaign. The report began with a video presentation and continued with the introduction of the Rev. Karen Brau, Luther Place Memorial Church, and the Rev. Joe Vogt, Community Lutheran Church, Sterling. A check, payable to the ELCA in the approximate amount of \$10,900, was presented to Presiding Bishop Eaton. This check represented 10% of the receipts of the Campaign.

Pastor Philip Hirsch continued the report by identifying the pilot congregations participating in the Campaign. He noted that a copy of the book *Growing Young* was distributed to each of the Synod's congregations. At the time of the Assembly, approximately 60% of the Synod's rostered leaders had made pledges or gifts to the Campaign.

Report of ELCA Representative

Bishop Graham introduced Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, who was serving as the ELCA representative to the Assembly.

Bishop Eaton began her remarks by noting the mission support of approximately \$541,000 provided by the Synod for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2017. The Synod is one of five synods constituting a pilot program for an experimental method of providing churchwide mission support. In exchange for a reduction of the mission support percentage to 35% of a synod's undesignated receipts, the synod in turn assumes the financial responsibility for the compensation of its Director for Evangelical Mission and for local grants. Bishop Eaton also acknowledged other contributions to World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response.

Bishop Eaton's remarks covered a number of other topics, including gratitude for the service of Bishop Graham, the Synod's companion synod relationships, Called Forward Together in Christ, Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO), Bishop Eaton's Leadership Initiative, ecumenical and interreligious relations, theological discernment, the social statement on women and justice, Young Adults in Global Mission, and the rostered ministers gathering scheduled for August 7-11 in Atlanta. She closed her remarks with the Synod Assembly video.

Introduction to Voting Devices

Mr. Dana White, Qwizdom Inc., offered an introduction to the voting devices, together with sample questions to demonstrate the various features of the devices.

Introduction of Front Table

Bishop Graham introduced the individuals seated at the front table facing the voting members: Pastor Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop; Mr. Richard Ahlberg, Synod Assembly Parliamentarian; Dr. John White, Vice President; Pastor Philip Hirsch, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission; and Mr. Kevin Anderson, Secretary.

Instructions for Lunch and Workshops; Meal Prayer

Instructions for lunch and early afternoon workshops were provided by Mr. Larry Evans and Ms. Gretta Williams. Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold led the Assembly in a meal prayer. The Assembly recessed for lunch at 1:15 PM.

After the Assembly had the opportunity to pick up their lunches, members were invited to attend one of four concurrent workshops, as follows: (1) New Connections: Growing Young and Diverse; (2) Circle of Welcome—Congregational Engagement with Immigrants and Refugees; (3) When Racism Takes Over My Sacred Spaces; and (4) Sustainable Development as Spiritual Calling.

Plenary Session 2
Friday, June 16, 2017
National Conference Center
Leesburg, Virginia

The Assembly resumed at 2:55 PM following lunch and workshops with song and prayer, led by the Synod Worship Team and the Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Pastor Albert Triolo, Chair, presented the report of the Nominating Committee, describing the process that the Committee undertook to identify nominees for all open positions. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the Conference Deans, who served as the Nominating Committee, and to the Synod Assembly Planning Committee. Pastor Triolo introduced each of the nominees and referred the Assembly to the Candidate Information Forms that had been included in the advance materials for the Assembly.

Office of Synod Vice President

Mr. Kevin D. Anderson
Ms. Evelyn J. Crenshaw

Office of Synod Treasurer

Mr. Wendell L. Anderson
Ms. Julie P. Hamre

DC. Conference – Lay

Mr. Michael Sonnenberg

Fairfax Conference – Clergy

The Rev. Albert W. Triolo

Maryland Conference – Clergy

The Rev. Gary R. Rhinesmith

Montgomery Conference – Clergy

The Rev. Sarah W. Lewis

Potomac Conference – Clergy

The Rev. Robert L. Lewis, Jr.

Virginia Conference – Lay

Barbara Bilodeau

At Large – Lay or Clergy

Mr. Paul Culler

The Rev. Elijah Mwitanti

Youth Representative
Samuel S.

Committee on Discipline
[No nominations]

Bishop Graham opened the floor to any additional nominations, by category. There were no additional nominations from the floor for any of the open positions. Bishop Graham noted that any unfilled vacancies would be filled by the Synod Council.

Moved:

Seconded: To close the nominations for all elected positions for the 2017 Synod Assembly.

VOTED

SA17.06.02 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Report of the Synod Treasurer

Pastor Thomas Knoll, Treasurer, reviewed the financial reports for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2017, which were contained in Section 4 of the materials provided to the Assembly. These statements reflected a surplus of undesignated receipts over expenditures of approximately \$33,000 (unaudited). Pastor Knoll also referred to the financial reports for the first three months of the current fiscal year, through April 30, 2017, which were also contained in the materials provided to the Assembly. These statements reflected a deficit in undesignated receipts, when compared with expenditures, of approximately \$20,000 (also unaudited).

He also described the Synod's participation in the pilot program for churchwide mission support, consisting of a reduction in the rate of such support in exchange for the assumption of certain costs previously borne by the churchwide organization.

Report on Synod Compensation Guidelines

Dr. John White, Vice President, provided background information regarding the compensation guidelines for rostered leaders that had been developed and approved in prior years. These guidelines consist of an unadjusted base amount, a "point" system, and housing allowance factors. For the current year, slight cost-of-living adjustments were made to certain dollar amounts set forth in the guidelines, a copy of which was contained in Section 3.3.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly. The guidelines for 2018 were previously approved by the Synod Council and recommended for approval by the Assembly.

Moved: To approve the Rostered Ministry Compensation Guidelines for 2018 in the form presented to the 2017 Synod Assembly.

VOTED Yes 105 No 68 Abstain 26
SA17.06.03 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Report of Synod Vice President

Dr. White continued by providing his final report to the Assembly in his capacity as the Synod Vice President, highlighting some of the themes contained in his written report at Section 3.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly.

The Community of St. Dysmas

Bishop Graham introduced Deacon Deborah Haynes, who provided the Assembly with a summary of her ministry in the Community of St. Dysmas, a worshipping community consisting of inmates in a women's prison within the Maryland Corrections System. She concluded her remarks with a prayer written by one of the members of this community.

Report of the Bishop

Dr. John White, Vice President of the Synod, assumed the chair and invited Bishop Graham to present his report.

Bishop Graham began by noting that he was delivering his tenth annual report as bishop, with two more such reports to be delivered. He also described the creation of the Racial Equity Team as a response to the murder of nine African Americans at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, on June 17, 2015. His remarks previewed the events scheduled to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, to be held in October 2017. His remarks concluded with a 500th anniversary video.

Upon the conclusion of this report, Vice President White yielded the chair back to Bishop Graham.

Ministry Moment—New Connections Campaign

Bishop Graham introduced a ministry moment segment for the New Connections Campaign. A video featured the Lutheran Church of the Abiding Presence, Burke, Virginia.

The Assembly recessed for a mid-afternoon break at 4:15 PM.

Plenary Session 3
Friday, June 16, 2017
National Conference Center

Leesburg, Virginia

The Assembly resumed at 4:30 PM following the mid-afternoon break with song and prayer, led by the Synod Worship Team and the Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold.

Introduction of the Mission Spending Plan

The Assembly was presented with the 2018 Mission Spending Plan, as set forth in Section 3.2.1 of the materials provided in advance to the Assembly. Pursuant to a three-year pilot program approved by the Church Council, the Synod's churchwide mission support is reduced to 35% of the congregational benevolence received, in exchange for its assumption of direct financial responsibility for the compensation and benefits of the Director for Evangelical Mission and for any grants made to congregations within the Synod. The proposed plan calls for budgeted expenditures of \$1,691,330, including \$575,750 of churchwide mission support. The Assembly was notified that the proposal would be brought before the Assembly for approval later in the meeting. No amendments were offered to the proposed spending plan.

Report of the Elections Committee/First Ballot

Pastor Kate Davidson, on behalf of the Elections Committee, led the Assembly through a series of elections by category of office.

For all open positions on the Synod Council (excluding the officer positions), Pr. Davidson advised the Assembly that there were no contested positions. Thus, the uncontested positions for the Synod Council are those for whom Michael Sonnenberg, Pr. Albert Triolo, Pr. Gary Rhinesmith, Pr. Sarah Lewis, Pr. Robert Lewis, Barbara Bilodeau, Pr. Elijah Mwitanti, Paul Culler, and Samuel S. had been nominated.

Moved:

Seconded: To elect all uncontested positions for the Synod Council by acclamation.

VOTED Yes 207 No -0- Abstain 2

SA17.06.04 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that all of the nominees for the Synod Council (excluding the officer positions) had been elected.

For the Office of Synod Vice President, Pr. Davidson advised the Assembly that there were two candidates, as follows:

Mr. Kevin D. Anderson
Ms. Evelyn J. Crenshaw

An electronic vote was cast, with the results of the vote to be announced at a later time.

For the Office of Synod Treasurer, Pr. Davidson advised the Assembly that there were two candidates, as follows:

Mr. Wendell L. Anderson
Ms. Julie P. Hamre

An electronic vote was cast, with the results of the vote to be announced at a later time.

Although there were four open positions on the Committee on Discipline, Pr. Davidson advised the Assembly that there were no nominations. Accordingly, no one was elected to serve on the Committee on Discipline.

First Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

The Rev. Mark Edwards, Chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee (R&C), reported to the Assembly.

Each resolution has two numbers, the R&C number, which will begin with "2017-" followed by a number. These are numbered in the chronological order received. The second number is the Secretary's number, which begins with a 6. These are the page numbers for the order in which they appear in the report. The Chair will present each resolution by giving the Synod Assembly both numbers. With the exception of the traditional "Expression of Thanks and Gratitude" resolution, the final resolutions were included in the materials provided to the Assembly.

Pastor Edwards advised the Assembly that if any member intends to propose an amendment to any of the resolutions, it would be helpful to have a written copy provided to the media coordinator as well as to the R&C Chair, so that it may be prepared as it was written for the Synod Assembly. The amendment will not be shown until it is moved from the floor.

Pastor Edwards reminded the Assembly that it is only the "Resolved" statements that are adopted. However, the "Whereas" statements are submitted as fact, lay out the issue or concern at hand, and lead to the proposed solution offered in the "Resolved" statements. Questions regarding statements in the "Whereas" clauses may be directed to a member of the R&C Committee or the author(s).

Finally, Pr. Edwards advised that any resolution arising out of the business of the Assembly must be submitted in writing to the Secretary. Should anyone have questions, they can be directed to any member of the R&C Committee. In addition to Pr. Edwards, the R&C Committee consisted of Pr. Darcy Tillman and Ms. Amanda

Wahlig. Pastor Edwards expressed his appreciation for each of the members for their time and gifts that were shared as part of this team.

Pastor Edwards explained that the R&C Committee advises and assists those who ask for action from a Synod Assembly. When a resolution meets the needs of the group asking for action, the R&C Committee puts it in proper order and then moves the resolution to the Synod Assembly. This action does not imply in any way that the R&C is in agreement with a resolution; the process is simply in compliance with *Robert's Rules of Order* for preparing and presenting resolutions to the Assembly.

Greetings to Other ELCA Synods Meeting in Assembly

Reference & Counsel Number 2017-01

Secretary's Number 6.1

WHEREAS, other synods throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) are gathering in assembly at the same time as the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod meets in assembly, and

WHEREAS, we are partners in the Mission of the Gospel with other synods of this church; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly direct the Secretary of the Synod to extend to the other synods of the ELCA who are gathering in assembly this weekend our greetings in Christ and prayers for their faithful deliberation:

Northwestern Pennsylvania
Southwestern Pennsylvania
Southwestern Washington
Northern Illinois
Upper Susquehanna Synod

Moved: To adopt the resolution entitled "Greetings to Other ELCA Synods Meeting in Assembly."

VOTED Yes 207 No 1 Abstain 3

SA17.06.05 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Gifts of Hope Program

Reference & Counsel Number 2017-02

Secretary's Number 6.2

WHEREAS, the Gifts of Hope program was established in 1992 in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod by Sue Clark to provide meaningful alternate

Christmas gift-giving opportunities for congregations and members of the synod; and

WHEREAS, over the past twenty-five years, Gifts of Hope has raised over 3.3 million dollars to support local and global ministries providing help to children, youth, adults, and elderly seeking assistance with nutritional and health needs, housing, literacy and mentoring support, transportation, emergency services, advocacy, life-affirming activities, and self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, Gifts of Hope has relied on dedicated program volunteers to create, publicize and collect these gifts each year, as well as many congregational coordinators to bring the opportunities to give each Advent season; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in assembly expresses its gratitude for the Gifts of Hope program, its director Carolyn Sowinski, volunteer leaders and congregation coordinators for the great generosity afforded by members of the synod's congregations to support the various local and global ministries over the last twenty-five years and expresses its encouragement in continuing these good works for the next twenty-five years.

Moved: To adopt the resolution entitled "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Gifts of Hope Program."

VOTED Yes 214 No -0- Abstain -0-
SA17.06.06 To adopt the foregoing motion.

After the resolution was adopted by the Assembly, Ms. Sowinski delivered brief remarks to the Assembly.

Amendments to Synod Constitution

Bishop Graham called upon Secretary Kevin Anderson to present a series of amendments to the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions. All of the proposed changes were reflected in a marked version of the complete document contained in Section 10.2 of the materials provided to the Assembly.

The 2016 Churchwide Assembly made significant changes to the *Model Constitution for Synods*, primarily as the result of the combination of three lay rosters into a single roster of ministers of Word and Service, as well as the use of the term "ministers of Word and Sacrament" to describe the roster formerly known as ordained ministers. Changes to any required provision of the *Model Constitution for Synods* automatically became part of the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions. Changes to other

provisions required a vote of the Synod Assembly, even if made to conform to changes in the model documents.

Other slight changes were made to the provisions governing the membership and leadership of the Primary Mission Table, in light of its unique place in the organization of the Synod.

All of the proposed changes had been approved by the Synod Council and recommended to the Assembly for its adoption. Following a brief description of the proposed changes, Bishop Eaton, Bishop Graham, and Secretary Anderson responded to questions from the floor.

Moved: To approve the amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, as set forth in Section 10.2 of the materials provided to the 2017 Synod Assembly.

VOTED Yes 204 No 7 Abstain 5
SA17.06.07 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area

Bishop Graham introduced Ms. Lynn Tedesco, Board Chair of Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS-NCA). She appeared at a time when LSS-NCA was observing its 100th anniversary. Ms. Tedesco described the work of the LSS-NCA in a refugee resettlement program, in collaboration with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and closed with a video illustrating some of its efforts.

Report of the Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop

Pastor Philip Hirsch focused his remarks on the New Connections Campaign, and began by noting that, although society as a whole may be more connected than ever, as individuals we may feel more disconnected than ever.

As an introduction to the goals of the Campaign, Pastor Hirsch provided a summary of how the congregations within the Synod might be classified. As of 2016, he identified 16 congregations as growing, 25 as declining, and 33 as stable. Some congregations have fewer than 50 in worship; some are not able to employ a pastor on a full-time basis.

He identified Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, as a congregation that committed to fulfill 10% of the Synod-wide goal of making 3,000 new connections during the term of the Campaign. He announced a new Web site devoted solely to the Campaign, www.newconnectionsmetrodc.com. He announced an “E-Vent” scheduled for September 16, 2017, with a focus on engagement rather than evangelism.

One aspect of the Campaign involves the availability of coaching services available to rostered ministers and congregation councils, led by Pr. Nathan Swenson-Reinhold as the coaching coordinator.

Congregations wishing to be contacted by a representative of the Campaign were invited to complete and return cards that had been distributed throughout the Assembly.

Welcoming New Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community

Bishop Graham welcomed representatives of Swahili Lutheran Church, a worshipping community approved by the Synod Council to be recognized as such pursuant to ELCA bylaw 10.02.03. Organizations having such status have the potential to be recognized as a congregation of the ELCA. The group is currently worshipping at Living Faith Lutheran Church, Rockville.

Instructions for Dinner and Evening Activities

Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold gave the Assembly instructions for dinner and evening activities and offered a meal prayer. The Assembly recessed for the day at 6:00 PM. In the evening following dinner, a worship service with holy communion included Bishop Eaton as preacher. Following worship, an informal opportunity was provided to meet and greet Bishop Eaton, with refreshments sponsored by the Mission Investment Fund.

Plenary Session 4 Saturday, June 17, 2017 National Conference Center Leesburg, Virginia

Before the beginning of Plenary Session 4, the Assembly had two informational opportunities. Bishop Eaton led a question and answer session for interested participants. Concurrently, the Synod Finance Committee held a workshop on the proposed mission spending plan.

Bishop Graham called the Assembly to order at 9:25 AM following the morning informational sessions with song, led by the Synod Worship Team. The opening prayer was offered by Bishop Graham.

Two announcements were made before returning to the agenda. First, the offering from the Friday evening worship service was \$2,371.75, and will be given to LSS-NCA. Second, due to the late arrival of the keynote speaker, the agenda will be altered so that his remarks would be delivered later than planned.

Second Report of the Registrar

Bishop Graham called upon Secretary Kevin Anderson for the report of the registrar.

Present:	Lay Voting Members	155
	Rostered Voting Members	<u>90</u>
	Total Voting Members	245
	Visitors	23

Report of the Elections Committee/Second Ballot

Pastor Kate Davidson, on behalf of the Elections Committee, reported the results of the elections for officers of the Synod. The results of voting for the Office of Synod Vice President were as follows:

Mr. Kevin Anderson	89
Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw	108

Bishop Graham declared that Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw is elected to the Office of Synod Vice President.

The results of voting for the Office of Synod Treasurer were as follows:

Mr. Wendell Anderson	62
Ms. Julie Hamre	138

Bishop Graham declared that Ms. Julie Hamre is elected to the Office of Synod Treasurer.

Upon the announcement of the votes for the two Synod officer positions, the Elections Committee concluded its report. No further votes were necessary.

Report of the Assistant to the Bishop

Bishop Graham introduced Pr. Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop, who began by summarizing her written report and describing her role in candidacy, discernment, and mobility processes for the Synod. She concluded with two video presentations. The first featured the bishops of the Synod and Delaware-Maryland Synod. The second described the immigration and refugee ministry.

United Lutheran Seminary

Bishop Graham introduced Pr. Angela Zimmann, Vice President of Advancement of the United Lutheran Seminary, formed by the combination of the formerly separate

seminaries in Gettysburg and Philadelphia. Pastor Zimmann presented a video describing the new organization and its “integrative” curriculum. She described unprecedented financial aid for seminary students, consisting of full tuition scholarships for a class of approved students. To support this approach, Pr. Zimmann requested the Assembly’s support in the form of prayers, seminary candidates, and continued financial support.

Consideration of the Mission Spending Plan

After having been introduced and discussed earlier in the agenda, the proposed 2018 Mission Spending Plan, as set forth in Section 3.2.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly, was brought before the Assembly. Bishop Graham called upon Treasurer Pr. Thomas Knoll to move the adoption of the proposed plan and to respond to questions. Bishop Graham advised the Assembly that, because the time for proposing amendments to the plan had passed, the plan was not open for amendment at this time.

A question was posed regarding the proposed reduction in support for the United Lutheran Seminary. Separately, Pr. Knoll noted that support for seminarians is provided through permanent/restricted funds available to the Synod.

Moved: To approve the 2018 Mission Spending Plan as set forth in Section 3.2.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly.

VOTED Yes 204 No 1 Abstain 1

SA17.06.08 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Milestones in Ministry

The Assembly noted with joy and gratitude the rostered leaders and congregations that have reached milestones in their ministry.

The following rostered leaders were identified:

The Rev. Geri Opsahl	25 years
The Rev. Bob Allard	50 years
The Rev. Harry T. Cleven	50 years
The Rev. Charles Gravenstine	50 years
The Rev. Richard Hoehn	55 years
The Rev. J. Lowell Knauff	55 years
The Rev. E. Harold Jansen	60 years

The following congregations were identified:

St. Nicholas, Huntington	25 years
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Christ Lutheran, Washington, DC 125 years
Zion Evangelical, Takoma Park 150 years

The Assembly returned at 11:00 AM after a mid-morning break, with a song led by the Synod Worship Team.

Second Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

The Rev. Mark Edwards, Chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee (R&C), provided the second report to the Assembly.

Membership in ELCA Congregations

Reference & Counsel Number 2017-03

Secretary's Number 6.3

WHEREAS, Jesus directed his disciples to baptize and teach all nations, even unto the ends of the earth; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commanded his followers to love God and to love their neighbors as themselves; and

WHEREAS, according to St. Paul, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male or female in the body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the body of Christ is called to bear the burdens of others, to welcome the stranger, to care for the well-being of every child of God; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly memorialize the ELCA 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee meeting in August 2019 to amend the church's governing documents to include the following mandatory language in Chapter 8 – Membership of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA*:

“*C.8.06. At no time may a disapproval of membership in this congregation be based, in whole or in part, upon age, marital status, race, gender, national origin, economic class, sexual preference, or gender identity. This congregation is open and welcoming to all who seek to worship or learn about Jesus Christ, and membership is open to all persons who agree to be bound by the constitution and by-laws of this congregation.”

Moved: To adopt the resolution entitled “Membership in ELCA Congregations.”

After initial remarks were made by the proponent of the resolution, an amendment was suggested to change the phrase “sexual preference” to “sexual orientation.” The proponent accepted the modification as a friendly amendment to the resolution, and no vote was taken on this modification. Following the resolution of this matter, another member of the Assembly suggested the addition of “ability” or “disability” to the list of inappropriate bases for disapproving membership in a congregation. After discussion, a consensus was reached to propose adding the word “ability” to the list.

Moved:

Seconded: To amend the resolution entitled “Membership in ELCA Congregations” by adding the word “ability” after the word “age”.

VOTED Yes 184 No 13 Abstain 11
SA17.06.09 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Moved:

Seconded: To amend the resolution entitled “Membership in ELCA Congregations” by adding the words “legal status” after the words “national origin”.

Moved:

Seconded: To amend the previous amendment to substitute “citizenship status” for “legal status”.

VOTED Yes 63 No 131 Abstain 14
SA17.06.10 Against adopting the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that the motion was not adopted. The amendment to the amendment having been defeated, the Assembly returned to its consideration of the amendment to add the words “legal status” to the resolution.

VOTED Yes 128 No 69 Abstain 11
SA17.06.11 To adopt the foregoing motion.

As amended, the “resolved” clause reads as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly memorialize the ELCA 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee meeting in August 2019 to amend the church’s governing documents to include the following mandatory language in Chapter 8 – Membership of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA*:

“*C.8.06. At no time may a disapproval of membership in this congregation be based, in whole or in part, upon age, ability, marital status, race, gender, national origin, legal status, economic

class, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This congregation is open and welcoming to all who seek to worship or learn about Jesus Christ, and membership is open to all persons who agree to be bound by the constitution and by-laws of this congregation.”

The Assembly proceeded to a vote on the resolution, as amended.

VOTED Yes 162 No 30 Abstain 12
SA17.06.12 To adopt the foregoing motion.

The Reference and Counsel Committee reserved any remaining resolutions for a subsequent report.

Keynote Speaker

Bishop Graham called upon Pr. Karen Brau to introduce the keynote speaker. Dr. Reggie Williams is Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, and has served in that role since 2012. His presentation was entitled “Christian Racism and the Beloved Community: What Must I Do to be Saved?”

Instructions for Lunch; Meal Prayer

Following the keynote address, instructions for lunch and a meal prayer were offered by Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold. The Assembly recessed for lunch at 12:30 PM.

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The Assembly resumed at 1:15 PM with song and prayer, led by the Synod Worship Team and the Assembly Chaplain Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold.

Keynote Speaker (Part 2)

Dr. Reggie Williams continued his remarks and led a question-and-answer session with the Assembly.

Ministry Moment—New Connections Campaign

A second ministry moment from the New Connections Campaign was offered to the Assembly. Referring to the pilot program undertaken by two congregations, this presentation featured Good Samaritan Lutheran Church, Lexington Park, Maryland.

Ecumenical Greetings

Bishop Graham introduced John Denninger, District President, Southeastern District, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, who spoke in anticipation of events scheduled for the fall to jointly commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Third Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

The Rev. Mark Edwards, Chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee (R&C), provided the third report to the Assembly.

Special Expression of Gratitude: Dr. John White

Reference & Counsel Number 2017-04

Secretary's Number 6.4

WHEREAS, Dr. John White has faithfully served the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod for eight years as Vice President of the Synod; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. White had previously served as a member of the Synod Council as lay member from Virginia Conference; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. White's generosity of spirit and devotion to Christ's church have been of immeasurable value to this synod; therefore, be it:

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in assembly expresses its deep, heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Dr. John White for his leadership and dedication to this synod and the mission we share in the life-giving gospel of Jesus Christ for the world; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in assembly express its approval and acclamation of this resolution with our applause.

Moved: To adopt the resolution entitled "Special Expression of Gratitude: Dr. John White."

VOTED (by acclamation)

SA15.06.13 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Expression of Thanks and Gratitude

Reference & Counsel Number 2017-05

Secretary's Number 6.5

WHEREAS, the task of providing facilities and support for a synod assembly imposes burdens and responsibilities physically, financially, and spiritually on the host organization outside of the normal parameters of the mission; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Synod Assembly Planning Committee and numerous others have worked many hours to prepare for this assembly; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly express its heartfelt thanks to God and to all whose support and effort have made this Synod Assembly a fruitful gathering of God's people, including:

- the Reverend Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Presiding Bishop, for an enlightening ELCA report, an informative session of questions and answers, and inspired proclamation during our Eucharist worship;
- Dr. Reggie Williams, for his stimulating keynote address and for engaging in a period of answering our questions in addressing these challenges;
- our ecumenical guests: The Reverend Charles Cortinovis, Executive Director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the Archdiocese of Washington; Rabbi Gerry Serotta, director of the InterFaith Conference of Washington DC; and the Reverend Olaf Wassmuth, Pastor of the German Lutheran Church of Washington, D.C.;
- for our workshop leaders in broadening our vision of the world and the role of the church: the Reverend Philip Hirsch and Ms. Christy Hartigan on the New Connections Campaign; the Reverend Kevin Jacobson of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) and Ms. Kiersten Nassar of Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS/NCA); members of the synod Racial Equity Team, and the Reverend Richard Hoehn and the Reverend Michael Kuchinsky on Sustainable Development;
- Ms. Katharyn Wheeler, Assembly Coordinator, for her tireless effort in arranging, organizing, and tracking preparations for the assembly, for supervising the registration process and on-site administrative support; Makoura Kone and Lee Shields for pre-Assembly Office assistance; and Registration and Assembly administrative volunteers Chris Schaefer, Sarah Wright, Eric Randolph, Esther Samuelson, Gretchen Bonnano;

- the staff of the National Conference Center for their hospitality and flexibility in providing support for our assembly;
- Mr. Dana White of Qwizdom, Inc. for providing invaluable and patient guidance in using the voting devices;
- the ELCA Mission Investment Fund and Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area for providing refreshments as part of our breaks;
- the Synod Assembly Planning Committee, under the leadership of the Reverend Margrethe Kleiber, in tirelessly addressing the myriad details and decisions necessary in planning and supporting the program and agenda for this assembly: Mr. Kevin Anderson, Mr. David Carlson, the Reverend Mark Edwards, Mr. Larry Evans, the Reverend Richard Graham, Ms. Christy Hartigan, Ms. Karen Krueger, Mr. Philip Meuschke, the Reverend David Slaigle-Peck, the Reverend Albert Triolo, the Reverend Mitch Watney, Ms. Katharyn Wheeler and Ms. Margretta Williams;
- the Assembly parliamentarian, Mr. Richard Ahlberg, for his wise counsel and the orientation session for those first-time synod assembly voting members;
- Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold for serving this assembly as our chaplain, leading our prayers and providing spiritual care for us all;
- the Assembly Worship Planning Team, led by the Reverend David Slaigle-Peck; Mr. Jeremy Grenhart, Mr. Philip Meuschke, and Dr. Jeffery Pannebaker;
- Mr. Allen Jones, Mr. Matthew Robinson, and Ms. Marissa Zeccinato for their musical leadership in our assembly worship;
- the Reverend Leila Ortiz for presiding at the Eucharist service and all who assisted in our worship and prayers: Ms. Virginia Atwell, the Reverend Lamar Bailey, Ms. Alice Benson, the Reverend Julie Bringaman, the Reverend Kate Costa, Deacon Deb Haynes, Deacon Kati Miller-Holland, Deacon Dave Larrabee, the Reverend Jeanette Leisk, the Reverend Cathy Ellen Rosenholtz, Ms. Kathy Russell, Vicar Chris Schaefer, Mr. Drew Sonnenberg, the Reverend Nathan Swenson-Reinhold, Mr. Mike Tervo and Deacon Jeff Tsai;

- the Synod's Communications Director, Ms. Karen Krueger, Media Coordinators Mr. David Carlson and Mr. Philip Meuschke, our guest Blogger Ms. Esther Samuelson, and Photographer Mr. David Owusu for the communications and social media support invaluable to this assembly;
- the Nominating Committee, consisting of the conference deans of the synod under the leadership of the Reverend Albert Triolo: the Reverend Anna Anderson, the Reverend Travis Kern, the Reverend Lynn Miller, the Reverend Mitch Watney and the Reverend Michael Wilker;
- the Elections Committee: the Reverend Kate Davidson and the Reverend Mitch Watney;
- the Reference and Counsel Committee: the Reverend Mark Edwards, the Reverend Darcy Tillman, and Ms. Amanda Wahlig;
- the Reverend Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop; the Reverend Philip C. Hirsch; Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission; Ms. Christy Hartigan, New Connections Campaign director, Ms. Katharyn Wheeler, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop; and Ms. Makoura Kone, Ms. Karen Krueger, and Mr. Siyada Kiriti of the synod office for their year-round work on behalf of the synod and our congregations;
- Dr. John White, Vice President of the Synod and Mr. Kevin Anderson, Secretary of the Synod for their wisdom and encouragement in planning and executing this assembly;
- The Reverend Tom Knoll for his dedicated and faithful service as Treasurer of the synod;
- those who are completing their terms on the Synod Council: Mr. Paul Culler, the Reverend Varinia Espinosa, Mr. Larry Evans, the Reverend Robert Lewis, the Reverend Sarah Lewis, Mr. Stanley Medikonda, the Reverend Elijah Mwitanti, the Reverend Gary Rhinesmith, and youth representative Samuel S-R.;
- all those who permitted their names to be placed before the assembly for consideration in elections for Synod Vice President and Treasurer, and the Synod Council;

- our special thanks to Bishop Richard Graham for his steady and faithful leadership of this assembly and this synod and to his wife Nancy Ann for her patient and faithful support of her husband’s work in the vineyard that is the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod.

Moved: To approve the resolution entitled “Expression of Thanks and Gratitude.”

VOTED (by acclamation)

SA17.06.14 To adopt the foregoing motion.

Conclusion of Assembly

There being no further business to bring before the Assembly, at 2:30 PM Bishop Graham asked the Assembly to proceed immediately to the closing worship and installation of the Synod Council and officers. The worship concluded at 3:30 PM and the 2017 Synod Assembly was declared closed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin D. Anderson
Secretary