

2005 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly

GUIDE to RESOLUTIONS

RC 2005-1

Pension and Insurance Support for Interim Pastors

In this resolution the Minneapolis Area Synod in Assembly asks the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to direct that comprehensive policies be developed governing the practice of Interim Ministry throughout the ELCA. Interim pastors serve short term calls while a congregation prepares itself to call and welcome a new, permanent pastor. In the time between appointments pension contributions are not permitted, and the cost of health insurance premiums must be borne entirely by the out-of-work interim pastor. If implemented, this resolution could lead to stabilized pension contributions and uninterrupted health care insurance for all interim pastors in the ELCA.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-2

Resources for Pastoral Support of Same-gender Partnerships

At the 2001 Churchwide Assembly specific Divisions of the ELCA were asked to prepare and make available printed resources to assist those pastors who minister to persons seeking blessings of their committed relationships. To date no such resources have been made available. If adopted, this resolution would forward the request of the Minneapolis Area Synod in Assembly that the 2005 Churchwide Assembly again direct the appropriate Divisions of the Church to prepare and make these resources available.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-3

Authorization for Covenanting Committed Same-gender Partnerships

This resolution asks the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to make it the explicit policy of this church that that individual congregations may authorize their clergy to conduct services for the covenanting of same-gender couples. This request departs from the recommendations of the Task force for Studies on Sexuality by seeking a statement of policy.

The Reference and Counsel Committee (RCC) forwards this resolution to the MAS Assembly for consideration, without recommendation. RCC refrains from making a recommendation in order that the Assembly may, in its deliberations, properly focus on the substance of this resolution rather than on the actions of the Committee.

RC2005-4

Support of the ELCA's Sexuality Task Force Recommendations

This resolution urges (“memorializes”) the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to accept, as guidelines to its policy and practice, the three recommendations put forward by the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality. Briefly summarized, those recommendations were:

- 1) to concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of our disagreements;
- 2) that the ELCA continue to respect the 1993 guidance of the conference of bishops, which stated, in part, “there is basis neither in scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship” ; and
- 3) that as a pastoral response... this church may, in good conscience and for the sake of outreach... refrain from disciplining (partnered gay and lesbian candidates) who are approved for ordination and called in the ELCA, and the congregations that call them.

For the full text of the Task Force recommendations see www.elca.org/faithfuljourney

This resolution both endorses the Report and Recommendation of the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality and encourages the Task Force to work towards a time when homosexual persons are fully welcomed in every aspect of church life, including the clergy roster and through the public blessing of homosexual unions.

The Reference and Counsel Committee (RCC) forwards this resolution to the MAS Assembly for consideration, without recommendation. RCC has refrained from making a recommendation in order that the Assembly may, in its deliberations, properly focus on the substance of this resolution rather than on the actions of the Committee.

RC 2005-5

Ordination of Gay and Lesbian Persons in Committed Relationships

If the MAS in Assembly adopts this resolution, it will be asking the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to direct the ELCA Church Council to implement a change in current church policy so that those living in same-sex committed relationships that are "mutual, chaste and faithful" will no longer be excluded by church policy from eligibility for call to rostered ministry within the Church. This represents a departure from the recommendations of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force.

The Reference and Counsel Committee (RCC) forwards this resolution to the MAS Assembly for consideration, without recommendation. RCC has refrained from making a recommendation in order that the Assembly may, in its deliberations, properly focus on the substance of this resolution rather than on the actions of the Committee.

RC 2005-6

Reaffirming “Vision and Expectations” as a Guide to Policy

This resolution affirms the current statement guiding the personal conduct of rostered persons as expressed in “Vision and Expectations” and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.” It asks the Minneapolis Area Synod in Assembly to urge (“memorialize”) the 2005 Churchwide Assembly to maintain the current practices and policies “consistent with past understandings.” If implemented this resolution would preclude the pastoral or missional exceptions recommended by the ELCA’s Task Force for Sexuality Studies.

Continued on next page

NOTE: The Reference and Counsel Committee (RCC) recognizes that some of the “Whereas” statements in Resolution 2005-6 fail to meet the criteria published in Appendix A.4 of the “2005 Guidelines for Resolutions and Memorials” which provides that “All statements contained within any resolution/memorial must be accurate, respectful, and necessary to an understanding of the memorial.” Diligent effort was made to work with the authors to revise the “Whereas” statements appropriately or to include supporting documentation for the assertions made. This effort was declined. Despite these issues, RCC believes the “Resolved” paragraphs merit consideration by the Assembly.

The Reference and Counsel Committee (RCC) forwards this resolution without recommendation. RCC has refrained from making a recommendation in order that the Assembly may, in its deliberations, properly focus on the substance of this resolution rather than on the actions of the Committee.

RC2005-7

An Exhortation for Unity in the ELCA

In this resolution the youth of the synod ask the Minneapolis Area Synod in Assembly to call upon the members and congregations of the Synod to persevere in God’s call to live and work together as one church for the sake of Jesus Christ; to continue in prayer and conversation; and to work earnestly to “bridge the diversity” we experience in this church. It is brought forward by the youth of MAS congregations, acting as part of the churchwide, ELCA Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO). In the Minneapolis and St. Paul synods youth leaders combined to form Lutheran Youth Networking in Christ (LYNC), the local expression of the national LYO.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-8

Revision of the 2005 Synod Budget

This resolution adjusts the synod budget adopted at the 2004 Assembly in light of actual Intents (pledges) received from congregations for fiscal 2005.

Note: The Synod Council will finalize this Budget Resolution at its meeting April 14, 2005. Copies of RC2005-8 will be distributed to voting members at the Assembly on April 16, 2005.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-9

2006 Synod Budget Proposal

This resolution proposes an estimated spending plan for the Minneapolis Area Synod in 2006.

Note: The Synod Council will finalize this Budget Resolution at its meeting April 14, 2005. Copies of RC2005-9 will be distributed to voting members at the Assembly on April 16, 2005.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-10

Public Services: Stand Up, Stand For, and Resist Cuts

This resolution addresses the significant decline in available social services for the citizens of Minnesota. It calls on the Partnership Table to develop and distribute supporting resources. It calls upon the Office of the Bishop to encourage congregations in becoming effective and vocal advocates for the common good on public policy issues. It calls on congregations and individuals to consider generous contributions to help sustain services. Finally this resolution asks the Minneapolis Area Synod Bishop to work with other ELCA bishops in the state to take a strong public stand on taxation and spending priorities.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-11

Health Security for Minnesota's Poor and Vulnerable

This resolution addresses concerns that the Minnesota Governor's proposed budget plan will drop an additional 30,000 individuals from the protection of *MinnesotaCare* in addition to the 38,000 who were dropped last session. If adopted, this resolution will encourage congregations in their advocacy for the vulnerable, and calls for the synod office to direct congregations to resources that will aid in that work. Further, the resolution asks the Bishop to notify Governor Tim Pawlenty about the will of this Assembly.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-12

Education about the Principles of Just War

If adopted, this resolution will ensure that leaders of all Minneapolis Area Synod congregations are informed of the conditions and criteria that constitute a "Just War." In addition it directs that synod staff collaborate with the Minneapolis and St. Paul Synods' Joint Peace With Justice Committee to develop an educational opportunity for members of congregations about the application of Just War principles and its meaning for Christian discipleship.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.

RC 2005-13

Support of "Sal Y Luz" – Peace Sanctuary Churches in Colombia

This resolution commits the Minneapolis Area Synod to support Peace Sanctuary Churches in Colombia. Peace Sanctuary churches strive to meet basic human needs and foster reconciliation in the nation of Colombia. If adopted, each Minneapolis Area Synod congregation will be encouraged, through the efforts of the Partnership Table and the Minneapolis-St. Paul Joint Peace With Justice Committee, to act in support of the Colombian Peace Churches.

The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.