

THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
of the
EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD OF THE ELCA
HOLIDAY INN - FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JUNE 3rd & 4th, 2023

"EQUIP"

Saturday, June 3rd, 2023

Voting Member Registration opened at 7:30 a.m.

OPENING WORSHIP – 9:01 a.m.

The Assembly began its time gathered for worship. Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth preached on Matthew 16:13 – 20, reminding the Assembly that they are equipped, fed, and sent into the world to be the foundation on which the church is built. Rev. Kimberly Adams, Crossroads Campus Ministry and the Christus Rex Lutheran Campus Ministry Deacons assisted with the service. Music was led by Jared Rendell, Interim Executive Director at Park River Bible Camp, and Evan Moilan, Interim Executive Director at Red Willow Ministries, with the assistance of other Outdoor and Campus Ministry staff and leaders. Offerings collected at both opening and closing worship will be divided equally between Park River Bible Camp, Red Willow Ministries, Christus Rex Lutheran Campus Center, and Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry.

PLENARY ONE – 9:55 a.m.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth formally opened the Assembly at 9:57 a.m.

FIRST CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Rev. Julie Johnson, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, gave the first report of the Credentials Committee as follows:

VOTING MEMBERS	
<i>Rostered Leaders</i>	81
<i>Lay</i>	176
Total Voting Members	257

Note: The Credentials Committee also reported that there were 29 visitors present, bringing the total attendance to 286.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared a quorum present.

Accepted by Synod Council 10/14/23, for Assembly Approval

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND THE RULES OF PROCEDURE:

SA.23.06.01 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt the Agenda, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED** see *attached*

SA.23.06.02 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt the Rules of Procedure as presented, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED** see *attached*

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Rev. Rachael Puttbrese presented the Nominating Committee's report.

Rev. Beth Peterson (rostered) and Michelle Hovdenes (lay) were presented as nominees for the Eastern North Dakota Synod Consultation Committee. Rev. Cassie Anderson (rostered), Margo Burthold (lay), and Lenita Larson (lay) were presented as nominees for the Eastern North Dakota Synod Committee on Discipline. Dr. Elna Solvang was presented as nominee for the role of Synod Vice President. Any voting member may submit additional nominations for the open positions in writing to the Business Table by 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 3rd.

The Nominating Committee also reminded the Assembly that they will vote for vacant and/or expired terms on the Synod Council. The names that will be presented were generated at the conference level or by the Synod Nominating Committee. Nominees for Conference Representatives will be presented tomorrow. In addition, the Nominating Committee presented one name for the role of Multicultural Representative to the Synod Council, Merlyn Greene, and one name for Youth Representative to the Synod Council, Kate Edman.

All of these positions require ratification by the Assembly. Elections will take place during Plenary Three.

MINISTRY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – Christus Rex Campus Ministry

EQUIP EXPERIENCE – FAITH5

Rev. Amy Kippen led the Assembly's first "EQUIP" Experience on Faith5. This simple five step program is an easy to implement faith practice that can be accomplished in five to fifteen minutes a night. By sharing highs and lows, reading a verse or story, talking about how scripture might relate to your highs and lows, praying for one another's high and lows, and blessing one another, we are equipped to encounter the holy in real and powerful ways.

STATE OF THE SYNOD ADDRESS – 10:36 a.m.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth reported on the state of the Synod using three guiding questions: How is it going?; What might God be up to?; and What is on the horizon?

For much the past two and a half years, the focus of the Bishop and Synod's work was accompanying leaders, congregations, and individuals in and through the midst of pandemic. This work was centered around listening, stabilizing, continuity, and connecting, culminating in the eight conference "Bring Your Basket" events designed to gather information and abundance, and to begin to re-gather community.

The Bishop went on to raise several examples of where she and the Synod have seen God at work in Eastern North Dakota. There has been an emergence, or re-emergence, of rural vitality, specifically in areas of youth programming and community care. She reported that over \$150,000 in funds were raised for the 'Flourishing Into the Future' initiative and were matched by a grant for \$100,000. Congregations have also grown in their capacity to share resources and leadership during this time of adaptive change.

Upcoming events include fall learning opportunities focusing on the Book of Acts. A Synod Holy Land Trip is scheduled for February 2024 and will center on the theme of "Ancient and Living Stones". A Strategic Planning Process for the Synod has begun to refocus and reimagine mission, values, vision, and ministry goals.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth closed her time by lifting up the work of the Synod staff and reminding the Assembly of their role to walk alongside congregations in their sharing of the good news.

CONFERENCE CAUCUSING – 11:30 a.m.

LUNCH BREAK – 12:15 p.m.

WORKSHOPS #1 – 1:00 p.m.

The following workshops were available during Workshop Session #1:

2024 ELCA Youth Gathering!! presented by: Molly Haagenon

FAITH5: for homes and congregations presented by: Pr. Amy Kippen.

Action and Advocacy 101 presented by: EaND Synod Action and Advocacy Team.

Partnerships for a Season: Adapting to Changes in the past 4 years presented by: Team from Christians in Action.

EQUIP Yourself with Board Management Best Practices presented by: Katie Tyler.

PLENARY TWO – 2:02 p.m.

SECOND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Rev. Julie Johnson, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, gave the second report of the Credentials Committee as follows:

VOTING MEMBERS	
<i>Rostered Leaders</i>	84
<i>Lay</i>	176
Total Voting Members	260

Note: The Credentials Committee also reported that there were 31 visitors present, bringing the total attendance to 291.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared a quorum present.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY:

Rev. Kyle Symanski, Secretary to the Synod, presented the minutes from the 2022 Synod Assembly and thanked the past year's Minutes Committee for their work.

Pr. Kyle also shared that at the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, updates were made to the model Synod Constitution. Any updates to required provisions do not require a vote and take effect once the Office of the Secretary reviews them. Any updates to non-required provisions do require one vote at a Synod Assembly. In this year's voting member packet, copies of our Synod Constitution with both required and non-required changes noted were made available for reference. Later during the Assembly, voting members will be presented a resolution related to the non-required provisions.

SA.23.06.03 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to accept the Secretary's Report as presented, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED** see *attached*

REPORT OF THE TREASURER:

Mr. Joe Askew, Treasurer to the Synod, gave a report on the Vital Leaders Endowment Fund and Synod funding and expenditures, a review of the auditor adjustments to Fiscal Year End January 31st, 2022, a review of Fiscal Year End January 31st, 2023 financials, and a review of the current year Mission Plan and updates.

The Vital Leaders Endowment Fund ended the year with a balance of \$4,102,606 as of January 31st, 2023. The Fund disbursed a total of \$168,754 in 2022 across five areas: Internship Site Grants, Leadership Development, Loan Repayment Grants, Pension Equity, and Seminary Student Aid.

Results from the audit for Fiscal Year End (FYE) January 31st, 2022, performed by Widmer Roel, CPA's, Business Advisors, were shared, as the audit was not complete by last year's Synod Assembly. The Synod received an unmodified opinion for the last two fiscal years, providing a reasonable level of assurance from the auditor that the financial statements present a true

and fair reflection of our results for the time period reported. As part of the audit, the auditors booked all the revenue from the CARES grant, leading to the final balance showing a surplus of \$80,000.

The Approved, Revised, and Audited Mission Plan for FYE January 31st, 2023 saw the Synod end the year with a loss of \$79,772, though it essentially balances with the \$80,306 in surplus from the previous year. Other trends of note include Mission Support to the ELCA was down, because our Congregation Mission Support was down.

A Finance Committee has been formed to help advise on financial best practices and decisions for the Synod.

SA.23.06.04 Rev. Karen Young Trenne, Sharon Lutheran, moved and it was seconded to receive the Treasurer's Report as presented. **MOTION CARRIED**

PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 PROPOSED MISSION PLAN:

Mr. Joe Askew, Treasurer to the Synod, presented the 2025 (FYE 1/31/25) Proposed Synod Mission Plan, which will be voted on during Plenary Three.

On average, mission support from congregations has gone down about \$20,000 per year. Specifics in the Proposed Mission Plan include a lowering of Congregation Mission Support to reflect current trends and an increase to the Annual Fund, in anticipation of hiring a Director of Generosity and Mission Innovation.

The Proposal has been made for a deficit budget, as forwarded to the Assembly by the Synod Council. The Synod Council, Finance Committee, and staff will continue to monitor opportunities for cost savings and be attentive to revenue. Additionally, the Synod Council has begun considerations for opportunities for increased revenue.

There will be a workshop this afternoon to give individuals an opportunity to ask further questions on this Proposed Mission Plan.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT:

Dr. Phyllis Johnson, Synod Vice President, began her report by thanking the Synod and Assembly for their shared work over the past eight years. She lifted up the work of the Action and Advocacy Team where she was first able to put her professional energy and faith together, spurring her to additional service within the Synod.

Dr. Johnson continues to serve as co-chair on the ELCA Task Force for Faith and Civic Life. The expectation is that a new Social Statement will come to Churchwide Assembly in 2025 for consideration. In the meantime, Synod-wide study and reflection events will be held in the coming months led by Dr. Johnson and Dn. Erin Power.

Finally, Dr. Johnson shared with the Assembly that she has enrolled in the TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) at Wartburg Seminary and will begin classes on Monday, June 5th.

Following Dr. Johnson's report, Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth offered works of gratitude for Dr. Johnson's eight years of service as Synod Vice President and shared with her a gift on behalf of the Synod as she begins her coursework at Wartburg.

MINISTRY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – Crossroads Campus Ministry @ NDSU

VICE PRESIDENT NOMINATIONS:

Bp. Tessa invited Dr. Elna Solvang, Nominee for Synod Vice President, to the stage to address the Assembly. Elections for Synod Vice President will occur during Plenary Three.

Note: *Dr. Solvang is the sole nominee brought forward from the Nominating Committee, and has participated in the discernment process and completed a background check.*

The Nominating Committee began their work of lifting up names for Synod Vice President in early 2023. As names were lifted up, the Nominating Committee reached out to invite individuals into a discernment process. Those that were interested participated in a discernment conversation with a panel of members of the Nominating Committee. The next step was a conversation with the Bishop and follow-up conversations, as needed, with the Nominating Committee. There were several candidates invited into this discernment process.

Dr. Elna Solvang is a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Fargo. As a member of St. Mark's and in previous congregations, Elna has served with worship and music planning, as a Church Council member, Council President, Call Committee Chair, co-planner and instructor for First Communion, Confirmation, interfaith and intergenerational education. She currently services as Professor of Religion and department chair at Concordia College – Moorhead.

RESOLUTIONS:

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Joel Kangas from the Committee on Reference and Counsel to the stage to present Resolution #1 for consideration and adoption.

RESOLUTION #1: Constitution Update

WHEREAS, the model constitution for Synods has been revised by the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA to reflect the changes voted on by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council has discussed and approved the non-required amendments and commends them to the 2023 Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly; therefore be it

RESOLVED, to adopt the following non-required amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* that were approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly:

- S7.14.** ~~One-half~~ One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a Quorum
- S7.21.01.** Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at~~ the opening of the next regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.22.** This Synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of this Synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of ~~consistent with~~ +S7.21.e. If the Synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.24.** Ministers under call on the rosters of this Synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this Synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular Synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special Synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. ~~Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~
- S7.26.** This Synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the Synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21.
- S7.27.** This Synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly ~~of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

- S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:
- a. Management of the monies and accounts of this Synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this Synod.
 - b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.
 - c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this Synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this Synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.
 - d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this Synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.
 - e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this Synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.
 - ~~f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling Synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this Synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~

~~S11.10. General Provisions.~~

- S14.13.** The pastor shall:
- a. keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation,
- S14.15.** Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this Synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of this Synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- S14.34.** Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this Synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the Synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Submitted by the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Pr. Cassie Anderson to lead the Assembly in prayer before voting on this resolution.

SA.23.06.05 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt Resolution #1, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED**

EQUIP EXPERIENCE – Portico Benefit Services

Portico Regional Representative, Pr. Tim Schroeder, led a series of intentional movements and stretches as a way of acknowledging all the work we do with our hands, closing with a blessing of hands.

STATE OF THE ELCA – 3:15 p.m.

Rev. Lamont Wells, Executive Director of for the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, gave the state of the ELCA presentation.

He reported that the Eastern North Dakota shared \$355, 839 in support of Churchwide's mission and ministry in 2022. Overall, Churchwide received \$38,727,566 in mission support. This support has, in part, helped fund 33 new mission starts in 2022, adding to the more than 300 active ELCA new start ministries. In addition to Churchwide support, Eastern North Dakota shared \$205,361 with Lutheran Disaster Response, \$360,705 with ELCA World Hunger, \$3,020 with the International Women's Leaders Fund, and \$36,877 with ELCA Global Mission.

Upcoming events include the first meeting of the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church which will gather from July 13th – 15th. The Rostered Ministers Gathering with be held July 17th – 20th, 2023, in Phoenix and the 2024 Youth Gathering 24 will be held July 16th – 20th in New Orleans.

VIDEO GREETING – Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS – 3:55 p.m.

Pr. Brad Skogen led the recognition of congregational milestones and ordination anniversaries as listed below:

25 Years of Service

Rev. Steve Thomason
Rev. Chad Brucklacher
Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth
Rev. Marty Tollefson

<p>50 Years of Service</p> <p>Rev. Peter Schmidt Rev. H. Chris Hallanger</p>
<p>55 Years of Service</p> <p>Rev. Robert Pestal Rev. Roger Brockmeyer Rev. Roland Martinson Rev. E. Douglas Heskin</p>
<p>60 Years of Service</p> <p>Rev. Elwood Reike</p>
<p>65 Years of Service</p> <p>Rev. Lyle Rich</p>
<p>150 Years of Ministry</p> <p>Gran Lutheran Church, Mayville</p>
<p>125 Years of Ministry</p> <p>Concordia Lutheran Church, Edmore Faith Lutheran Church, Hannaford</p>
<p>Holy Closures</p> <p>Willow Creek Lutheran Church, Overly (July 31st, 2022) Pembima Lutheran Church, Pembima (August 14th, 2022) United Lutheran Church, Brockett (August 20th, 2022) Highland Lutheran Church, Brockett (October 2nd, 2022) Faith Lutheran Church, Inkster (October 2nd, 2022) Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Grafton (January 8th, 2023)</p>

WORKSHOPS #2 – 4:30 p.m.

The following workshops were available during Workshop Session #2:

2024 ELCA Youth Gathering!! presented by: Molly Haagenon.

Portico Benefit Services: A Benefits Overview with Q & A presented by: Pr. Tim Schroeder.

FAITH5: for homes and congregations presented by: Pr. Amy Kippen.

Accepted by Synod Council 10/14/23, for Assembly Approval

Faith and Civic Life: Introduction to an Adult Study presented by: Dr. Phyllis Johnson.

What's your "Why?" Getting to the heart and equipping yourself with why the good news matters to you! presented by: Pr. Jessica Miller.

Finance Forum presented by: Joe Askew.

FOOD FOR ALL BLOCK PARTY – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Hosted by the Advocacy and Action Team, all Synod Assembly participants and congregation members from across the Synod are invited to a neighborhood block party (hosted at Bethlehem Lutheran Church - 613 16th St. S, Fargo) benefiting rural hunger ministries throughout the Synod.

Sunday, June 4th, 2023

COFFEE SOCIAL – 8:00 a.m.

EQUIP EXPERIENCE – Lectio Divina

Bp. Tessa led Lectio Divina on Ephesians 4:1 – 7, 11 – 16 as the Assembly's final EQUIP experience.

PLENARY THREE – 9:03 a.m.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Rev. Elwood Reike to the stage to present the 2023 Bread of Life Award to Peace Lutheran Church, Fargo.

The following churches were also recognized for their generosity to hunger ministries:

St. John, Arthur
Christ Lutheran, Neche
Trinity Lutheran, Esmond

St. John, Fargo
Trinity Lutheran, Binford
St. Petri, Nome

MINISTRY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – Park River Bible Camp & Red Willow Ministries

THIRD CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Rev. Julie Johnson, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, gave the third report of the Credentials Committee as follows:

VOTING MEMBERS	
<i>Rostered Leaders</i>	85
<i>Lay</i>	176
Total Voting Members	261

Note: The Credentials Committee also reported that there were 32 visitors present, bringing the total attendance to 293.

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared a quorum present.

ADOPTION OF THE 2025 SYNOD MISSION PLAN:

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Mr. Joe Askew to the stage to answer any questions related to the 2025 Mission Plan.

SA 23.06.06 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt the 2025 Synod Mission Plan, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED** see *attached*

REPORT OF THE ELECTIONS/NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Rev. Rachael Puttbrese presented the Election and Nominating Committees' report and the final ballot for the Synod Vice President, Synod Council, the Consultation Committee, and the Committee on Discipline. The nominees reflected below:

NOMINEE FOR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT (four-year term):

+S8.21. The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this Synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.

Elna Solvang

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD COUNCIL (two-year term):

S10.07.01 b.. One minister of Word and Sacrament and/or minister of Word and Service and one lay person from each conference nominated at the Conference Assembly and elected by the Synod Assembly. The terms of conference representatives shall be two years, with term of office arranged so that half of the terms expire annually. Each representative shall be eligible for two consecutive reelections.

Prairie Rose Conference: Rev. Gary Lundberg (rostered) & Margo Burthold (lay) Spirit Lake Conference: Richard Persky (lay) Fargo Conference: Kim Thompson Grafton Conference: Rev. Kayla Hill (rostered) Grand Forks Conference: Julie Pedersen (lay) Jamestown Conference: Rev. Lucinda Lien (rostered) Mayville Conference: Rev. Rachael Puttbrese (rostered) & Chris Larson (lay)
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NOMINEE FOR YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES TO SYNOD COUNCIL (one-year term):

S10.07.01.c Each youth member of the Synod Council shall be a voting member, elected by the Synod Assembly for a one-year term and electable for two consecutive re-elections.

Kate Edman Clara Kjelland

NOMINEE FOR MULTICULTURAL REPRESENTATIVE TO SYNOD COUNCIL (two-year term):

S10.07.01.e Two lay representatives who are persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. These persons are elected by the Synod Assembly for a two-year term, eligible for two consecutive re-elections.

Merlyn Greene

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (six-year term):

+S11.02. The **Consultation Committee** of this Synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers and half shall be lay persons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

Rev. Beth Peterson
Michelle Hovdenes

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE (six-year term):

+S11.03. The **Committee on Discipline** of this Synod shall consist of 12 persons of whom six shall be rostered ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

Rev. Cassie Anderson
Margo Burthold
Lenita Larson

COMPANION SYNOD UPDATE:

As part of our connection with the global church, the Eastern North Dakota Synod has a companion Synod partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. 2023 marks the centennial anniversary of the Sudan Mission - the arrival of the first missionaries to the area that is now the Central African Republic and Cameroon. A Centennial Celebration is taking place in Minneapolis, July 7th – 9th, to commemorate this on-going partnership.

RESOLUTIONS:

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Kathy Fick from the Committee on Reference and Counsel to the stage to present Resolution #2 for consideration and adoption.

RESOLUTION #2: 2023 Compensation and Policy Guidelines for Rostered Ministers & Lay Paid Staff

WHEREAS, congregations of the Eastern North Dakota Synod request and appreciate the aid and counsel of their companion congregations in this Synod and Synod leadership in ascertaining fair, equitable, and adequate compensation and benefits for Rostered Ministers and professional staff; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council has discussed and approved these guidelines and commends them to the 2023 Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly and to the congregations of this Synod for deliberation and use; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 2023 Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly adopt, approve, and commend to the congregations of this Synod these guidelines; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly approve the publication and distribution of these "Guidelines" to congregations of this Synod through the usual and appropriate means employed by the Synod office.

Submitted by the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council

SA.23.06.07 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt Resolution #2, so no second is required.

During discussion, the following amendment was offered...

SA.23.06.08 Rev. Karen Young Trenne, Sharon Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to amend Appendix A form 1, page 2 of 2, D.6, Appendix A form 2, page 2 of 2, D.6, and Appendix A form 3, page 2 of 2, D.6, of Resolution #2 to reflect the language "where applicable, parental leave of a minimum of eight weeks with full salary and benefits" and to amend the footers at the bottom of the page of Appendices B,C,D, and E of Resolution #2 to "2024 Compensation & Policy Guidelines". **MOTION CARRIED**

SA.23.06.07 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Council moved to adopt Resolution #2 as amended, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED**

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Pr. Kirk Meseck to lead the Assembly in prayer following voting on Resolution #2.

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Pr. Beth Peterson from the Committee on Reference and Counsel to the stage to present Resolution #3 for consideration and adoption.

RESOLUTION #3: Making Heart Room for Refugees and Migrants

- WHEREAS,** there are more than 27.1 million refugees in the world today and less than 1% have a chance for resettlement, clearly showing that more hands and hearts are needed to do this work, and
- WHEREAS,** the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to approve a memorial that declares the ELCA a sanctuary church, committed to serving and supporting refugee and migrant children and families in communities across the country, and
- WHEREAS,** the ELCA AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities) program currently has 222 congregations serving as 'welcoming congregations,' and only one is a congregation in the state of North Dakota, and
- WHEREAS,** Lutheran Immigrations and Refugee Service (LIRS) has helped settle a large number of refugees from Ukraine in the past year, along with other refugees and migrants from different countries, and they anticipate resettling many more in future months, and
- WHEREAS,** North Dakota communities have the space and resources for more people to live in peace and comfort, and
- WHEREAS,** Jesus was a refugee (Matthew 2:13-23) and commanded us to 'love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matthew 22:36-40); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that each congregation in our Synod find 'heart room' within themselves and consider doing one or more of the following:
1. Become a "Welcoming Congregation" through the ELCA AMMPARO program by making the following four commitments:
 - a. Welcome and minister to migrants and identify a contact person in the congregation who has the language skills necessary for basic communication;
 - b. Physically accompany migrants and refugees as they make new lives in local communities;
 - c. Pray for justice for migrants and refugees; and
 - d. Advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigrations crisis.
 2. Become a "Refugee Welcome Team" for LIRS by doing the following:
 - a. Gather furniture, kitchen items, toiletries, linens, and other household supplies needed for the home of an incoming refugee or migrant person or family;
 - b. Provide \$1500 of financial support for the refugee/migrant person or family;

c. Set up the apartment; put items away in their places, make beds, and make sure everything is in good order so that it is ready for when the refugee(s) or migrant(s) arrive.

3. Make issues facing refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants a regular part of the devotional and educational efforts in your congregation and community by doing the following;

- a. Sponsor a congregational and community forum to understand the challenges facing newcomers to our country, our state and our communities. Engage in Bible study about what it means to be a good neighbor.
- b. Include migrants in our communities and around the world in our Prayers of the Church weekly.
- c. Learn about our country's immigration policies and what it means to be a refugee, and asylum seeker, or someone seeking humanitarian parole. Learn about who can become a permanent resident and citizen and what the process is for doing so.
- d. Get to know the new Americans already in the community. Learn more about their experiences. Ask how we can be better neighbors.
- e. Financially support the work of LIRS, AMMPARO, and other organizations.

*Submitted by the Eastern North Dakota Synod Advocacy and Action Team,
Immigration/Refugee Focus Group*

SA.23.06.09 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Advocacy and Action Team moved to adopt Resolution #3, so no second is required.

During discussion, the following amendment was offered...

SA.23.06.10 Alexis Meduna, United Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to amend the title of Resolution #3 to "Encouraging Action in Support of Refugees and Migrants" and the RESOLVED statement to: "that each congregation in our Synod consider doing one or more of the following:" **MOTION CARRIED** *amended Resolution now reflects:*

RESOLUTION #3: Making Heart Room For Encouraging Actions in Support of Refugees and Migrants

WHEREAS, there are more than 27.1 million refugees in the world today and less than 1% have a chance for resettlement, clearly showing that more hands and hearts are needed to do this work, and

WHEREAS, the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to approve a memorial that declares the ELCA a sanctuary church, committed to serving and supporting refugee and migrant children and families in communities across the country, and

- WHEREAS,** the ELCA AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities) program currently has 222 congregations serving as 'welcoming congregations,' and only one is a congregation in the state of North Dakota, and
- WHEREAS,** Lutheran Immigrations and Refugee Service (LIRS) has helped settle a large number of refugees from Ukraine in the past year, along with other refugees and migrants from different countries, and they anticipate resettling many more in future months, and
- WHEREAS,** North Dakota communities have the space and resources for more people to live in peace and comfort, and
- WHEREAS,** Jesus was a refugee (Matthew 2:13-23) and commanded us to 'love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matthew 22:36-40); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that each congregation in our Synod ~~find 'heart room' within themselves and~~ consider doing one or more of the following:
1. Become a "Welcoming Congregation" through the ELCA AMMPARO program by making the following four commitments;
 - a. Welcome and minister to migrants and identify a contact person in the congregation who has the language skills necessary for basic communication;
 - b. Physically accompany migrants and refugees as they make new lives in local communities;
 - c. Pray for justice for migrants and refugees; and
 - d. Advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigrations crisis.
 2. Become a "Refugee Welcome Team" for LIRS by doing the following:
 - a. Gather furniture, kitchen items, toiletries, linens, and other household supplies needed for the home of an incoming refugee or migrant person or family;
 - b. Provide \$1500 of financial support for the refugee/migrant person or family;
 - c. Set up the apartment; put items away in their places, make beds, and make sure everything is in good order so that it is ready for when the refugee(s) or migrant(s) arrive.
 3. Make issues facing refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants a regular part of the devotional and educational efforts in your congregation and community by doing the following;
 - a. Sponsor a congregational and community forum to understand the challenges facing newcomers to our country, our state and our communities. Engage in Bible study about what it means to be a good neighbor.
 - b. Include migrants in our communities and around the world in our Prayers of the Church weekly.

- c. Learn about our country's immigration policies and what it means to be a refugee, and asylum seeker, or someone seeking humanitarian parole. Learn about who can become a permanent resident and citizen and what the process is for doing so.
- d. Get to know the new Americans already in the community. Learn more about their experiences. Ask how we can be better neighbors.
- e. Financially support the work of LIRS, AMMPARO, and other organizations.

SA.23.06.11 Rev. Terry Monson, Our Savior's, Dazey, and Bethel, Rogers, moved and it was seconded to call the question on SA.23.06.09. **MOTION CARRIED**

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Dn. Tara Ulrich to lead the Assembly in prayer before voting on Resolution #3.

SA.23.06.09 The Eastern North Dakota Synod Advocacy and Action Team moved to adopt Resolution #3 as amended, so no second is required. **MOTION CARRIED**

SA.23.06.12 Rev. Karen Young Trenne, Sharon Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to amend the Agenda to extend Plenary Three by no more than 15 minutes. **MOTION CARRIED**

SA.23.06.13 Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, United Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded that the Resolution entitled *Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call* be brought forward for consideration. **MOTION CARRIED**

Note: *The following Resolution was submitted after the deadline of May 3, 2023. The Resolutions Committee has determined that it meets the criteria to be considered at Synod Assembly. This required a two-thirds vote to be considered.*

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Pr. Bonnie Weaver from the Committee on Reference and Counsel to the stage to present the Resolution entitled *Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call* for consideration and adoption.

RESOLUTION: Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call

WHEREAS, our current Eastern North Dakota Synod Constitution excludes retired, on leave from call, and those granted disability status from voting at Synod Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, the current Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution states in S7.22.: "This Synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of this Synod to serve as

voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21c. If the Synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but no vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly," and

WHEREAS, the current Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution does not have a process that permits retired rostered ministers, those granted disability status, or those on leave from call to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly; and

WHEREAS, past service as a rostered minister, current on leave from call status, or granted disability status should not exclude these faithful servants of the church from full participation in the life of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, the balance of rostered ministers to lay voting members at recent Eastern North Dakota Synod Assemblies has not come close to exceeding the 60% lay to 40% ordained ratio; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that an additional item be added to the Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution bylaw S7.22.01.

S7.22.01. In accord with S7.21 and S7.22., the following shall be authorized by the Synod Council annually to serve as voting members of the Synod assembly:

- a. ELCA Members serving as Synod Authorized Ministers under contract in congregations or ministries of this Synod (this appointment would be in addition to the congregation's allotment of voting lay members)
- b. Retired ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service who are serving under contract as interim ministers in congregations or ministries of this Synod
- c. Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service on leave from call who are serving under contract as interim ministers in congregations or ministries of this Synod
- d. Additional ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may request to be voting members at least 45 days in advance. This may not exceed 25% of their numbers and should be in accord with S7.21. to maintain at least 60 percent of voting membership to be laypersons.

Submitted by United Lutheran Church Council, Grand Forks

SA.23.06.14 Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, United Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to adopt the Resolution entitled *Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call*.

During discussion, the following amendment was offered...

Accepted by Synod Council 10/14/23, for Assembly Approval

SA.23.06.15 Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, United Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to amend the Resolution entitled *Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call*, changing S7.22.01.d to the following: "Additional Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Ministers of Word and Service who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may request to be voting members. Requests must be made at least forty-five (45) days in advance of opening of the assembly. No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of rostered ministers of this synod who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may be granted membership under this provision. Granting voting rights under this provision shall be in accord with §7.21 to maintain the voting membership as at least sixty percent (60%) lay persons."

MOTION CARRIED amended Resolution now reflects:

RESOLUTION: Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call

WHEREAS, our current Eastern North Dakota Synod Constitution excludes retired, on leave from call, and those granted disability status from voting at Synod Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, the current Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution states in S7.22.: "This Synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of this Synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21c. If the Synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but no vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly," and

WHEREAS, the current Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution does not have a process that permits retired rostered ministers, those granted disability status, or those on leave from call to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly; and

WHEREAS, past service as a rostered minister, current on leave from call status, or granted disability status should not exclude these faithful servants of the church from full participation in the life of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, the balance of rostered ministers to lay voting members at recent Eastern North Dakota Synod Assemblies has not come close to exceeding the 60% lay to 40% ordained ratio; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that an additional item be added to the Eastern North Dakota Synod constitution bylaw S7.22.01.

S7.22.01. In accord with S7.21 and S7.22., the following shall be authorized by the Synod Council annually to serve as voting members of the Synod assembly:

- a. ELCA Members serving as Synod Authorized Ministers under contract in congregations or ministries of this Synod (this appointment would be in addition to the congregation's allotment of voting lay members)
- b. Retired ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service who are serving under contract as interim ministers in congregations or ministries of this Synod
- c. Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service on leave from call who are serving under contract as interim ministers in congregations or ministries of this Synod
- d. ~~Additional ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may request to be voting members at least 45 days in advance. This may not exceed 25% of their numbers and should be in accord with S7.21. to maintain at least 60 percent of voting membership to be laypersons.~~ Additional Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Ministers of Word and Service who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may request to be voting members. Requests must be made at least forty-five (45) days in advance of opening of the assembly. No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of rostered ministers of this synod who are retired, granted disability status, or on leave from call may be granted membership under this provision. Granting voting rights under this provision shall be in accord with §7.21 to maintain the voting membership as at least sixty percent (60%) lay persons.

SA.23.06.16 Rev. Brooke Phelps, First Lutheran, Hoople, moved and it was seconded to call the question on SA.23.06.13. **MOTION CARRIED**

SA.23.06.14 Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, United Lutheran, Grand Forks, moved and it was seconded to adopt the Resolution entitled *Voting Right for Rostered Ministers who are Retired, Granted Disability Status, or On Leave from Call*, as amended. **MOTION CARRIED**

Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth invited Pr. Lori Pankratz to lead the Assembly in prayer following voting on this Resolution.

LOOKING AHEAD – 10:33 a.m.

Dn. Laura Carson thanked Pr. Val Teppo, Pr. Cassie Anderson, Pr. Kayla Hill, Pr. Brooke Phelps, Alice Senechal and members of the Synod Council, Conference Deans, and Synod Staff for their leadership during Assembly. She also thanked the Assembly production team, Livewire, for their handling of all video, sound, lighting, staging, and streaming logistics. Next year's Assembly will be held June 1st – 2nd, 2024.

Additionally, Dn. Laura shared notes on upcoming Synod events including Fall Theological Conference with Rev. Dr. Ray Pickett and new variations of the "Bring Your Baskets" event. She also shared that a 2024 Lenten resource is in production and will be available in the future.

ELECTION RESULTS:

Rev. Rachael Puttbreese shared the results from the first common ballot held earlier during Plenary Three. There were 6 invalid ballots leaving a total of 212 ballots cast.

Note: Vote totals for each candidate are reflected in bold and parenthesis.

NOMINEE FOR SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT (four-year term):

+S8.21. *The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this Synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.*

Elna Solvang (212)

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that Dr. Elna Solvang was elected Eastern North Dakota Synod Vice President.

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD COUNCIL (two-year term):

S10.07.01 b.. *One minister of Word and Sacrament and/or minister of Word and Service and one lay person from each conference nominated at the Conference Assembly and elected by the Synod Assembly. The terms of conference representatives shall be two years, with term of office arranged so that half of the terms expire annually. Each representative shall be eligible for two consecutive reelections.*

Prairie Rose Conference: Rev. Gary Lundberg (rostered) (201) & Margo Burthold (lay) (194) Spirit Lake Conference: Richard Persky (lay) (210) Fargo Conference: Kim Thompson (192) Grafton Conference: Rev. Kayla Hill (rostered) (211) Grand Forks Conference: Julie Pedersen (lay) (212) Jamestown Conference: Rev. Lucinda Lien (rostered) (207) Mayville Conference: Rev. Rachael Puttbreese (rostered) (211) & Chris Larson (lay) (183)
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Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that each nominee was elected to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council as Conference Representatives.

NOMINEE FOR YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES TO SYNOD COUNCIL (one-year term):

S10.07.01.c Each youth member of the Synod Council shall be a voting member, elected by the Synod Assembly for a one-year term and electable for two consecutive re-elections.

Kate Edman (157) Clara Kjelland (52)

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that Kate Edman was elected to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council.

NOMINEE FOR MULTICULTURAL REPRESENTATIVE TO SYNOD COUNCIL (two-year term):

\$10.07.01.e Two lay representatives who are persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. These persons are elected by the Synod Assembly for a two-year term, eligible for two consecutive re-elections.

Merlyn Greene (210)

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that Merlyn Greene was elected to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council.

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (six-year term):

+S11.02. The **Consultation Committee** of this Synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers and half shall be lay persons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

Rev. Beth Peterson (210) Michelle Hovdenes (209)

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that each nominee was elected to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Consultation Committee.

NOMINEES FOR EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE (six-year term):

+S11.03. The **Committee on Discipline** of this Synod shall consist of 12 persons of whom six shall be rostered ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

Rev. Cassie Anderson (208) Margo Burthold (198) Lenita Larson (191)

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth declared that each nominee was elected to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Committee on Discipline.

VIDEO PRESENTATION – Rev. Keith Pearson, ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planner

WORKSHOPS #3 – 10:45 a.m.

The following workshops were available during Workshop Session #3:

Equipped for Ministry presented by: Dn. Laura Carson.

Portico Benefit Services: A Benefits Overview with Q & A presented by: Pr. Tim Schroeder.

Action and Advocacy 101 presented by: EaND Synod Action and Advocacy Team.

Partnerships for a Season: Adapting to Changes in the past 4 years presented by: Team from Christians in Action.

CLOSING WORSHIP – 11:45 a.m.

The Assembly closed its time together in worship. Rev. Lamont Wells, Executive Director of for the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, preached on Luke 10:1 – 9. Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth presided, assisted by Rev. Kyle Symanski. Mary Jo Kinzler served as lector and Thomas Hanson and Tony Christianson provided musical leadership.

During worship, Bp. Tessa Moon Leiseth formally installed Dr. Elna Solvang as Synod Vice President.

Offerings collected at both opening and closing worship totaling \$11,990.92 will be divided equally between Park River Bible Camp, Red Willow Ministries, Christus Rex Lutheran Campus Center, and Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry.

CLOSING OF THE ASSEMBLY

Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth closed the assembly at 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kyle Symanski, Secretary to the Synod



Eastern North Dakota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.