



Legislative Update  
Thursday, August 8, 2019

**Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IX, Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Ms. Emma K. Wagner and Mr. James J.F. Jennings, co-chairs of the Reference and Counsel Committee, made the motion to adopt Motion E on behalf of the committee.

**Motion E: Resolution on Support for Engagement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the #ThursdaysinBlack Campaign of the World Council of Churches  
Submitted by: Bishop Donald Kreiss [Southeast Michigan, 6A]**

WHEREAS, in 2015, the ELCA Church Council adopted the ELCA social message “Gender-based Violence” in order to increase awareness, accountability, and action across the church about the alarming degree of gender-based violence in church and society; and

WHEREAS, the companion “Foundational documentation for a social message on Gender-based Violence” provides additional resources for understanding gender-based violence as a deeply systemic social problem, a theological concern, a pastoral challenge, and a critical matter for faith-based action and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the Lutheran World Federation Council adopted a “Gender Justice Policy,” laying out a biblically-rooted framework for the global Lutheran communion of churches to take concrete, contextually-appropriate steps to implement gender justice; and

WHEREAS, the XII Assembly of the LWF in 2017 passed a resolution encouraging member churches to partner with civil society on sex education and the elimination of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence in church and society; and

WHEREAS, the World Council of Churches (WCC) Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998) gave witness to the movements of women against gender-based violence around the world and inspired the launch of a global, ecumenical campaign, Thursdays in Black: Resistance and Resilience; and

WHEREAS, the WCC, on the occasion of its 70th anniversary in 2018, relaunched its #ThursdaysinBlack campaign, calling upon its member churches and the global ecumenical family to recommit to work toward education about and elimination of gender-based violence; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America calls upon all people across all expressions of the church to participate in the #ThursdaysinBlack campaign by wearing black on Thursdays and actively participating in the various reflection and action items detailed in the ELCA “Gender-based Violence” social message and documentation; the LWF Gender Justice Policy; and the WCC resources for #ThursdaysinBlack.

- [www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Gender-Violence](http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Gender-Violence)
- [www.LutheranWorld.org/Content/Resource-LWF-Gender-Justice-Policy](http://www.LutheranWorld.org/Content/Resource-LWF-Gender-Justice-Policy)
- [www.Oikoumene.org/En/Get-Involved/Thursdays-In-Black](http://www.Oikoumene.org/En/Get-Involved/Thursdays-In-Black)

**Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

We recommend adopting the **Resolution of Support for Engagement of the ELCA through the #ThursdaysinBlack Campaign of the WCC.**

ASSEMBLY

YES-891; NO-4

ACTION

CA19.04.13      **To adopt Motion E.**

## **Elections: Report of the First Common Ballot and Second Common Ballot**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, Rules of Organization and Procedure, Section X, Report of the Elections Committee

The Elections Committee reported elections on 109 of the 112 tickets of the first common ballot for the Church Council, Committee on Appeals, Committee on Discipline, Nominating Committee, and the boards of the Board of Pensions (Portico Benefit Services), Mission Investment Fund, Endowment Fund of the ELCA (ELCA Foundation), and the Publishing House of the ELCA (1517 Media). There was no election on Ticket 19, Ticket 52, and Ticket 99 on the first common ballot; the assembly used electronic voting machines to conduct the second common ballot election between the two nominees on each of the three remaining tickets.

## **Elections: Second Ballot for Secretary**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section I, Rules of Organization and Procedure; Section V; Election of the Secretary; Section X; Report of the Elections Committee

The Elections Committee presented the names received on the first ballot for secretary that were not withdrawn by the nominee from further consideration for election. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton led the assembly in casting the second ballot for secretary. There were 114 people nominated on the first ballot; 53 individuals withdrew their names from consideration, leaving 61 people for the second ballot. A nominee must receive three-fourths of the votes to be elected on the second ballot.

The Credentials Committee reported that, as of 2:16 p.m., 932 voting members were registered.

## **Consideration: “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment” Policy Statement**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section V, A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton led the assembly in voting on the policy statement. The Policy Statement *Ad Hoc* Committee received one proposed amendment, which it did not forward for recommendation to the assembly. Thirty-nine ecumenical and interreligious guests were in attendance during the vote and passage of the policy statement.

### **ASSEMBLY**

#### **ACTION**

**YES-890; NO-23**

**CA19.04.14 To adopt the proposed policy statement, “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment: A policy statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”**

## **Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee (continued)**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IX, Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Ms. Emma K. Wagner and Mr. James J.F. Jennings, co-chairs of the Reference and Counsel Committee, made the motion to refer Motion F to the Office of the Presiding Bishop on behalf of the committee.

### **Motion F: Resolution to Hire an Assistant Program Director Justice for Women**

**Submitted by: Ms. Bethany Fayard [Southeastern Synod, 9D]**

WHEREAS, the ELCA has invested considerable time and resources developing the proposed social statement, “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action”; and

WHEREAS, a primary concern of the church body as expressed throughout the hearings process is that the church take action on any resulting implementing resolutions; and

WHEREAS, the office of Theological Discernment has an insufficient budget to support additional staff that would be necessary to implement the resolutions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that, should the proposed social statement pass, \$100,000 be allocated from budget line item “address social issues and work for justice” to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for Justice for Women to monitor, assess, and ensure the fulfillment of proposed commitments.

### **Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

We recommend that this resolution be referred to the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

### **ASSEMBLY**

#### **ACTION**

**YES-789; NO-59**

**CA19.04.15 To refer Motion F to the Office of the Presiding Bishop.**

## **Consideration: 2020–2022 Budget Proposal**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section V, 2020–2022 Budget Proposal

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton called on Secretary Wm Chris Boerger who presented the Church Council's recommendation.

**ASSEMBLY**

**ACTION**

**CA19.04.16**

**YES-880; NO-10**

### **2020 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2020 current fund spending authorization of \$68,378,325;**

**To approve a 2020 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,500,000; and**

**To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.**

### **2021 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2021 current fund income proposal of \$68,442,034;**

**To approve a 2021 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,500,000; and**

**To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.**

### **2022 Budget Proposal**

**To approve a 2022 current fund income proposal of \$68,507,018;**

**To approve a 2022 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$21,500,000; and**

**To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.]**

## **Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee (continued)**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IX, Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee

Ms. Emma K. Wagner and Mr. James J.F. Jennings, co-chairs of the Reference and Counsel Committee, made the motion to adopt Motion A on behalf of the committee.

### **Motion A: Resolution to Establish June 17th as Emanuel 9 Feast Day of Repentance Submitted by: The Rev. Kwame Pitts [Metropolitan Chicago Synod, 5A]**

WHEREAS, the Lord teaches us "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."(Luke 5:31-32); and

WHEREAS, the Emanuel 9 (Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Rev. Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson) on June 17, 2015, while in prayer and bible study at the historic African-American church, Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina were murdered by a self-professed white supremacist adult who was raised and formed in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, that self-professed white supremacist espoused racist rhetoric and epithets before and after committing these murders; and

WHEREAS, two of his victims, Rev. Daniel Lee Simmons Sr. and Rev. Clementa Pickney, were graduates of the Lutheran Theology Southern Seminary, one of eight ELCA seminaries.; and

WHEREAS, the deep sin of white supremacy and racism continues to be a plague and hindrance in the life of the ELCA as a church called to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirm its commitment to repentance from racism by:

1. Venerating June 17th as a feast day of repentance in the ELCA for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9; and
2. Having the names of the Emanuel 9 (Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson) added to future ELCA publications to venerate their martyrdom and lead us to repentance because of the white supremacy and racism in our church; and
3. Calling for this feast day be grounded in prayer as the Emanuel 9 were murdered while in prayer at the end of the bible study; and
4. Directing the Division on Worship to help develop future worship prayers and litanies around repentance from racism; and
5. To encourage giving both prayer and financial support the memorial to be built in remembrance of the Emanuel 9 (<https://www.emmanuelnine.org/>); and
6. Be in deeper conversations with the AME church on ways of reconciliation and repentance on the matters of white supremacy and racism.

**Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

We recommend adopting the **Resolution to Establish June 17<sup>th</sup> as Emanuel 9 Feast Day of Repentance.**

A voting member made the following motion to amend the main motion.

**Moved;**

**Seconded;**

**Carried;** To amend the language of the motion

**YES-851; NO-35**

1. ~~Venerating~~ Commemorating June 17th as a ~~feast~~ day of repentance in the ELCA for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9; and
2. Having the names of the Emanuel 9 (Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson) added to future ELCA publications to venerate their martyrdom and lead us to repentance because of the white supremacy and racism in our church; and
3. Calling for this ~~feast day~~ commemoration be grounded in prayer as the Emanuel 9 were murdered while in prayer at the end of the bible study; and
4. Directing the ~~Division on Worship~~ Office of the Presiding Bishop to help develop future worship prayers and litanies around repentance from racism; and
5. To encourage giving both prayer and financial support the memorial to be built in remembrance of the Emanuel 9 (<https://www.emmanuelnine.org/>); and
6. Be in deeper conversations with the AME church on ways of reconciliation and repentance on the matters of white supremacy and racism.

**ASSEMBLY**

**YES-887; NO-8**

**ACTION**

**CA19.04.17 To adopt Motion A as amended.**

**Motion B: Resolution on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to Condemn White Supremacy  
Submitted by: The Rev. Kerry L. Nelson [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, 4F]**

WHEREAS, we are members of the Body of Christ called to love and serve a hurting world; and

WHEREAS, each of us is called through our Baptisms to proclaim that God's love is for all people, not just for people who are white; and

WHEREAS, we have observed with alarm a rising tide of racist rhetoric, hate crimes, and domestic terrorism in the name of white supremacy in our nation; and

WHEREAS, we have now seen again the terrible consequences of violence visited on immigrants and people of color in the name of so-called "Christian Nationalism" or "white supremacy"; and

WHEREAS, we now grieve with the communities of El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio, who have experienced terrible losses as a result of mass shootings or racist violence directed against their neighbors, friends, and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, we continue to grieve with and remember the communities of Charleston, South Carolina and Charlottesville, Virginia, who have also been victims of hate crimes in the name of white supremacy; and

WHEREAS, as Lutherans, we have a unique historical calling to recognize, name, and condemn racist acts, imagery, and violence that seeks to injure, demean, or marginalize persons who are not white or Christian; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge with horror that Christians, including persons raised in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, have committed mass shootings in our nation; and

WHEREAS, we understand that interpretations of Scripture that seek to legitimize racism or white supremacy are false teachings that must be named and condemned as such by this Church with one, powerful voice; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, we the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America do hereby resolve and proclaim that:

1. White supremacy is racism and we condemn it;
2. Violent rhetoric against persons of color in the name of so-called "Christian Nationalism" is not a true Christian faith. It is idolatry and we condemn it;
3. The love of God is for all people, without exception, and we proclaim it;
4. The justice and mercy of God are for all people, without exception, and we proclaim this;
5. Our religious and political leaders have a moral responsibility to condemn racist rhetoric and to speak with respect for the innate dignity of all persons, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, or faith tradition and we call our leaders to honor this responsibility; and
6. Language that refers to people of color or immigrants with words like "invasion" or "infestation" or "white replacement" is racism and we condemn it;
7. We are called by Jesus to "love our neighbors as ourselves." As persons called to love one another as God has loved us, we therefore proclaim our commitment to speak with one voice against racism and white supremacy. We stand with those who are targets of racist ideologies and actions. With them, we demand and will advocate for a more just, loving, and peaceful world where the gifts of all people are appreciated, and the lives of all people are treasured; and
8. We call all congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in communal study of the structures and rhetoric that empower and fuel racism and white supremacy and to take to heart the teaching of Scriptures, so we may all be better equipped to speak boldly about the equal dignity of all persons in the eyes of God.

**Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee**

We support the **Resolution to Condemn White Supremacy** and recommend referral to the Office of the Presiding Bishop of the churchwide organization.

**Moved;**

**Seconded;**

YES-178; NO-708

**Defeated;** To refer Motion B to the Office of the Presiding Bishop

The Reference and Council Committee presented a new recommendation.

We support the **Resolution to Condemn White Supremacy** and recommend adopting the resolution ~~referral to the Office of the Presiding Bishop of the churchwide organization.~~

**ASSEMBLY**

YES-893; NO-5

**ACTION**

**CA19.04.18 To adopt Motion B as amended.**

### **Elections: Report of the Second Ballot for Secretary**

Reference: 2019 Pre-Assembly Report, Section V, Election of the Secretary; Section X, Results of the Second Ballot for Secretary

The Elections Committee reported that 862 votes were cast on the second ballot for secretary requiring 647 votes for election. There was no election on the second ballot. The names of the seven receiving the greatest number of votes were presented:

- Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, 358 votes
- The Rev. Stephen Herr, 116 votes
- The Rev. Lamont A. Wells, 95 votes
- Bp. Jon V. Anderson, 48 votes
- Mr. John Emery, 38 votes
- Mr. Peter Severson, 27 votes
- The Rev. Tyler D. Rasmussen, 23 votes

Biographical information about the nominees can be found online and in the Guidebook app. The election process will proceed in accordance with Part Sixteen of the Rules of Organization and Procedure. The nominees will address the assembly Friday morning, August 9, 2019 in plenary session eight.