

**2010 Synod Assembly**  
**Items of New Business for Consideration**  
**Unedited Resolutions**

*The 2010 Synod Assembly will consider two items of New Business. It is important to note that “only items of business which have been submitted by voting members or the Synod Council may be considered by the assembly. Resolutions must be submitted to the Committee for Reference and Counsel by April 9, 2010 in order to be considered at this year’s assembly” (Proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure, 2010, p. 1).*

*The two items of New Business have been referred to the Committee for Reference and Counsel. “The Committee for Reference and Counsel shall report on every resolution referred to it, and may recommend approval, disapproval, referral to a unit of this synod or the ELCA, or recommend a substitute motion to the assembly” (p.1).*

*The two items of New Business that are given below have not as yet been reviewed by the Committee for Reference and Counsel and therefore may not be in the final form in which the committee will ultimately present them. The two items of New Business are reprinted here as they were received and are published for information purposes only.*

**NEW BUSINESS #1 – as received**

Topic: Constitutional Integrity

Submitter: Pastor Joel Berthelsen, Hope Lutheran Church, Cedar Hill, Texas

The Resolution:

Whereas: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's constitution states, the ELCA “...accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.”

And Whereas: a plain reading of the scriptural passages regarding same-sex sexual activity upholds the idea that same-sex sexual activity is not to be practiced and that it is wrong

Therefore be resolved: that the Northern Texas Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA memorialize the ELCA to rescind the 2009 Churchwide Assembly's decisions on 8/21/09 titled Ministry Policies Resolutions #2, 3, & 4 #2: “Resolved, that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.” #3: “Resolved, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.” & #4 which dealt with the changing of Visions and Expectations.

**IMPLICATION OF RESOLUTION (NB #1) - If Adopted**

What is the financial impact of this resolution on the synod budget?

*It will be beneficial.*

What are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the resolution’s purpose?

*Congregations*

What are the personnel implications within our Synod – or churchwide?

*It will affect rostered leader definitions.*

Who will be responsible for implementation of the resolution?

*The proper ELCA Churchwide Assembly memorial committee.*

How does this resolution enhance the mission of the church and our synod?

*It would lend the view of integrity to our church as the world would see we say what we mean and we mean what we say.*

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## **NEW BUSINESS #2 – as received**

Topic: The ELCA Churchwide Assembly’s Resolutions of August 21, 2009 Are Unconstitutional

Submitter: Mark Johnson, Central Lutheran Church, Dallas, Texas

The Resolution:

WHEREAS “[t]his church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life,”<sup>1</sup> AND

WHEREAS the Scriptures demonstrate that God’s plan for human sexuality does not permit homosexual conduct,<sup>2</sup> AND

WHEREAS “[a]n ordained minister of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; *and whose life and conduct are above reproach.* An ordained minister shall comply with the constitution of this church,”<sup>3</sup> AND

WHEREAS “[o]rdained ministers shall be subject to discipline for preaching and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church or willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of this church,”<sup>4</sup> AND

WHEREAS the blessing of same sex unions is a human contrivance found nowhere in the Scriptures, and that Martin Luther gravely warned us of the dangers of neglecting the Scriptures,<sup>5</sup> and predicted that “men will, as the ancients did, once more turn to human schemes ... and again issue laws and regulations to keep the people in the unity of the faith,”<sup>6</sup> AND

WHEREAS the ELCA 2009 Churchwide Assembly’s resolutions permitting the ordination and calling of pastors engaged in homosexual conduct and the blessings of same sex unions are nowhere authorized by scriptural or canonical authorities and are therefore unconstitutional. Moreover, the exercise of the resolutions violates Articles 7.22 and 20.21.01 of the ELCA Constitution. Such resolutions are also incompatible with other scriptural directives in that they have grieved many members of the body of Christ.<sup>7</sup> Therefore be it

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<sup>1</sup> ELCA Constitution, Article 2.03 (2009)

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:6-8; Ephesians 5:28-31; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26,27; I Corinthians 6:9-11; I Timothy 1:9,10.

<sup>3</sup> ELCA Constitution, Article 7.22 (italics added for emphasis).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, Article 20.21.01, (a) and (d).

<sup>5</sup> Martin Luther, *That These Words of Christ, “This is My Body,” etc., Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics*, in 37 *Luther’s Works* 14-16 (Robert H. Fischer trans., Fortress Press 1961).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 17.

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. 13:5: “Love does not insist on its own way.”

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod declares the ELCA 2009 Churchwide Assembly's resolutions permitting the ordination and calling of pastors engaged in homosexual conduct and the blessings of same sex unions are not authorized by Scripture or canonical authorities and are therefore unconstitutional. The Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod hereby disavows and disassociates itself from any connection to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly Resolutions "Related to Ministry Policies" adopted on Friday, August 21, 2009, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and declares that it is not bound by them.

#### **IMPLICATION OF RESOLUTION (NB #2) - If Adopted**

What is the financial impact of this resolution on the synod budget? If expenditures are required, what are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the purpose of the resolution?

*The financial impact is positive, since the passing of the resolution may encourage congregations contemplating leaving the ELCA and NTNL Synod to instead remain affiliated with the ELCA. No expenditures are required.*

What are the personnel implications within our Synod – or churchwide?

*The personnel implications would be the same as the status quo prior to August 2009.*

How does this resolution enhance the mission of the church and our synod?

*The resolution serves to spiritually and legally protect the church and our synod by adhering to the Scriptures and the constitution that governs the ELCA.*