

The following are the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The 2016 Synod Assembly met on June 16, 2018, at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax, 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 2019 Synod Assembly.

Kevin D. Anderson  
Secretary of the Synod

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE 2018 SYNOD ASSEMBLY  
THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD  
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 2018  
LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH - FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA**

**Introductory Activity**

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

**Festive Eucharist**

Prior to the opening of the Assembly, the Assembly gathered in worship for the Festive Eucharist. Bishop Graham was the preacher. Offerings were designated for the New Connections Campaign and the Building Puentes efforts.

**Plenary Session 1  
Saturday, June 16, 2018  
Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
Fairfax, Virginia**

**Opening of Assembly**

Bishop Richard H. Graham called the Assembly to order at 10:15 AM.

**Report of the Registrar**

Present:	Lay Voting Members	146
	Rostered Voting Members	<u>92</u>
	<b>Total Voting Members</b>	<b>238</b>
	Visitors	23

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To seat the Voting Members.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.01** To adopt the foregoing motion.

**Synod Assembly Agenda, Rules of Procedure, Minutes, and Absences**

Following the seating of the voting members, Bishop Graham brought forth four items for adoption and approval as a single motion: the approval of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, the adoption of the 2018 Synod Assembly Rules of Procedure, the approval of the minutes of the 2017 Synod Assembly, and the approval of excused absences from among the rostered leaders.

### **Adoption of the 2018 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 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 only 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.
21. At this assembly, voting members to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly shall be elected. The synod has been allocated eight voting members, provided that at least one is a youth or young adult and at least one is a person of color or person whose primary language is other than English. Not more than 40% of the voting members may be ministers of Word and Sacrament. At least 60% of the voting members must be lay persons (including, for this purpose, ministers of Word and Service). Gender balance requirements apply to both lay persons and ministers of Word and Sacrament, although they are articulated somewhat differently for each of the two groups in the governing provisions of the ELCA. The bishop and vice president of this synod are ex officio voting members of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly and are taken into consideration in applying the foregoing representational principles. Pursuant to the recommendation of the Synod Council, the election of voting members to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly shall be conducted so that exactly two of the elected voting members (in addition to the bishop of this synod) are ministers of Word and Sacrament. The remaining voting members shall be elected in a manner that will ensure compliance with all of the foregoing representational principles.

## **Minutes**

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

## **Applications for Displays**

23. Due to space constraints, displays will not be permitted at the 2018 Synod Assembly.

### **Excused Absences of Rostered Leaders**

The Rev. Shannon Anderson  
The Rev. Amy Carter Fiera  
The Rev. Gregory Gaertner  
The Rev. Charles Hodges  
The Rev. Alexis King  
The Rev. Gordon Lathrop  
The Rev. Michael Lohmann  
The Rev. Daniel Martensen  
The Rev. Lynn Miller  
The Rev. Tom Omholt  
The Rev. Donald Piper  
The Rev. Theodore Schneider  
The Rev. George Schwantes  
The Rev. Amy Sevimli  
The Rev. Albert Swingle  
Deacon Deborah Haynes

The Rev. Dean W. Anderson  
The Rev. Anne Duggins  
The Rev. Vincent Guss  
The Rev. Richard Hoehn  
The Rev. Terri King  
The Rev. Sarah Lewis  
The Rev. Jan Lookingbill  
The Rev. Connie Miller  
The Rev. Janice Mynchenberg  
The Rev. Bill Perry  
The Rev. Ronald Qualley  
The Rev. Lowell Schuetze  
The Rev. Glen A. Sea  
The Rev. Sandra Shaw  
Deacon Kathy Garrison

#### **Moved:**

**Seconded:** To approve the agenda for the Synod Assembly as set forth in Section 1.2 of the meeting materials for the Assembly, the Rules of Procedure as set forth above, the minutes of the 2017 Synod Assembly as set forth in Section 9.1 of the meeting materials for the Assembly, and the excused absences as set forth above.

#### **VOTED**

**SA18.06.02** To adopt the foregoing motion.

### **Report of the Bishop**

Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw, Vice President of the Synod, assumed the chair and invited Bishop Graham to present his report.

After noting that this report was his 11<sup>th</sup> annual report to the Synod Assembly as bishop, he reviewed the several events that had taken place within the last year to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. He identified the plans for his 12<sup>th</sup> and final year as bishop, including transition planning for the bishop to be elected at the 2019 Synod Assembly. He completed his remarks with expressions of gratitude for the synod staff, its lay leaders, and his family.

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

## **Report of the Nominating Committee**

Pastor Travis Kern, 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 Kern 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.

### **Secretary**

Kevin D. Anderson

### **At Large – Lay or Clergy**

Jackson F. Droney

### **DC Conference – Clergy**

The Rev. David O'B. Trott, Sr.

### **At Large – Rostered**

Dcn. Rebecca H. Kolowé,

### **Fairfax Conference – Lay**

Virginia Trygstad

### **SWO Representative**

Sheena Foster

### **Maryland Conference – Lay**

Ashelyn Mosby

### **Youth Representative**

Katherine S.

### **Montgomery Conference – Clergy**

The Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe

### **Consultation Committee – Clergy**

The Rev. Scott E. Zimmerer

### **Montgomery Conference – Lay**

Dr. Cleophas J. Tsokodayi

### **Consultation Committee – Lay**

Michael Sonnenberg

### **Potomac Conference – Clergy**

The Rev. Michael B. Guy

### **Churchwide Assembly Voting Member**

Kevin D. Anderson

### **Potomac Conference – Lay**

Cynthia E. Reese

The Rev. Mark D. Edwards

Dcn. Deborah K. Haynes

Dcn. Rebecca H. Kolowé

Dcn. David A. Larrabee

### **Virginia Conference – Clergy**

The Rev. Sandra J. Kessinger

The Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe

Ms. Kathryn L. Moran (Y/YA)

The candidates for Synod Council in the categories of Montgomery Conference – Clergy and Potomac Conference – Clergy are filling vacancies caused by the resignations of the respective incumbents. Accordingly, these two candidates will be elected to serve one-year terms.

Bishop Graham opened the floor to any additional nominations, by category. Hearing no additional nominations for the office of Synod Secretary, Bishop Graham declared the nomination to be closed, noting that the position was uncontested. Hearing no additional nominations for Synod Council, Bishop Graham declared the nominations to be closed, noting that each of the open positions was uncontested. Hearing no additional nominations for the Consultation Committee, Bishop Graham declared the nominations to be closed, noting that each of the open positions was uncontested. With respect to the Consultation Committee, he noted that any unfilled vacancies would be filled by the Synod Council. Hearing no additional nominations for Churchwide Assembly Voting Members, Bishop Graham declared the nominations to be closed, noting that an election would be necessary for this position.

In order to formally close the nominations process, Bishop Graham asked for a motion from the floor to this effect.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To close the nominations for Synod Secretary, Synod Council, Synod Consultation Committee, and Churchwide Assembly Voting Members.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.03** To adopt the foregoing motion.

**Report of the ELCA Churchwide Representative**

Bishop Graham introduced Christina Jackson-Skelton, the Executive Director, Mission Advancement, the representative from the churchwide organization to the Synod Assembly.

Ms. Jackson-Skelton began her remarks by sharing the work that has been done as a church through a video presentation. The activities described in the video included (1) Future Directions; (2) Faith Formation; (3) Congregational Vitality; (4) Lutheran Disaster Response; (5) Global Mission; (6) Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO); (7) Advocacy; (8) Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations; and (9) Leadership.

She continued her report by identifying a number of different matters, including:

- Special appreciation for the service of Bishop Graham to the church;
- The special role of the synod because of its location in the Nation's capital, which also serves as the location for the ELCA Washington, D.C. office and the Office of Federal Chaplaincy;
- The January 2018 ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering;
- Appreciation for the \$536,000 in benevolence to the churchwide organization provided by the synod for the immediately preceding fiscal year;



- The last year of the Campaign for the ELCA, with appreciation for the synod's commitment of ten percent of its contributions received through the New Connections Campaign;
- Appreciation for the \$445,000 received by Lutheran Disaster Response from this synod alone;
- The adoption of the AMMPARO strategy to respond to several challenges around the world;
- The deployment of 113 new missionaries through Young Adults in Global Mission;
- An endowment in excess of \$55 million, with \$2.1 million being made available for scholarships;
- The 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering to be held in Houston, with 485 registered from this synod to attend;
- The Social Statement on Women and Justice to be presented to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, with a draft currently in circulation for comment; and
- The local impact of the Regional Gift Planner from the ELCA Foundation and loans made by the Mission Investment Fund.

She closed with a video featuring Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton discussing what it means to be distinctly Lutheran.

### **Introduction to Voting Devices**

Ms. Jean Knight, 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 Assembly, as follows:

Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw, Vice President  
 Pr. Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop  
 Mr. Richard Ahlberg, Parliamentarian  
 Mr. Kevin D. Anderson, Secretary  
 Pr. Philip Hirsch, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

### **Report of the Elections Committee/First Ballot**

Pastor Mitch Watney, Chair of the Elections Committee, led the Assembly through a series of elections by category of office.

For all open positions on the Synod Council, including the office of Synod Secretary, Pr. Watney advised the Assembly that there were no contested positions.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To elect all uncontested positions for the Synod Council, including the office of Synod Secretary, by acclamation.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.04** To adopt the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that all candidates for the Synod Council, including the office of Synod Secretary, were elected.

With respect to the election of Churchwide Assembly Voting Members, Pr. Watney reported that, in view of the representational principles governing their selection, five of the six positions were effectively uncontested. One vote would be required in order to select one voting member from the two remaining candidates. The uncontested positions will be filled by Kevin D. Anderson, the Rev. Mark D. Edwards, Deacon David A. Larrabee, the Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe, and Kathryn L. Moran (youth or young adult). The remaining position will be filled based on the results of a vote to be held between Deacon Deborah K. Haynes and Deacon Rebecca H. Kolowé.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To elect all uncontested positions for voting members to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, consisting of Kevin D. Anderson, the Rev. Mark D. Edwards, Deacon David A. Larrabee, the Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe, and Kathryn L. Moran, by acclamation.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.05** To adopt the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that all candidates for Churchwide Assembly Voting Member, except for Deacon Deborah K. Haynes and Deacon Rebecca H. Kolowé, were elected.

Following the approval of this motion, an electronic vote was taken to elect the final remaining position for Churchwide Assembly Voting Member. The results will be announced later in the afternoon.

For all open positions on the Consultation Committee, Pr. Watney advised the Assembly that there were no uncontested positions.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To elect the Rev. Scott E. Zimmerer to the Consultation Committee as a clergy member, by acclamation.

## **VOTED**

**SA18.06.06** To adopt the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that the Rev. Scott E. Zimmerer was elected to the Consultation Committee.

### **Introduction/First Reading of the Mission Spending Plan**

Pastor Susanne Blume, Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the 2019 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 has been reduced to 35% of the congregational benevolence received, in exchange for 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 \$1,799,460, including approximately \$576,000 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.

### **Instructions for Lunch and Workshops and Meal Prayer**

Bishop Graham called upon Deacon Kyle Warfield, Director of Discipleship and Senior High Ministries, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, and Assembly Chaplain, to offer a meal prayer. Deacon Warfield was also available for prayer for the duration of the Assembly. Instructions for lunch and workshops were also provided. The Assembly recessed for lunch and workshops at 11:40 AM.

### **Lunch and Workshops**

Between 11:40 AM and 2:30 PM, the Synod Assembly was divided into three groups. At successive one-hour intervals, one group broke for lunch while the other two groups attended workshops of their choice. Some workshops were offered once, while others were offered more than once. The workshop opportunities were as follows:

1. All Anew: Women of the ELCA
2. Are You Leaving Money on the Table?
3. Building Puentes
4. Church Security
5. ELCA Representative: Question and Answer Session
6. Fear to Abundant Life: Engaging in Race in Our Churches
7. Mission Spending Plan
8. New Connections Campaign: Building Healthy Multi-Ethnic Congregations

9. Proposed Policy Statement: A Declaration of Our Inter-Religious Commitment
10. Proposed Social Statement on Women and Justice

**Plenary Session 2**  
**Saturday, June 16, 2018**  
**Lord of Life Lutheran Church**  
**Fairfax, Virginia**

### **Song and Prayer**

The Assembly resumed at 2:30 PM after lunch and workshops. Deacon Kyle Warfield and the Synod Assembly Worship Team led the Assembly in song and prayer as an introduction to Plenary Session 2.

### **Report of the Elections Committee**

Pastor Mitch Watney, Chair of the Elections Committee, reported the results of the sole election for Churchwide Assembly Voting Member. One position remained to be filled, and two candidates were nominated for this position. There were 230 votes cast, as follows:

Deacon Rebecca H. Kolowé	122
Deacon Deborah K. Haynes	108

Bishop Graham declared that Deacon Rebecca H. Kolowé was elected to the position of Churchwide Assembly Voting Member.

Pastor Watney noted that one remaining uncontested position was not voted on by the Assembly in the morning session. One candidate for lay member of the Consultation Committee was uncontested.

#### **Moved:**

**Seconded:** To elect Michael Sonnenberg to the Consultation Committee as a lay member, by acclamation.

#### **VOTED**

**SA18.06.07** To adopt the foregoing motion.

Bishop Graham declared that Michael Sonnenberg was elected to the Consultation Committee.

### **Report of the Synod Treasurer**

In the absence of the Treasurer, Pr. Susanne Blume, Chair of the Finance Committee, reviewed the financial reports for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2018. More complete financial details were set forth in Section 4 of the materials provided to the Assembly. Summarizing the bottom-line financial results for the year, she noted that overruns in expenses were principally due to the costs of the 2017 Synod Assembly and the events commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation.

### **New Connections Campaign Update**

Bishop Graham called upon Pr. Philip Hirsch, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission, to provide an update on the New Connections Campaign. Pastor Hirsch began by showing a video summary of the campaign. Thus far, approximately \$1.3 million has been received, committed, or pledged to the financial component. With respect to the new connections component, congregations have pledged to make 930 new individual connections out of the goal of 3,000 such connections. Three new ministries were identified: the “Mosaic” second site of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Falls Church, Virginia; Swahili Lutheran Church; and King of Kings 2.0, Fairfax, Virginia.

Pastor Hirsch then called upon Christy Hartigan, Director of the New Connections Campaign, for additional remarks. She in turn introduced a representative of Lutheran Church of the Covenant for brief comments on the implementation of the campaign in that congregation. Ms. Hartigan also identified three other congregations that have completed the stewardship aspect of the campaign: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Woodbridge, Virginia; Good Samaritan Lutheran Church, Lexington Park, Maryland; and All Saints Lutheran Church, Bowie, Maryland.

Pastor Hirsch concluded his remarks by reporting that 51 congregations have had visits from synod staff or campaign representatives in connection with the campaign.

### **Report of the Vice President/Synod Council**

Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw, in her first appearance as Vice President, provided a brief personal introduction and identified some of the major events of the last year.

### **Report on Synod Compensation Guidelines**

Vice President Crenshaw then offered the proposed compensation guidelines for rostered leaders for approval by the Assembly. These guidelines consist of an unadjusted base amount, a “point” system, and housing allowance factors. For 2019, the Synod Council has recommended that the minimum unadjusted salary amount be increased to \$60,538, with the recognition that such an increase will also result in an increase in most of the other amounts set forth in the guidelines. The recommendation was included in Section 3.3 of the materials provided to the Synod Assembly in advance.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To approve the Rostered Leadership Compensation Recommendations for 2019, as set forth in Section 3.3 of the meeting materials for the Assembly.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.08** To adopt the foregoing motion.

### **First Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

Pastor 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 “2018-” 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.

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 2018-001

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:

Caribbean Synod  
Grand Canyon Synod  
Northern Illinois Synod  
Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod  
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod  
Upper Susquehanna Synod

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

**VOTED**  
**SA18.06.09** To adopt the foregoing motion.

### **Child Protection Policies**

Reference & Counsel Number 2018-002

Secretary's Number 6.2

**WHEREAS**, there are many congregations in the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod that have among their members and others they serve, families that include children; and,

**WHEREAS**, the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of these children is a primary care and concern for all who work with them; and,

**WHEREAS**, the church should be a place of safety and security for all people, especially those who are the most vulnerable among us, including our children; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly asks each congregation of the synod to adopt a Child Protection Policy (resources available on ELCA website<sup>1</sup>) before the 2019 Synod Assembly and complete all screening and training of appropriate persons.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.10** To adopt the foregoing motion.

**No Way to Treat a Child: Protecting the Human Rights of Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation**

Reference & Counsel Number 2018-003

Secretary's Number 6.3

**WHEREAS**, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in 2005, established an initiative, "Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land,"<sup>2</sup> which seeks "peace with justice for both Palestinians and Israelis and the continuation of the Christian witness in the Holy Land"; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA, in its Social Statement "For Peace in God's World"<sup>3</sup> has committed to promote respect for human rights, especially for "groups most susceptible to violations, especially all minorities, women, and children"; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA is in relationship of accompaniment with the six Palestinian Lutheran congregations (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land); and,

**WHEREAS**, Israel operates two separate and unequal legal systems in the same territory. Military law has applied to Palestinians in the West Bank since 1967, when Israeli forces occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Jewish settlers, however, who reside within the bounds of the occupied West Bank, in violation of international law, are subject to the Israeli civilian legal framework;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, Israel is the only country in the world that automatically and systematically prosecutes children in military courts that lack fundamental fair trial rights

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary#Risk> and <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Legal#Sexual>

<sup>2</sup> 2005 Pre-Assembly Report: Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine, Section V pages 48-58 [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW\\_Strategy.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Social Statement: For Peace in God's World, September 1995 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Division for Church in Society <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PeaceSS.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/19/separate-and-unequal/israels-discriminatorytreatment-palestinians-occupied>



and protections; detaining and prosecuting an estimated 500 to 700 Palestinian children in military courts each year;<sup>5</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** Palestinian children detained in the Israeli military detention system commonly report being arrested in the middle of the night and typically arrive to interrogation bound, blindfolded, frightened, and sleep deprived, and often give confessions after verbal abuse, threats, physical and psychological violence that in some cases amounts to torture. Israeli military law provides no right to legal counsel during interrogation; 96 percent of children have no parents present during interrogation;<sup>6</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** Israel has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on October 3, 1991, which states—in article 37(a), that “no child shall be subject to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment”;<sup>7</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** after 50 years of Israeli military occupation the situation for children living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip) continues to deteriorate, making children increasingly vulnerable; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly expresses its opposition to the State of Israel’s failure to guarantee basic due process rights for children in the Israeli military court system in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and to the use of U.S. taxpayer funds in support of this ill-treatment; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly direct the Bishop of this synod to make this position known to elected officials in Congress and the White House, and ask them to ensure that the United States fully enforces its own established law, including the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act, so that taxpayer funds do not support ill-treatment of Palestinian children in violation of international law; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly encourage congregations of the Synod to provide study opportunities to learn more about the lives of Palestinian children—especially the treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military courts; the Lutherans in the six congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy

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<sup>5</sup> Defense for Children International-Palestine: [http://www.dci-palestine.org/children\\_in\\_israeli\\_detention](http://www.dci-palestine.org/children_in_israeli_detention)

<sup>6</sup> No Way to Treat a Child: Palestinian Children in the Israeli Military Detention System, April 2016. [www.dcipalestine.org](http://www.dcipalestine.org)

<sup>7</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Land; and how Israel is spending our U.S. foreign aid dollars;<sup>8</sup> and encourage members to contact their representatives in Congress in support of legislation that specifically prohibits U.S. foreign aid to be used in ways that violate human rights for Palestinian children, like H.R. 4391, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, which requires the Secretary of State to certify that United States funds do not support military detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill-treatment of Palestinian children in violation of international law.<sup>9</sup>

**VOTED** Yes 154 No 22 Abstain 11  
**SA18.06.11** To adopt the foregoing motion.

### **Report of the Assistant to the Bishop**

Bishop Graham introduced Pr. Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop. Her written report was provided in Section 2.3 of the Assembly materials. She summarized her work in the candidacy and mobility processes, working with congregation councils, transition teams, call committees, candidates, and others. As more completely set forth in her written report, the past year saw 12 new pastoral calls into the Synod and 20 individuals in the process of seminary education. Pastor Ortiz recognized the important work of the Candidacy Committee in the candidacy process.

Pastor Ortiz also summarized the Synod's efforts in partnership with the Delaware-Maryland Synod in the Building Puentes initiative to provide support to congregations in the Caribbean Synod. She reported that the Delaware-Maryland Synod had authorized the transfer to the Synod of approximately \$87,000, representing the results of their special appeal for this purpose, to be used to provide relief from the September 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria. These funds will be combined with the other funds received from the Synod's own appeal for this purpose.

### **Consideration of the Mission Spending Plan**

After having been introduced and discussed earlier in the agenda, the proposed 2019 Mission Spending Plan, as set forth in Section 3.2.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly, was brought to the floor for consideration. 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. Pastor Susanne Blume, Chair of the Finance Committee, responded to a question concerning the Synod's support for Campus Ministry.

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<sup>8</sup> Resources are available via the ELCA Peace Not Walls website <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/PubliclyEngaged-Church/Peace-Not-Walls>

<sup>9</sup> For more information and suggestions for contacting your member of Congress, please visit [http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/palestinian\\_child\\_detention\\_bill](http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/palestinian_child_detention_bill).

**Moved:** To approve the 2019 Mission Spending Plan as set forth in Section 3.2.1 of the materials provided to the Assembly.

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.12** To adopt the foregoing motion.

**Second Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

Pastor Mark Edwards, Chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee, provided the second report to the Assembly.

**Thanks and Farewell**

Reference & Counsel Number 2018-004

Secretary's Number 6.4

**WHEREAS,** The Reverend Mark and Kari Olsen have been active leaders in the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod for many years; and,

**WHEREAS,** Kari Olsen served as Administrative Assistant for Bishop Theodore Schneider and Bishop Richard Graham as the Synod Assembly Coordinator; and,

**WHEREAS,** The Reverend Mark Olsen was ordained at Lutheran Church of the Abiding Presence in Burke VA and served on the roster of this synod as:

- Senior Pastor, Peace Lutheran Church in Alexandria;
- Director of Admissions, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg;
- Pastor, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Haymarket; and
- currently as Associate Director for the ELCA Fund for Leaders.

He has served the synod in various ways such as Chair of the New and Renewing Missions Table; and

**WHEREAS,** Kari has accepted a position at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence in New Haven, Connecticut, and they will be relocating to the NY/CT area; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly expresses its thanks to The Reverend Mark and Kari Olsen for their service to Christ's church and for the blessing they have been to us, and now sends them out with gratitude and confidence that they will continue to be a blessing to others.

**Moved:** To adopt the resolution entitled “Thanks and Farewell.”

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.13** To adopt the foregoing motion.

**Recognition of Anniversaries**

Bishop Graham introduced an audio-visual presentation commemorating the rostered leaders and congregations celebrating milestone anniversaries during the year. The following individuals were featured in the presentation:

The Rev. Connie Thomson	25 years
The Rev. Jeanne C. Lowe	25 years
The Rev. Margrethe S.C. Kleiber	25 years
The Rev. David M. Bohannon	50 years
The Rev. George W. Schwantes	50 years
The Rev. Lowell E. Schuetze	50 years
The Rev. Myron L. Barbour, Jr.	50 years
The Rev. Richard D. Reichard	55 years
The Rev. Neal R. Davidson	55 years
The Rev. Barron B. Maberry	60 years

The following congregations were featured in the presentation:

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Woodbridge, VA	50 years
Lutheran Church of the Covenant, Dale City, VA	50 years
St. Michael's Truth Lutheran Church, Mitchellville, MD	50 years
Augustana Lutheran Church, Washington, DC	100 years
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Washington, DC	175 years

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

Pastor Philip Hirsch began his report with remarks on the health of our congregations, noting recent favorable trends in the classification of congregations as either growing, declining, or stable. He attributed this trend to the investment in leaders. One important element of this investment is Metro DC Coaches, the subject of a video message from Pr. Nathan Swenson-Reinhold. Pastor Hirsch advised the Assembly that it is his desire to extend coaching beyond rostered leaders to make it available to congregation councils as well.

At the conclusion of this report, Bishop Graham declared the Assembly in recess for 15 minutes, beginning at 4:15 PM.

**Plenary Session 3**

**Saturday, June 16, 2018  
Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
Fairfax, Virginia**

### **Song and Prayer**

The Assembly resumed at 4:30 PM after a brief break. Deacon Kyle Warfield and the Synod Assembly Worship Team led the Assembly in song and prayer as an introduction to Plenary Session 3.

### **Third Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

Pastor Mark Edwards, Chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee, provided the third report to the Assembly.

### **Expression of Thanks and Gratitude**

Reference & Counsel Number 2018-005

Secretary's Number 6.5

**WHEREAS**, the 2018 Synod Assembly Planning Committee and numerous others have worked many hours to prepare for this assembly; and

**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; 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 2018 Synod Assembly a fruitful gathering of God's people, including:

- Ms. Christina Jackson Skelton, Executive Director, ELCA Mission Advancement, for representing the ELCA with an enlightening report and informative question and answer sessions;
- for our workshop leaders in broadening our vision of the world and the role of the church:
  - the Rev. Suzanne Blume, Metro D.C. Synod Finance Committee;
  - the Reverend Philip Hirsch and Ms. Christy Hartigan of the New Connections Campaign;

- Ms. Cheryl Dwyer and Ms. Donna Nelson of the Synodical Women's Organization;
- the Rev. Karen Brau and the synod's Racial Equity Team;
- the Rev. Wendy Moen and the Rev. Jeanette Leisk;
- the Rev. Leila Ortiz and the Rev. Carmelo Santos;
- the Rev. Thomas Prinz, Synod Ecumenical Officer;
- Lt. Michael Berg, City of Herndon Police Department; and
- Ms. Yvonne Jones Lembo, Regional Gift Planner, ELCA Foundation;
- 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 and the assembly staff and volunteers;
- the pastors, staff and members of Lord of Life Lutheran Church, especially Ms. Lynne Saltzman for their hospitality and generous spirit in hosting our assembly;
- Ms. Jean Knight of Qwizdom, Inc. for providing invaluable and patient guidance in using the voting devices;
- the ELCA Mission Investment Fund for sponsoring our delicious lunch;
- 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;
- the Assembly parliamentarian, Mr. Richard Ahlberg, for his wise counsel and the orientation session for those first-time synod assembly voting members;
- the Reverend Kyle Warfield for serving this assembly as our chaplain, leading our prayers and providing for our spiritual care and nurture;

- the Assembly Worship Planning Team, led by the Reverend David Slaigle-Peck; and Deacon Jeff Pannebaker and Mr. Julio Cuellar and his band for their musical leadership in worship;
- the Synod's Communications Director, Ms. Karen Krueger, Media Coordinators Mr. David Carlson and Mr. Philip Meuschke, our guest bloggers Vicar Ben Hogue and Vicar Franklin Morales; our Guidebook Guide Mr. Alex Stall; our interpreters Ms. Sandra Rico and Ms. Kathy Ogle; and our photographer Ms. Katie Simbala for the communications, IT 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 Travis Kern: the Reverend Anna Anderson, the Reverend Lynn Miller, the Reverend Darcy Tillman, the Reverend Mitch Watney and the Reverend Michael Wilker;
- the Elections Committee, chaired by the Reverend Mitch Watney: Pastor Gary Rhinesmith, Pastor Greg Durig, Ms. Annette Nija, and Ms. Anita Goehringer;
- Ms. Evelyn Crenshaw, Vice President of the Synod and Mr. Kevin Anderson, Secretary of the Synod for their wisdom and encouragement in planning and carrying out this assembly;
- Ms. Julie Hamre for her dedicated service as Treasurer of the synod;
- the Reverend Leila Ortiz, Assistant to the Bishop; the Reverend Philip C. Hirsch; Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission; Ms. Katharyn Wheeler, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop; Ms. Karen Krueger, Communications Coordinator; and Ms. Katie Simbala, Administrative Assistant for Mobility & Candidacy for their year-round work for our synod and our congregations;
- those who are completing their terms on the Synod Council: Ms. Cheryl Dwyer, the Reverend Renata Eustis, Mr. Nels Hendrickson, the Reverend Sandra Kessinger; the Reverend Sarah Lewis, Ms. Cassandra Smith, Mr. Cleophas Tsokodayi; Ms. Kim Watson, and youth representative Samuel S.;
- all those who permitted their names to be placed before the assembly for consideration in elections for Synod Secretary, Synod Council, Consultation Committee and 2019 Churchwide Assembly Voting Members;

- and Bishop Richard Graham for his enthralling sermon on welcome and inclusion as well as his wisdom and dedication in leading this assembly and this synod and to his wife Nancy Ann for her support and faithfulness for the work of our synod.

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

**VOTED**

**SA18.06.14** To adopt the foregoing motion.

Pastor Edwards concluded the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee.

**Conclusion of Assembly**

There being no further business to bring before the Assembly, Bishop Graham presided over the order for closing of the Assembly, including the installation of the Synod Council and other elected positions. At 4:50 PM, the 2018 Synod Assembly was declared closed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin D. Anderson  
Secretary