

**Northwest Washington Synod
Thirtieth Annual Assembly**

**Saturday, May 20, 2017
Salem Lutheran Church, Mount Vernon**



PLENARY 1

WORSHIP

The thirtieth annual Synod Assembly of the Northwest Washington Synod opened with worship at 9:00 am, Bishop Kirby Unti preaching.

CALL TO ORDER

The Assembly was called to order by Bishop Kirby Unti at 10:20 am. The assembly welcomed with acclaim Church of the Apostles, Seattle as a full congregational member of the synod.

CREDENTIALS REPORT 1

Assembly Registrar Joanne Hinkle, Lutheran Church of the San Juans, reported that 328 voting members were present.

QUORUM

Bishop Unti declared a quorum and announced that the assembly was in session.

ORIENTATION

Parliamentarian David Johnson, First Lutheran, Mount Vernon, assisted by Synod Secretary Pastor Deanna Wildermuth, Holy Trinity, Mercer Island reviewed the role of Standing Rules, agendas, and voting processes in helping to move the work of the synod forward in this meeting. David provided background on the use of Robert's Rules of Order, noting that these are rules of the majority but are intended to protect the rights of the minority.

STANDING RULES

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Georganne Robertson, Queen Anne, Seattle moved adoption of the Standing Rules. A two-thirds majority is required to adopt. The Standing Rules were **adopted**.

SA2017.01 **That the Standing Rules of the 2017 Synod Assembly are adopted as presented.**

ASSEMBLY AGENDA

Speaking on behalf of the Synod Council, Synod Vice President Georganne Robertson moved adoption of the Assembly Agenda. The motion *carried*.

SA2017.02 That the 2017 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly Agenda is approved as presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Emily Brown, First Richmond Beach, Shoreline, speaking as the Assembly Chair, reviewed 'housekeeping' details for the assembly (coffee, lost & found, etc) and led a round of applause for the volunteers from Salem Lutheran for their hospitality. Members of Church of the Apostles (COTA) led the assembly in worship at the start of the assembly and Emily asked for a round of applause for COTA as well. She encouraged everyone to be fully present for this day and to breathe in as needed!

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Vicars Lowell Chilton, Shepherd of the Hills, Concrete; Katherine GrayBuck, Phinney Ridge, Seattle; and Joshua Sullivan, Ballard First, Seattle and Faith Action Network introduced five ministry displays throughout the meeting space and encouraged assembly members to visit the displays during the breaks.

REFERENCE & COUNSEL 1

The Rev Bob Lewis, Faith Lutheran, Redmond, Chair of the Reference & Counsel Committee, presented amendments to the constitution for assembly approval. It was moved and seconded to amend the constitution with Amendment 74 (second reading). The purpose of the amendment is to remove the requirement for including the financial contributions from congregations in the minutes of the Synod Assembly. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.03 That the 2017 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approves Amendment 74 to the synod constitution.

It was moved and seconded to amend the constitution with Amendment 75, which dealt with election of the Treasurer by the Assembly. The motion to delete this provision *carried*.

SA2017.04 that the 2017 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approves deletion of Amendment 75 to the Synod Constitution.

Pr Lewis presented *en bloc* Amendment 86 (mandatory changes to the constitution, provided for information to the assembly) and Amendment 87 (non-mandatory changes to the constitution related to changes in language for the roster. The motion to approve these amendments *carried*.

SA2017.05 That the 2017 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly approves Amendments 86 and 87 to the synod constitution.

S7.22. The This synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained rostered ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with

†S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.24. Ordained 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 ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call on the roster 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 official lay roster of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained 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 ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.

S10.03. The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:

...

- d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of ministers of Word and Service and of other official rosters, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.**
- e. Issue letters of call to ordained rostered ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal**

ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

...

S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ordained ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

S13.11. When a pastor or when an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal rostered minister resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.

S13.12. A congregation under financial obligation to its former pastor or associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal rostered minister shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.

S14.15. Each ordained minister of Word and Sacrament 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.

†S14.16. When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the pastoral office in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church.

...

b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or pastoral candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds majority ballot vote shall be required of voting members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.

...

S14.17. No ordained minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and

the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.138. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:**

...

6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

...

- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,**

- 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained rostered ministers and one layperson, or**
- 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained rostered ministers and one layperson.**

- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this**

synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

...

- d. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.**

S14.215. All ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons Ministers of Word and Service
The time and place of the consecration of those persons properly called to congregations or non-congregational service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every Minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;**
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;**
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;**

- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;**
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;**
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;**
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;**
- h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and**
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.**

S14.33. The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

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.

S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

S14.47. All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Rev Katy McCallum Sachse thanked members of the committee and others who helped pull together the slate and thanked everyone who said 'yes' to allow your names to be brought forward. The names of those nominated are included in the meeting materials. The committee will continue to seek out nominees for other positions over the next year or two.

ELECTIONS 1

The Rev Paul Stumme-Diers presented colleagues of the Elections Committee: The Rev Kent Narum, Greenlake New Start, Seattle; Barbara Swartling, Bethany, Bainbridge; The Rev Kristy Daniels. While the ushers handed out the ballots, Pr Stumme-Diers noted that some of the elections being held today involve positions that will be filled in 2019. A question was raised about a person being named on the list for both the Discipline and Consultation Committees. Pr Stumme-Diers confirmed that this is permissible.

CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE

The Rev Daniel Rift from ELCA Disaster Response, spoke to the assembly about the work of the church, introducing a video statement from the Presiding Bishop. Pr Rift talked about the many ways the ELCA is engaged in the world, in developing new leaders, and focusing outward on faith issues.

LUNCH BREAK

Bishop Unti asked the assembly to thank the people who prepared the lunches and directed members of the assembly to pick up box lunches and enjoy the sunshine on the outside deck.

PLENARY 2

CALL TO ORDER

Bishop Unti called the assembly to order at 1:30 pm, with a special welcome to the younger members of the assembly.

CREDENTIALS REPORT

Kim Plata, Advent, Mill Creek brought the report for the committee. 330 voting members, of whom 111 were clergy and 209 were lay voting members have registered for the assembly.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Georganne Robertson thanked the voting members of the assembly for their presence and commitment to our shared ministry. She discussed the constitutional role of voting members and of the assembly and closed her report with prayer.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The Rev Deanna Wildermuth referred members of the assembly to the summary of meetings of the Synod Council and Executive Committee in the meeting packets. She explained the nominations process for the Synod Council, which has been adapted to the change in schedule of assemblies, along with the process of adjusting and/or addressing vacancies on the Synod Council. The Synod Council is also engaged in addressing how they do their work. The Nominating Committee will remain involved in the work of finding candidates for the vacancies on the Synod Council. The goal we all share is diverse representation on the council, to guide the work of the synod. Pastor Wildermuth closed her report with a passage from Jeremiah 29:9: *If I say "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot,* referring to the years of service to the church that will be recognized next.

RECOGNITION

Bishop Unti invited the assembly to join in recognizing the following rostered ministers on the significant anniversaries of their ordination/consecration:

Deacon Elizabeth A Steele, 35 years
The Rev Arda L Skinner, 25 years
The Rev Eric P Finsand, 25 years
The Rev Gary L Rothenberger, 35 years
The Rev Gary W Dalenius, 35 years
The Rev James L Sack, 35 years
The Rev Joe H Kutzke, 35 years
The Rev Paul E Hoffman, 35 years
The Rev Thomas J Rohde, 35 years
The Rev Allan H Bruck, 50 years

The Rev Maynard W Atik, 50 years
The Rev Philip H Maakestad, 50 years
The Rev Donald A Cornell, 55 years
The Rev Donald H Maier, 55 years
The Rev James W Schoeld, 55 years
The Rev Robert F Winkel, 55 years
The Rev Carl A Jensen, 60 years
The Rev Herbert W Siefkes, 60 years
The Rev Jack F Hustad, 60 years
The Rev Paul L Wietzke, 65 years

ELECTIONS 2

Pr Paul Stumme-Diers reported election results with the position of Vice President of the Synod. Kay Edgerton, Nativity, Renton received 219 votes; David Papenhausen, Holy Spirit, Kirkland received 84. The bishop declared Kay Edgerton *elected*.

For the position of Secretary of the Synod, Pr Tor Berg received 127 votes; Pr Deanna Wildermuth received 180. The bishop declared Pr Deanna Wildermuth *elected*.

For two clergy positions on the Consultation Committee, Pr Dan Heim, Faith of North Lakewood received 275 votes and Pr Anne Van Kley, Phinney Ridge, Seattle received 281 votes. The bishop declared Pr Dan Heim and Pr Anne Van Kley *elected*. Pr Kari Lipke received 291 votes to fill an unexpired term of two years. The bishop declared Pr Kari Lipke *elected*. For Lay Male Positions on the Consultation Committee, Rick Heinbaugh, Northlake, Kenmore received 162 votes; Rick Huling, Northlake, Kenmore 192 votes and Philip-Justus Pascual, Columbia City Church of Hope, Seattle received 173 votes. The bishop declared Rick Huling and Philip-Justus Pascual *elected*.

For the Committee on Discipline, Pr Tim Oleson, Edmonds Lutheran received 283 votes and Pr Gail Rautmann, Gloria Dei, Alderwood received 284 votes. The bishop declared Pr Tim Oleson and Pr Gail Rautmann *elected*.

The final ballot at this time was for nominees for the ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly 2019 Voting Members. Results were reported in Plenary 3.

REFERENCE & COUNSEL 2

Committee Chair Pr Bob Lewis, Faith, Redmond reported that a resolution approved at the Synod Council meeting the previous evening expressing appreciation for the ministry of Pr Kathryn Buffum was submitted to the assembly for approval. The assembly approved the resolution by acclamation.

SA2017.04 **That the voting members of the 2017 Assembly of the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America wish to lift up their voices of gratitude and appreciation and extend our thanks to Pastor Kathryn Buffum for her ministry among us. Through her tireless example of faithful servanthood assisting congregations in the call process, supporting the work of our Synod Council and our various synod committees, together we have and are becoming better equipped and positioned to share and witness to the Good News that is ours in Christ. Thank you, Kathryn, good and faithful servant. We are church, we are church together!**

On behalf of the Reference and Counsel Committee, Pastor Lewis moved adoption of the AMMPARO Resolution. It was moved and seconded to include a requirement for quarterly reports and an annual report from the synod office on the results of their work. The motion to amend failed. It was proposed that the ‘resolved’ clauses be included in the resolution for Churchwide Assembly action. A request was made to include the ‘whereas’ clauses in the resolution. The assembly approved the resolution.

SA2017.05 **Whereas, today there are more than 65 million people displaced from their homes by war, violence, persecution, economic and social dislocations and other factors -- more than at any time since the end of World War II; and**

Whereas, more than 21 million of those who are displaced have been forced to cross a border seeking safety and are considered refugees under humanitarian international law; and

Whereas, the Lutheran Church throughout its history has been a church comprised in part of immigrants and refugees, and Lutherans in North America have worked together for more than seven decades as champions of immigrants and refugees from around the globe; and

Whereas, the political and social climate of our nation has become increasingly hostile toward immigrants and refugees, endangering the safety of many members of our communities and compromising our life together as community; and

Whereas, the Bible exhorts us to not oppress the “aliens” in our midst, but to regard them as citizens among us, loving the alien as we love ourselves (Leviticus 19:33-34); and further urges protection of the stranger and those in need (Matthew 25:31-46), because “if one member suffers, all suffer together” (1 Corinthians 12:26), and among the greatest commandments is: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39); and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has ministries extensively involved with immigration and refugee relief and resettlement, including Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Lutheran Services in America (LSA) and its member social ministry organizations, Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW), as well as many synodical and congregational ministries and programs and ecumenical organizations such as the Faith Action Network (FAN) in the State of Washington; and

Whereas, these ministries and organizations also advocate for an end to family detention, progress in compassionate immigration reform, and safety for those fleeing violence and persecution; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2016 Churchwide Assembly adopted the AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities) Strategy that seeks to uphold and guarantee basic human rights of migrant children and their families as this church bears witness to the conditions affecting so many communities, and works to find solutions that will acknowledge the humanity in all of God’s children; and

Whereas, the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod serves a region with thousands of people who are recent immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers and already is committed to assist “refugees and immigrants to access resources and gain skills to successfully transition to their new communities, attain self-sufficiency, and begin lives of new hope and promise” (Lutheran Community Services Northwest); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod give thanks for and affirm the importance of ministry to and among immigrants and refugees and endorse and support the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Lutheran Services in America (LSA) and its member organizations, Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW), the Faith Action Network (FAN), and other ELCA-related and affiliated programs and organizations in this work; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod—mindful of its identity as a public church for the sake of the world and committed in baptism to strive for justice and peace in all the earth—encourage its members, rostered leaders, and Bishop to prophetic speech that advocates compassionate immigration reform and refugee relief and resettlement, promotes family unity, and further encourages bold actions that will offer safety, companionship, and protection for people without regard to immigration status; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod request the ELCA Church Council, and memorialize the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, to request that the Presiding Bishop communicate this church’s resolute commitment to the resettlement of refugees in the United States and encourage steadfast support for this program to the President and Members of Congress.

FINAL CREDENTIALS REPORT

Kim Plata, on behalf of the Assembly Registrar, delivered the final credentials report for the assembly:

Voting Members		
Clergy		111
Lay		219 of whom 10 are Deacons
Male	91	
Female	118	
Youth	14	
Young Adults	19	
Persons of Color	24	
Observers		6
Visitors		30
Volunteers	countless	
Total Present		366

REPORT OF THE BISHOP

Bishop Unti passed the gavel of the meeting to Vice President Georganne Robertson.

The bishop referred members of the assembly to his written report in the meeting materials and talked about the Living Local initiative within the synod. Lay people in the synod are being encouraged to dwell more deeply in God's word through the Living Local program, which is led by Pr David Hahn. The Capital Campaign is currently in the early stages. Rick Friedhoff, formerly director of Compass Housing Alliance, is the Chair of the campaign. Brief vignettes from campaign videos were shared with the assembly.

Bishop Unti spoke of a reservoir of compassion within the Lutheran faith community.

Georganne returned the gavel to Bishop Unti.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Vicars Lowell Chilton, Shepherd of the Hills, Concrete; Katherine GrayBuck, Phinney Ridge, Seattle; and Joshua Sullivan, Ballard First, Seattle and Faith Action Network introduced Mission to Seafarers, Seattle; Camp Lutherwood; Mission Investment Fund; and Open Door Ministries. A video from Reconciling Works was played as the assembly paused for a break.

BREAK

Open Door Ministries is celebrating their 25th anniversary and provided cake for members of the assembly during the recess.

PLENARY 3

Bishop Unti called the assembly back into session at 3:38 PM.

ELECTIONS 3

Paul Stumme-Diers reported the results of the previous elections. For the position of synod representative to the ELCA Church Council, Pr Joanne Engquist, Gethsemane, Seattle received 157 votes, Pr Sara Yoos, Light of the Cross, Bothell received 147 votes. The bishop declared Pr Engquist **elected**. For the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2019 position of Clergy Female, Jana Schofield received 157 votes and Veronica Smith received 106. The bishop declared Pr Jana Schofield **elected**. Pr Sara Yoos received 290 votes as Churchwide Assembly Voting Member, Person of Color. Bishop Unti declared Pr Yoos **elected**. Pr Tim Feiertag, Trinity, Everett received 289 votes as the Churchwide Assembly Voting Member, Clergy Male. Bishop Unti declared Pr Feiertag **elected**. Kaaren Hatlen, First Lutheran, Bothell received 246 votes and Jonathan Ochsankohl, Columbia City Church of Hope, Seattle received 216 votes as Churchwide Assembly Voting Member, Youth/Young Adult. Bishop Unti declared Ms Hatlen and Mr Ochsankohl **elected**.

Ushers distributed the next ballot and Pr Stumme-Diers advised the members of the assembly to vote for two Lay Male members and one Lay Female members of the Churchwide Assembly.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Vicars Lowell Chilton, Katherine GrayBuck, and Joshua Sullivan introduced ministry displays throughout the meeting space and again encouraged assembly members to visit the displays around the meeting spaces: Pacific Lutheran University, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Church Mutual Insurance, and Luther Seminary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dale Zehms, Shepherd of the Hills, Sammamish gave his report as the Treasurer and introduced the two finance issues being presented to the assembly for approval. Dale thanked congregations and their members for their generous support of the ministry of the larger church. He also thanked members of the Finance Committee, Synod staff, and the staff of the Financial Services Office. Issues of longer term concern include increases in the cost of medical care in the compensation budget, asset replacement (needed in the next few years) and the costs associated with electing a new bishop in 2019. Increases in the budget has been held to about 2.5 percent growth.

BUDGET APPROVALS

Pr Jim Kruse, Cross of Christ, Bellevue and Treasurer Dale Zehms, Shepherd of the Hills, Sammamish presented the 2018/2019 Proposed Budget for approval, along with the 2019/2020 Proposed Budget. It was moved and seconded to approve the 2018/2019 Budget as presented. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.06 **That the Synod Assembly directs that the General Fund Budget adopted for FY 2018-2019 shall be capped at \$1,474,975 and that motions to increase any expenditure item in said fund shall include a recommended offsetting decrease, and that FY 2018-2019 General Fund receipts in excess of \$1,474,975 be disbursed as directed by the Synod Council.**

It was moved and seconded to approve the 2019/2020 Budget as presented. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.07 **That the Synod Assembly directs that the General Fund Budget adopted for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 shall be capped at \$1,511,280 and that motions to increase any expenditure item in said fund shall include a recommended offsetting decrease, and that Fiscal 2019-2020 General Fund receipts in excess of \$1,511,280 be disbursed as directed by the Synod Council.**

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Vicars Lowell Chilton, Katherine GrayBuck, and Joshua Sullivan introduced the Candidacy Committee and Team Russia ministry displays around the meeting spaces.

REFERENCE & COUNCIL 3

Pr Lewis referred members of the assembly to Resolution E, submitted by Pr Heidi Fish, Celebration Lutheran, Anacortes. It was moved, seconded and carried to change 'clergy, lay

professionals' to 'rostered ministers'. It was moved and seconded to approve the resolution as amended. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.08 **That the congregations, rostered ministers, volunteer leaders, and members and friends of the Northwest Washington Synod encourage voters to “decline to sign” petitions to put I-1552 on the ballot;**

and be it further Resolved, that if Initiative I-1552 makes it onto the ballot, all congregations, rostered ministers, volunteer leaders, members and friends be encouraged to vote No on I-1552;

and be it further Resolved, that all congregations, rostered ministers, volunteer leaders, members and friends of the Northwest Washington Synod be encouraged to make known their opposition to I-1552 and to actively work for its defeat;

and be it further Resolved, that all congregations, rostered ministers, volunteer leaders, members and friends share their welcome and support for the LGBTQ+ community in whatever ways they are led by the Holy Spirit.

ELECTIONS 4

Paul Stumme-Diers reported the results of the voting on Lay Male Churchwide Assembly Voting Members and Lay Female Churchwide Assembly Voting Member. Curt Eidem received 141 votes, David Gross 125, and David Johnson 149. Bishop Unti declared Curt Eidem and David Johnson *elected*. Paul reported that Lay Female Churchwide Assembly Voting Member results showed that Emily Brown received 127 votes, Sherianne Molzahn Caldwell 45 and Carol Warren 23. Bishop Unti declared Emily Brown *elected*.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Vicars Lowell Chilton, Shepherd of the Hills, Concrete; Katherine GrayBuck, Phinney Ridge, Seattle; and Joshua Sullivan, Ballard First, Seattle and Faith Action Network highlighted the Northwest Washington Synod Women's Gathering scheduled for later this year and Holden Village's ministry in the Cascades and encouraged assembly members to visit the displays during the breaks.

2018/2019 and 2019/2020 Budget Approvals

Pr Jim Kruse, Chair of the Synod Finance Committee, presented the 2018/2019 Budget for consideration. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.09 **That the Synod Assembly approves the 2018/2019 Budget as presented.**

Jim presented the 2019/2020 Budget for approval by the assembly. It was moved and seconded to approve the 2019/2020 Budget as presented. The motion to approve *carried*.

SA2017.07 **That the Synod Assembly approves the 2019/2020 Budget as presented.**

REFERENCE & COUNSEL 4

Pr Lewis reported that the resolution labeled A in the meeting packet was determined not to meet the guidelines and will not be acted on. He presented Resolution C, *Regarding “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust”* to the assembly. The maker of the resolution requested that the ‘Whereas’ clauses be included in the resolution. The motion to approve the resolution *carried*. The motion to include the ‘whereas’ clauses *carried*.

SA2017.08 **Whereas in the time since the passing of the 2009 social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” marriage in the United States has become legally inclusive of same-sex couples, and**

Whereas Lutheran practice throughout the centuries has been to appreciate and support as gifts from God the life-enhancing actions of secular governments, and

Whereas in the time since the passing of the 2009 social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” there has been rapid and widespread growing understanding and support for people of all gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations in the United States, especially evident in negative public responses when discriminatory legislation is proposed or enacted (such as so-called “religious liberty” laws and bathroom bills), or when violence is visited upon members of the LGBTQ+ community (such as the wildly disproportionate numbers of rapes and murders of transgender people of color), and

Whereas such discriminatory legislation and violence do remain significant factors in the lives and deaths of people in the LGBTQ+ community in the United States; and persecution and violence toward the LGBTQ+ community in other parts of the world remain widespread and devastating (including, at the time of this writing, numerous countries with laws against same-sex sexual contact punishable by public whipping, long prison sentences, and/or death; and reports in the press of the recent development of concentration camps for gay men in Chechnya), and

Whereas such discrimination, persecution, and violence remain largely grounded in the language, practices, and traditions of faith communities, and

Whereas the ELCA is a faith community that has found our way to a different perspective on the LGBTQ+ community that is grounded in love for the neighbor, and therefore can serve as a faith-based antidote to other faith-based messages that support discrimination, persecution, and even violence, therefore be it

Resolved that the Northwest Washington Synod requests that the Church Council of the ELCA initiate a review and edit of “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” to reflect changes in laws and language, as well as the changing faith and secular perspectives on the wide variety of family structures included in our church and society, especially in relation to LGBTQ+ individuals and families, and be it further

Resolved that the Northwest Washington Synod requests that the Church Council of the ELCA bring a reviewed and edited version of “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” to the floor of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for a vote, and be it further

Resolved that the Northwest Washington Synod urges rostered and lay leaders throughout the church, including the Bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod and the Presiding Bishop, to continue to publicly speak and act against legislation that discriminates against the LGBTQ+ community in this country, and practices that persecute the LGBTQ+ community globally.

Bob thanked the members of the Reference & Counsel Committee, along with synod staffer Susan Berg, for their work on presenting the resolutions to the assembly.

Bishop Unti thanked David Johnson for his work as Parliamentarian for the assembly.

BISHOP’S REFLECTIONS

Bishop Unti thanked the members of the synod for their faithful honoring of the work of the church. We are evolving in our work with resolutions and memorials and we look forward to having deeper, more meaningful conversations about difficult issues.

The bishop thanked Pr Nancy Winder for her service as Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy and for her filling in after Pr Kathryn Buffum was forced to leave her position. The bishop invited the assembly to give her a round of applause for her good and faithful work. Pr Winder thanked the members of the assembly for raising up new leaders for the church and noted this synod has a long history of raising new leaders.

Bishop Unti thanked the synod staff, including Margaret, Nancy, David, Jerry, Susan Berg, and Sister Liz Colver (who served for a good part of the past year). The bishop thanked Pr Marc Hander and the gracious members of Salem Lutheran for their hospitality and their hard work of

hosting the assembly. He thanked his wife Kim, honoring their commitment to be engaged in their faith life together.

Assembly Coordinator

Emily Brown, Assembly Coordinator, thanked the ushers, the members of Church of the Apostles, and in particular Pr Ivar Hillesland for their contributions to the assembly. She thanked the members of the synod for being willing to try something new – a one-day assembly. Emily thanked the members of the Planning Team and offered special thanks to Susan Berg for her assistance.

Emily noted that there will be an online survey link available shortly so that everyone can provide their impressions of the day and preferences for how the assembly might be managed. She asked that people clear their table as they are leaving, returning voting cards and leaving their notebooks if they don't need to keep them.

Bishop Unti presented Emily with a gift in thanks for countless hours of work in bringing off the assembly.

CLOSING

Ivar Hillesland led the Litany of Closing that marked the end of the assembly. Bishop Unti declared the Assembly closed at 5:05 pm.