

**MOTIONS- NATIONAL CHURCH COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That National Church Council recommends to the Eleventh Biennial Convention the adoption of the document *In Mission for Others an Evangelical Theology of Mission, Evangelical Declaration* for the next decade.**

Refer to Addendum #1 page G-7

- 2. That National Church Council recommends that we commit ourselves as a church to answer the call to respect the integrity of God's creation through an environmental stewardship initiative engaging our national, synodical, congregational and individual member expressions.**

Refer to Addendum #2 page G-9

- 3. That National Church Council recommend Ken Hartviksen for the position of national treasurer for the next four years (2007–2011).**

Second Reading Constitution Amendments

- 4. That a new Article IX (Full Communion Provisions), Section 1, be inserted into the ELCIC Constitution and that the current Articles IX to XX be renumbered to Articles X to XXI.**

Section 1. Ordered ministers of churches with which this church has a full communion agreement, who are serving in this church under the provisions of that full communion agreement, shall have the same rights and privileges as the equivalent order of ministry in this church.

- 5. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XI (Conventions), Section 5, be amended with the addition of subsection c.**

Section 5. The voting membership of conventions shall consist of:

- c. Twelve youth selected by the synods as members of the youth assembly.

- 6. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XI (National Church Council), Section 1 first sentence be amended as follows:**

Section 1. There shall be a National Church Council ~~comprised~~ composed of the officers of this church, who shall serve as the officers of the council; and additional members from the synods allocated on the basis of proportional representation according to baptized membership; and other representatives from full communion agreements.

First Reading Constitution Amendments

- 7. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article IV (Mission of the Church). Section 2, be amended to include a new subsection c and the following subsections be re-lettered:**

Section 2. In seeking to achieve its mission, this church shall:

- c. Admit persons to the roster of diaconal ministers by consecration or transfer and be responsible for their nurture, support, and discipline.

**8. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article VIII (Lay Diaconal Ministers) be amended with the deletion of the word lay in the title and in sections 1 through 6.**

Section 1. A synod may admit individuals as ~~lay~~ diaconal ministers. In doing so the synod shall comply with and administer the provisions of this article and shall maintain a roster of those admitted and continued as ~~lay~~ diaconal ministers.

Section 2. Consecration of candidates as and reception of ~~lay~~ diaconal ministers shall be the function of the synods. Synods shall also have responsibility for recruitment, approval and supervision of all candidates for the ~~lay~~ diaconal ministry. Applicants for consecration or for reception shall appear before the examining committee of the synod, and may be consecrated or otherwise admitted only upon recommendation by such committee. The members of the examining committee shall be appointed or elected by the synod.

Section 3. Each ~~lay~~ diaconal minister shall covenant to abide loyally by the constitution, administrative bylaws and enactments of this church and of the synod.

Section 4. Each ~~lay~~ diaconal minister shall conform in teaching to the Confession of Faith of this church and shall lead a life befitting the office.

Section 5. Subject to the provisions of the administrative bylaws of this church each ~~lay~~ diaconal minister, except those who are retired or disabled, shall be in possession of a call from a congregation or a synod or this church itself. Under the conditions stated in the administrative bylaws, a ~~lay~~ diaconal minister on leave from call may be retained on the roster of ~~lay~~ diaconal ministers from year to year for no more than three consecutive years by action of the appropriate synod. A ~~lay~~ diaconal minister on leave from call for parental leave or study leave may be granted an additional five consecutive years by action of the appropriate synod.

Section 6. The synod shall be responsible for discipline of ~~lay~~ diaconal ministers on its roster. A Committee on Discipline shall be formed, when necessary. The composition and responsibilities of the Committee on Discipline shall be set out in the administrative bylaws. Disciplinary action may be appealed to the Court of Adjudication, whose decision therein shall be final.

**9. That the ELCIC Constitution Article IX (Synods) be amended as follows:**

Section 5. Included on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of each synod shall be those who are:

Section 6. It shall be the responsibility of each synod to:

- a. Shepherd congregations, ordained ministers, ~~deaconesses~~ **diaconal ministers**, and its lay workers;

**10. That the ELCIC Constitution Article X (Conventions) and Article XI (National Church Council) be amended with the deletion of the word ordained and replaced with the word rostered.**

## Article X Conventions

Section 5. The voting membership of conventions shall consist of:

- a. Two hundred ~~ordained~~ rostered ministers elected by the conferences as allocated by the National Church Council on the basis of baptized membership; and
- b. A lay delegate elected by each parish\* not already represented by an ~~ordained~~ rostered minister and an additional lay delegate elected by every parish with more than eight hundred baptized members. Any parish with less than eight hundred members represented by an ~~ordained~~ rostered minister for two consecutive conventions may not be represented by an ~~ordained~~ rostered minister at the following convention.

## Article XI National Church Council

Section 1. There shall be a National Church Council comprised of the officers of this church, who shall serve as the officers of the council; and additional members from the synods allocated on the basis of proportional representation according to baptized membership, and other representatives from full communion agreements. Each synod shall be represented by at least one lay person and one ~~ordained~~ rostered minister, and the total number of lay persons shall equal or exceed the total number of ~~ordained~~ rostered ministers. The distribution of additional members shall be specified in the administrative bylaws. The additional members shall be elected by the convention and shall be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms. Synod bishops shall be present as advisory members. Terms of elected members shall be such that half of the members shall be elected at each convention. Vacancies shall be filled by the National Church Council until the next regular convention. A member of the National Church Council who is an ~~ordained~~ rostered minister who has been suspended from the office of the ~~ordained~~ rostered ministry or removed from the roster of ~~ordained~~ rostered ministers by a synod council, may be removed from membership on the National Church Council by a majority or a least two-thirds of the members of the National Church Council at a meeting duly called and held for such purpose.

**11. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XIII (Divisions) be removed from the Constitution.**

## ARTICLE XIII Divisions

~~Section 1. This church shall carry out its work in mission and ministry through such divisions as may be established in the administrative bylaws.~~

~~Section 2. In establishing a division in the administrative bylaws, such provision shall set out the objectives of the division and the method by which such objectives are to be accomplished.~~

**12. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XIV (Offices), Section 1 be amended as follows:**

## Article XIV Offices

Section 1. This church shall provide ongoing support services for ~~the divisions and~~ this church through such offices as may be established in the administrative bylaws.

**13. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XV (Department of Finance and Administration), Section 1, subsection c be amended as follows:**

Article XV Department of Finance and Administration

Section 1. The National Church Council shall, through its Department of Finance and Administration, have responsibility for the general oversight and control of the finance and business management of this church. As such it shall:

- c. Ensure that there be sound and responsible fiscal management by its ~~divisions~~, offices, committees and institutions;

**14. That the ELCIC Constitution, Article XVI (Benefit and Pension Plans) Section 1 and Article XVIII (Court of Adjudication) Section 2 and 10 be amended as follows:**

Article XVI Benefit and Pension Plans

Section 1. The administrative bylaws shall provide for the participation by ~~ordained~~ rostered ministers and lay employees of this church, its synods, congregations, agencies, institutions, and other recognized organizations in a pension plan and in a group benefits plan. The administrative bylaws may establish rules providing for the participation of such employers and employees in such plans on a compulsory basis, and may determine the methods to be adopted by the participants in such plans in order to provide for the proper administration of such plans.

Article XVIII Court of Adjudication

Section 2. The Court of Adjudication shall consist of seven members, four lay and three ~~ordained~~ rostered ministers, who shall be elected by the convention for a term of four years. No member may hold a position on Church Council, synod council or a synodical committee for theological education and leadership. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. A vacancy occurring *ad interim* may be filled by the National Church Council until the next regular convention, which shall fill the unexpired term.

Section 10. An appeal made under ARTICLE VI, Section 11, ~~and~~ ARTICLE VII, Section 8, ~~and~~ Article VIII, Section 6 must be in writing and must be filed with the secretary of the court within forty-five days from the date of the decision, which is being appealed. The court shall hear and determine the appeal on the data upon which the decision appealed was based and render its verdict in writing. The court may for the purpose of hearing and determining the appeal receive such further evidence and in such manner and form as it in its sole discretion may determine.

Administrative Bylaws Amendments

**15. That Administrative Bylaw, Part III (Rostered Ministers) Section 3, subsection b. be amended by adding sub-point xviii as follows:**

Part III Rostered Ministers (Constitution, Article VII)

Section 3. Continuance on the Roster of Ordained Ministers

- b. Calls may be issued for the ministries specified below by the agencies indicated:

	Type of ordained ministry	Source of call
xviii	Pastor ordained through the Alternate Route.	<u>synod councils</u>

**16. That Administrative Bylaw, Part III (Rostered Ministers) Section 5 be amended as follows:**

Section 5. Ordained ministers on the faculty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary must maintain status on the roster of the British Columbia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Alberta Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada or the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The synod in which the faculty member will be rostered will be decided by the ~~Board of Directors~~ **Governors** of Lutheran Theological Seminary.

**17. That Administrative Bylaw, Part III.1 (Lay Diaconal Ministers) be amended to include a new section number 14.**

Part III.1 Lay Diaconal Ministers (Constitution, Article VIII)

Section 14. All Diaconal Ministers consecrated by the ELCIC have the right to use the title Deacon.

**18. That Administrative Bylaw, Part IV (Synods) Section 1 be amended as follows:**

Part IV Synods (Constitution, Article IX)

Section 1. This church shall be organized into five synods with names and territories as follows:

- b. Name: Alberta Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, also know as the Synod of Alberta and the Territories.  
Territory: The Province of Alberta, plus the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
- e. Name: Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.  
Territory: The Province of Ontario east of 86 degrees longitude and the Provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador.

**19. That Administrative Bylaw, Part V (Conventions) Section 13 be amended as follows:**

Part V Conventions (Constitution, Article X)

Section 13. The privilege of the floor shall be granted at all times to all members of the National Church Council and of the Court of Adjudication and to the synod bishops and the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Inc. ~~and to the official youth participants.~~

**20. That Administrative Bylaw Part VI (Youth Assembly) Sections 1 & 2 be added to the Bylaws.**

Part VI Youth Assembly

Section 1. The Youth Assembly shall consist of four youth from the Eastern Synod, two youth from the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod, two youth from the Saskatchewan Synod, two youth from the Synod of Alberta and the Territories, and two youth from the British Columbia Synod.

Section 2. Youth shall be baptized members between the ages of 16 and 23 inclusive on the first full day of the convention.

**21. That Administrative Bylaw Part VII (National Church Council) Section 2 and Section 5 be amended as follows:**

Part VII National Church Council (Constitution, Article XI)

Section 2. The Executive Committee of the council shall consist of the officers of this church. In addition to the officers there shall be sixteen (16) elected members of National Church Council: one ordained minister and one lay person from each of the synods of British Columbia and Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario, one ordained minister and two lay persons from each of the synods of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and three ordained ministers and three lay persons from the Eastern Synod. There shall be one additional member appointed by the Council of General Synod (COGS) of the Anglican Church of Canada for a term to be determined by COGS.

Section 5. The council shall issue letters of call to the rostered salaried officers of this church, to ordained ministers serving full time within the structures and agencies of this church, and to those in special service in accordance with the bylaw provisions (Part III, Section 3 and Part III.I, Section 3.)

**22. That National Church Council recommend the following motion to the 2007 Convention:**

- **That this convention affirms that the diversity within Canada's culture requires responses to a variety of persons in order for this church to be *In Mission for Others*. We also affirm that the synods have the mandate to devise mission strategies appropriate to their regional settings. Accordingly, we encourage synods to develop ways to best minister to people who live in committed same-sex relationships, including the possibility of blessing such unions.**

**ADDENDUM #1****IN MISSION FOR OTHERS, AN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSION**

**God calls us**, through Word and Sacrament, to be disciples and to make disciples. Our discipleship is defined by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Our mission is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people in Canada and around the world through the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, and through service in Christ's name. On the basis of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions:

**We believe, teach and confess** that God is revealed in the incarnation, the scandal of the cross, and in the wonder of the resurrection of Jesus Christ—not in human power and glory.

**We believe, teach and confess** that people find their true worth, meaning and purpose in life through the free gift of God's grace in Christ alone—not through their own accomplishments and efforts.

**We believe, teach and confess** that the crucified Christ calls us into a life of discipleship in which we are to be persons for others.

**We believe, teach and confess** that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we face the future with a hope and confidence that is based on Christ alone.

**We believe, teach and confess** that everything we have is a gift from God entrusted to our nurture and care, and that the Christian life is a life of stewardship.

**We believe, teach and confess** that the Holy Spirit calls and gathers the whole church into the mission of God, which takes seriously both the reality of the world, and the reality of Christ, with equal care.

We understand that the present reality of the world involves significant changes in our society, economy and culture. Technological innovations, globalization, economic and political uncertainties, and shifting morals and values have increased the sense of insecurity for many people. We further understand that the needs of the world and our opportunities for mission are found on our doorsteps and not simply at a distance.

We believe that the reality of Christ is that God promises to be with us unconditionally in the midst of the changes in our world. The church is called to name those things that cause us to be less than human. The church is called to proclaim the truth of the gospel to others and to live according to it as a community. The church is called to stand in solidarity with, and to welcome into its midst, all those who are marginalized because of sin and who experience injustice. The cross of Christ stands opposed to any ideology that treats people as commodities or proclaims that people can earn salvation by hard work or positive thinking.

**We, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada,** celebrate and rejoice in the gifts which God has given us to carry out our mission in the world today. Where we see need, we will take action. We will use our gifts deliberately to be the people of God for others. Over the next decade:

1. **We commit ourselves as church** to *worship* the Triune God through Word and Sacrament. Our worship will be faithful to scripture and tradition, celebrating diverse forms of worship and speaking to our context. Our worship will strengthen us to be God's people in mission in all of our vocations.
2. **We commit ourselves as church,** through prayer, study, and conversation, to *discern* what it is for us to live faithfully under the cross at this time and place, seeing the world through the event of the cross. We will enter into the lives of people in our local, national and global communities.
3. **We commit ourselves as church** to *equip* all members to be people in mission and to live as faithful disciples. We will emphasize ongoing learning for both lay and rostered members. We will make full use of the resources of the people in our congregations, schools, seminaries and leadership positions in the church. We also will work intentionally with other churches.
4. **We commit ourselves as church** to *encourage companionship and advocacy* with those who are treated unjustly, whether in our local, national or global communities. We will do this ecumenically in as many ways as possible.
5. **We commit ourselves as church** to *share our gifts* with the whole people of God beyond our specific denomination and national context. We will seek ways of working cooperatively wherever we are able.
6. **We commit ourselves as church** to *communicate clearly* with one another and with society. We commit ourselves to openness and trust. We will listen to the voices of our church and society, and respond to their needs.
7. **We commit ourselves as church** to *respond faithfully, promptly and flexibly* to the many opportunities for mission. We will pursue creative and effective ways for mission and ministry in our local, national and global communities.

Historical note: This document was originally entitled *Evangelical Declaration* when it was drafted by the Future Directions Task Force (1995–1997). *Evangelical Declaration* was adopted by this church in its 1997 convention as its theology of mission for the decade ending 2007.

## ADDENDUM #2

## STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION INITIATIVE

In Celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the *Evangelical Declaration*.

We affirm that **God calls us**, through Word and Sacrament, to be disciples and to make disciples. Our discipleship is defined by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Our mission is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people in Canada and around the world through the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, and through service in Christ's name. On the basis of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions:

**We believe, teach and confess** that everything we have is a gift from God entrusted to our nurture and care, and that the Christian life is a life of stewardship.

**We believe, teach and confess** that the Holy Spirit calls and gathers the whole church into the mission of God, which takes seriously both the reality of the world, and the reality of Christ, with equal care.

**Therefore, we, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**, will celebrate and rejoice in the gifts which God has given us to carry out our mission in the world today. Where we see need, we will take action. We will use our gifts deliberately to be the people of God for others. We will be involved in mission by focusing on the following:

**We commit ourselves as church to answer the call to respect the integrity of God's creation through an environmental stewardship initiative engaging our national, synodical, congregational and individual member expressions.**

### **Implementation Strategy**

The Stewardship of Creation Initiative is the first area of emphasis for the Global Hunger and Development Appeal's "Signs of Hope, Practices of Love Campaign" which is a campaign by our church aimed at increasing our involvement in the justice work which we share together.

### **Goals for the Stewardship of Creation Initiative**

- To reduce the negative impact the ELCIC, at all levels, has on the environment.
- To increase the ELCIC's commitment to and understanding of environmental stewardship.
- To involve youth in this initiative and create opportunities for leadership development.

### **Key Components**

- Web based resources to act as a guide for how congregations can "green".
- Synod based organizing to get congregations involved in initiative.
- Accreditation process for congregations, with recognition of their involvement.
- Involvement of youth, and creating opportunities for leadership development.
- Integration with other programs, (Youth Gathering, GHDA's Signs of Hope campaign, KAIROS's energy campaign, stewardship etc.).

### General Time Line

- June 2007–Launching of campaign at convention and launching of web site
- September 2007-Summer of 2008–Promotion through synod network and national communication means. With the goal of getting congregations involved and accredited.
- Spring 2008–meeting of coordinators
- Summer 2008–Renew the campaign at Youth Gathering and work to get more youth involved in the initiative

### Responsibilities

The National Church will be responsible for:

- Coordinating the initiative nationally
- Speaking out on public policy issues that relate to the environment
- Promoting this initiative through its national communication media as appropriate
- Providing web based resources for this initiative which synods, congregations and individuals can use
- Integrating this with other related initiatives so that they can build on each other. This will possibly include the National Youth Gathering, the next national youth project, GHDA's Signs of Hope Campaign, Kairos' Energy campaign, our stewardship work and others as appropriate.
- Create an accreditation process for congregations that want to be recognized as a "Green Congregation"
- Host a coordinating consultation in the spring of 2008
- Examine its own practice to find ways to model stewardship of creation and adopt these practices as appropriate

Synods will be responsible for:

- Actively promoting this initiative to its congregations
- Appoint a staff person (staff time) or dedicated volunteer to be responsible for coordinating the initiative in the synod
- Organizing a Stewardship of creation group(s) in the synod to promote this initiative in the synod. If possible this group will also include youth (30 and under) and be used as an opportunity to provide leadership development for these youth. These groups could be either synodically or regionally based.
- Examining its own practices to find ways to model stewardship of creation and adopt these practices as appropriate.
- Congregation will be responsible for
- Promoting this initiative to its members
- Encouraging its members to practice environmental stewardship
- Seek to become a "Green Congregation" by examining its own impact on creation and seeking ways to minimize its negative impact and promote positive impacts on creation.

Individuals will be responsible for:

- Promoting environmental stewardship to others in their life.
- Examining their own practices to find ways to live responsible environmental stewardship.

**Evaluation Parameters**

- Number of congregations that become “greening congregations” This will be monitored by asking congregations to be accredited as a “green congregation,” providing them with a certificate and listing accredited congregations on our website. The goal will be 25% of parishes.
- The development of groups to promote the green initiative and the participation of youth in these groups.
- That the synod and National Church offices provide leadership by taking actions to reduce their impact on the environment. The goal will be 100% of synodical and national offices taking steps to reduce their negative ecological impact.
- A theology of “stewardship of creation” is promoted in the ELCIC.

**NOTES**

## REFERENCE AND COUNSEL

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING MARRIAGE, HOMOSEXUALITY, AND THE CHURCH****Concerning ELCIC Human and Financial Resources**

That this convention direct the officers, National Church Council, division employees, department employees, synod councils, National Bishop, synod bishops and synod committees and synod offices to immediately cease any further action related to enabling members of the “Roster of Ordained Clergy” of this church or any congregation from performing or participating in any capacity in the blessing or marriage of same-sex couples or same-sex groups of people. Action includes, but is not limited to, discussion, analysis, review, policy formulation, motion preparation relating to any aspect of pastors of the ELCIC performing same-sex blessings or same-sex marriage. No financial or human resources of the ELCIC, at either the national or synod level, are to be expended in relation to any initiatives supporting same-sex blessings or same-sex marriage.

Rationale:

After an extensive debate, the 2005 ELCIC National Convention decisively rejected the National Church Council proposal to permit ELCIC pastors and congregations to bless same-sex couples. In spite of this rejection, the National Church Council and bishop continue to propose even more radical policies that are in direct contradiction of the *ELCIC Constitution*, *The Holy Bible* and *The Book of Concord*. In defiance of the 2005 National Convention, the Eastern Synod passed a motion permitting pastors and congregations to bless same-sex couples. As of January 24, 2007, the Eastern Synod has not rescinded this motion.

The cost to the ELCIC in both human and financial resources is significant and continues to grow. The same-sex blessing/marriage issue is the most disruptive and divisive issue in the history of the ELCIC. National Church Council’s continued pressure to change the decision of the 2005 National Church Convention hinders the ELCIC from addressing critical ministry challenges and opportunities.

This motion does not end the ability of members of the ELCIC from debating the initiatives or the challenges faced in ministering to individuals in a same-sex relationship. It simply restricts the official ELCIC bodies listed above from engaging in this debate and proposing motions to permit same-sex blessings/marriage.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

St. Paul Bergheim Lutheran Church

Saskatoon, SK

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR A PASTOR PERFORMING SAME-SEX BLESSINGS OR MARRIAGE**

That this convention advise all synod councils that any pastor that performs or participates in a same-sex blessing or same-sex marriage is subject to discipline and should receive a minimum one year suspension from the “Roster of Ordained Ministers.”

**Rationale:**

Same-sex blessings were rejected by the ELCIC at the 2005 National Convention, therefore any pastor committing such an action is acting beyond their authority and are subject to discipline in accordance with ELCIC Administrative Bylaws, Part III, *Section 12*.

The minimum one year suspension from the “Roster of Ordained Ministers” indicates how seriously the convention views the willful disregard of the *ELCIC Constitution, Administrative bylaws* and enactments of this church.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

St. Paul Bergheim Lutheran Church

Saskatoon, SK

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING RESOLUTION FOR AN AMICABLE SEPARATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA**

That provision be made for an amicable separation of ELCIC congregations divided over the issue of same-sex blessings into two independent national church bodies and that said separation take place under guidelines such as the following:

*Guidelines for an Amicable Separation**I. How Affiliation will be Determined*

1. At a meeting of the synodical bishops and the National Bishop of this church (Council of Bishops) to be held within one month of this 2007 National Convention, each bishop will choose and declare his/her affiliation.
2. Each of the two factions of our divided church will prepare a “position paper” of no more than four pages to be distributed to each synod by the National Bishop within two months of the Council of Bishops meeting.
3. Each synodical bishop will cause the two “position papers” to be immediately distributed to each congregation.
4. Subsequent to receiving the “position papers”, each congregation will call for a special congregational meeting to be held prior to the end of 2007 in order to decide the congregation’s affiliation.
5. Clergy, as well as teaching staff at the two seminaries, will likewise declare their affiliation prior to the end of 2007.

*II. Anticipated Outcome*

1. A Constituting Committee, established by each faction, will be responsible for developing a “position paper”, working on organizational details for each new church, such as constitution, church name, structure, pastoral training, etc., and guiding the process of an orderly and fair separation.
2. Two national conventions held to reconstitute the two factions as two separate churches would take place in the summer of 2008.
3. Two independent national Lutheran churches replacing the ELCIC, each able to pursue its own direction and ministries, would emerge.

Rationale:

Whereas the ELCIC’s National Church Council in a statement (September 2005 news release) concerning the blessing of same-sex unions in the aftermath of the 2005 National Convention has concluded that there is “compelling evidence as to the deep and significant differences of opinion that exist within our church” on this matter.

Whereas, our unity in the church is primarily confessional, that is, we are united by what we believe in common (Article II — Confession of Faith — of *ELCIC Constitution*) in accordance with the Holy Scripture.

Whereas, accordingly, a church that tolerates two clearly divergent views concerning the authority and interpretation of scripture and the confessions cannot remain united (*Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.* — Matt. 12:25 NIV)

Whereas, the competing visions within the ELCIC on such matters of doctrine and practice are irreconcilable, and, with time, the ongoing internal struggle sadly is becoming increasingly hurtful and debilitating to all concerned.

Whereas, our loyalty to Jesus Christ and our witness to the world compels us to deal with our differences in a Christian and orderly manner.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

St. John Lutheran Church (Ardrossan)

Sherwood Park, AB

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING RESOLUTION TO ADJUDICATE THE EASTERN SYNOD'S ACTIONS REGARDING THE BLESSING OF SAME-SEX UNIONS**

That this convention, as per Part VII , Section 11 of this church's bylaws, adjudicate on whether or not the Eastern Synod Assembly's 2006 resolution on the blessing of same-sex couples is outside of its authority or not in conformity with a policy laid down by the national convention.

Rationale:

Whereas, pastors of this church are obliged by their Letter of Call to "conduct public worship in harmony with the faith and practices of the church" and to "baptize, confirm and marry in accordance with the teaching of the church."

Whereas, with respect to "marriage," this church teaches, according to *A Statement on Sex, Marriage and the Family* (1970), that, "Christian faith affirms marriage as a covenant of fidelity — a dynamic, lifelong commitment of one man and one woman in a personal and sexual union."

As well, according to the same social statement, this church teaches that homosexual behaviour is a sin ("...homosexuality is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God's creation. Persons who engage in homosexual behaviour are sinners only as are all other persons alienated from God and neighbour").

Whereas, a July 2003 letter regarding "Same Sex Marriage" from the national and synodical bishops of this church, declared that, "Since the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada has no official policy authorizing clergy to bless same-sex relationships, pastors are not permitted to perform such rites and will be disciplined for doing so." Furthermore, the bishops of this church cautioned that, "For the sake of unity and good order of the church, it is important that any change in this practice be authorized by this church acting together."

Whereas, this church "acting together" at the 2005 National Convention, affirmed the "faith and practices of the church" and the "teaching of the church" by defeating a motion which would have given congregations of the ELCIC a local option to bless same-sex unions.

Whereas, the National Church Council, in September 2005, issued the following statement in response to the defeat of the same-sex blessings motion at the 2005 National Convention: "With reference to the actions taken at the Tenth Biennial ELCIC Convention concerning same-gender blessings National Church Council encourages congregations and pastors to honour the decisions that have been made and to refrain from taking actions that are in contradiction to them (*emphasis added*). National Church Council encourages synodical bishops to address breaches in this regard through pastoral conversation with the congregations and pastors involved and, if necessary, through censure and admonition."

Whereas, in November 2003 in a letter written to 72 clergy in the Eastern Synod who had asked that the threat of discipline be removed for pastors conducting same-sex blessings, Bishop Pryse and the Eastern Synod Council, alluding to the ELCIC's understanding of marriage as defined in *A Statement on Sex, Marriage and the Family* (1970), advised the clergy that, "Given the lack of a policy on the 'blessing' or 'marriage' of a same-sex relationship, our church's bishops have unanimously agreed that the act of 'marrying' or 'blessing' a same-sex couple, would constitute a breach of this official statement."

Whereas, the Eastern Synod at its 2006 Assembly passed a motion giving its congregations a local option to bless same-sex unions.

Whereas, according to Part VII, Section 10 (National Church Council) of the *ELCIC's Administrative Bylaws*: "It (National Church Council) shall review the actions of the committees and synods of this church at the first or second meeting of the council following receipt of minutes in which such actions are recorded. If a specific action is, in the judgment of the council, outside the authority of the committees or synod concerned or not in conformity with a policy laid down by the convention, a formal declaration of that fact shall postpone or suspend the effectiveness of such action. If the action in question is not rescinded, the issue shall be reported to the next convention for adjudication."

Whereas, the National Church Council, acting in accordance with Part VII, Section 10 (National Church Council) of the *ELCIC's Administrative Bylaws*, reviewed the Eastern Synod Assembly's 2006 resolution on the blessing of same-gender couples ("action in question") at its September 2006 meeting and declared the Eastern Synod's action in question as being "beyond its constitutional authority".

Whereas, according to a letter of November 18, 2006 written by Eastern Synod Bishop Michael Pryse on behalf of the Eastern Synod Council, the Eastern Synod's response to the National Church Council's ruling was not to take steps towards rescinding the "action in question", but, rather, the Eastern Synod Council "determined that the Eastern Synod had both the right and obligation to pass this motion."

Whereas, the Eastern Synod, failing to take steps to rescind the 2006 Eastern Synod Assembly's "action in question", then according to Part VII, Section 10 of this church's *Administrative Bylaws*, "the issue shall be reported to the next convention for adjudication".

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

Cochrane, AB

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING RESOLUTION THAT MOTIONS REQUIRING CHANGES IN THE *ELCIC CONSTITUTION* BE DONE THROUGH THE HOME CONGREGATION**

Motions requiring changes in the *ELCIC Constitution*, as well as important changes in policy be voted on by individual members of the ELCIC by means of mail-in or electronic balloting. The process is to be controlled by the congregations to ensure only members in good standing are voting. Proper information prior to voting is to be given to members at conferences and congregational levels.

**Rationale:**

Whereas, it is becoming increasingly expensive to hold national conventions, many congregations cannot afford to send delegates every two years, and since it has recently become very apparent that it is environmentally irresponsible to fly or drive so many people to a certain place, when the business to be attended to can be done more efficiently from the home congregation, and modern ways of communication provide efficient ways to collect and transmit confidential information.

Part of the intent of the motion is to allow a larger proportion of the membership of the ELCIC to participate in its decision making.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

Oakridge Lutheran Church

Vancouver, BC

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING RESOLUTION FOR POSSIBLE BLESSING OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN COMMITTED SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILAR MOTIONS**

In the name of Jesus Christ, all glory, thanks and honour to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, died for our sins and speaks to us through the Bible. God's Word is the truth and the only way for salvation. Jesus said: *If you love me, you will obey what I command.* John 14:15 (NIV). The man who says, *I know Him, but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* I John 2:4 (NIV). *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill them.* Matt. 5:17 (NRSV)

A motion, known as the "local option" with similar intentions was defeated at the 2005 ELCIC National Convention. The ELCIC convention as well as our congregation agreed that blessing a sin was contrary to God's Word.

Therefore, we petition all delegates to the 2007 National Convention to uphold our constitution and reject the blessing of same-sex relationships as well as other revisionist motions that are contrary to the constitution and God's word. Such motions will weaken the witness of the church and threaten our unity.

The following congregations have requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

St. Timothy's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Grace Lutheran Church

Pembroke, ON  
Kelowna, BC

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING THE REVIEW OF THE CHURCH EXTENSION CAPITAL FUND (CECF)**

Moved that the National Bishop appoint a task force to evaluate the mandate of the Church Extension Capital Fund (CECF) with specific consideration given to broadening the purpose of the fund beyond financing exclusively new land acquisitions and buildings for new mission congregations to supporting other building projects of existing congregations in renewal; and that the task force report and make recommendations to the National Bishop and the next convention.

Moved that the ELCIC in convention affirm with compassion and understanding the differing opinions and interpretations of mission strategies in our various contexts and communities as we struggle together to be the body of Christ for all; that we commit to continue striving to find ways to live together in times of tension with respect and acknowledging our dependence upon God's grace for each of us; and we encourage and support the efforts of synods to assist congregations and other communities to develop mission strategies that are appropriate to the diverse situations in which they minister.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

Lutheran Church of the Cross

Victoria, BC

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING ADOPTING A PROCEDURE TO FUND DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL CHURCH CONVENTION**

The Synod Council in a meeting held November 24, 2006 approved the following motion:

“That we petition the National Church to consider adopting a procedure of funding delegates to the National Church Convention similar to the practice currently in place in the Synod of Alberta and the Territories for synodical conventions.”

This synod was mandated by the following 1998 Synod Convention resolution:

“That congregational fees for convention of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories be based on the formula: convention costs (including non-parish and retired delegates) divided by the total number of synod confirmed membership times each congregation’s number of confirmed members.”

This system has worked well in our synod with increased participation by congregations and a more reliable budget figure with which to implement the convention. Once congregations realized that the smaller congregations were subsidizing the larger ones by paying an equal amount towards the convention costs, there seemed to be few criticisms.

Therefore, the Synod Council petitions the National Church to implement —

That fees for delegates of the National Convention be based on the formula:

- convention costs divided by the total number of confirmed members in the ELCIC,
- times each congregation’s number of confirmed members.

For example,

- convention costs may be determined to be \$500,000. and with a confirmed ELCIC membership of 130,000, the amount levied to each confirmed person would be \$3.85;
- Using the example of two congregations in the Alberta Synod:
  - Risen Lord, Edmonton (with a confirmed membership of 91, would pay  $91 \times \$3.85 =$  ) \$350.
  - Trinity, Edmonton (with a confirmed membership of 834, would pay  $834 \times \$3.85 =$  ) \$3,210.90

The following synod has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

Synod of Alberta and the Territories

Edmonton, AB

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT FROM GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, DAWSON CREEK, BC.**

“This convention affirms that the diversity within Canada’s culture requires responses to a variety of persons in order for this church to be *In Mission for Others*.”

“We also affirm that the synods have the mandate to devise mission strategies appropriate to their regional settings.”

“Accordingly, we encourage synods to develop ways to best minister to people who live in committed same-sex relationships, including the possibility of blessing such unions.”

**Rationale:**

The words “this motion” in each case refer to “the motion of National Church Council concerning the possibility of blessing same-sex unions” which is quoted above and that phrase, “the motion of National Church Council concerning the possibility of blessing same-sex unions”, may be used in place of “this motion” in printing these motions if that is felt to be needed for clarity.

THAT a 2/3 majority be required for passage of this motion.

THAT voting on this motion be recorded and reported in separate categories of lay delegates and ordained delegates and that passage of this motion require that the same majority be achieved in each category of delegates.

THAT this motion, if approved at this convention, not come into effect until it has been ratified by approval without amendment at the next convention of the ELCIC by the same majority and in the same manner.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

Grace Lutheran Church

Dawson Creek, BC

**NOTES**

**POSITION STATEMENT CONCERNING THE REVIEW OF BLESSING SAME-SEX UNIONS**

Although not able to bless same-gender relationships, this church supports the full membership of all those who are baptized into Christ and who accept the Lutheran Confession of Faith and terms of membership as set out in the constitution of the ELCIC.

On the basis that the motion to allow synods to bless same-sex unions is a matter that affects conscience and doctrine is controversial, argumentative, divisive, and contrary to Christ's prayer for unity, and violates the principles and practices of the ELCIC as it is presently constituted, and whereas a similar motion was rejected by the 2005 National Convention, the congregation of Christ Lutheran Church Chilliwack censures the National Church Council; therefore, we ask that the National Convention requests the Court of Adjudication review whether God, through scripture, provides the church with authority as it pertains to the granting of same-sex blessings.

The following congregation has requested that the secretary of the ELCIC forward the above petition to the 2007 National Convention:

Christ Lutheran Church

Chilliwack, BC