

**Resolution 2002-01**  
**Fair Representation**  
**Failed**

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod (or “this synod”) has adopted a new “team structure” in 1999 that divides the fifteen member Synod Council into three teams of five persons for specific purposes (see ++S10.01.A99); and

WHEREAS, the concept of equal representation is valued and appreciated by members of the Blue Earth River Conference as an important part of the shared ministry of this synod; and

WHEREAS, there is no mechanism in place to ensure these positions are represented equally by the five conferences of this synod for the Synod Council, the Leadership Development Committee (the nominating committee for the Synod Council), or other synod committees and task forces; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2000-1, the makeup of the Synod Council was far from being equal in representation, as the following numbers show: (# members: conference)

6	Zumbro River Conference (Austin, Stewartville, Rochester)
4	Cannon River Conference (Northfield, Red Wing, Faribault)
2	Root River Conference (Winona, Spring Valley, Houston)
2	Minnesota River Conference (Mankato, Waseca, Owatonna)
1	Blue Earth River Conference (Fairmont, Blue Earth, Albert Lea)

(the Leadership Development Committee did have one representative from each conference for 2000, but there is no requirement for this in the synod’s constitution); and

WHEREAS, the current team structure offers the possibility of a simple solution with each of the five conferences having one member on each team or committee of five members; and

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod has not made any attempt to provide for equal representation by the conferences on the Synod Council or Leadership Development Team (nominating committee);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Synod Council bring the required constitutional amendments for consideration to the next Synod Assembly that will ensure proper and equal representation by the conferences of this synod on the various teams of the Synod Council, the Leadership Development Team (nominating committee), and other committees or teams that serve in this synod as needed or possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following proposed constitutional changes be considered at the earliest possible time for action by the next Synod Assembly.

Possible Constitutional Amendments (italics are changes or additions)

S9.03. (Beginning with the second sentence) The Synod Leadership Development Committee of five members shall be nominated by the Conference Deans and elected by the Synod Council to serve for one three year term. *The Conference Deans and Synod Council shall seek to make allowances for representation by each of the conferences of this synod when composing the committee.* (The rest remains unchanged.)

++S11.01.02.B99. The Leadership Development Committee shall nominate members of each team, *allowing for equal representation by each conference of this synod*, and the Synod Assembly shall elect the members of each team.

++S11.01.A99. The Synod Council shall organize teams and task forces, *with the*

*consideration for representation by each of the conferences of this synod, to accomplish specific work to be defined by the entity to which the team or task force directly reports.*

Submitted by Pastor Daniel D. Baker, Bethlehem and Deer Creek Valley Lutheran Churches, February 10, 2002. Brought forth by the Blue Earth River Conference - passed by the Blue Earth Conference Assembly February 10, 2002.

**Resolution 2002-02**  
**Future Assembly Dates**  
**Failed**

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly is typically scheduled in late April or early May, from a Friday to a Saturday; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Conference wants to promote wholeness, unity and collegiality within our synod; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Conference wants sufficient time at our Synod Assemblies for worship, education and fellowship, along with the necessary business; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Conference wants a broad representation of voting members of all ages and our present Friday/Saturday assembly makes this very difficult; and

WHEREAS, a Friday/Saturday Assembly puts undue stress on pastors and others to be ready for Sunday, especially when the Assembly immediately precedes Confirmation Sunday, as often happens; and

WHEREAS, assemblies in late April and early May usually come in the midst of spring planting and makes it difficult for farm folks to attend;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod go to a Friday evening through Sunday afternoon assembly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the date be changed to avoid spring planting and Confirmation weekend, typically at the end of April and the first weekend in May.

Submitted by Pastor Bill Meiers and Pastor Don Larson, Minnesota River Conference, February 10, 2002.

**Resolution 2002-03**  
**Scholarship Fund for Seminarians**  
**Passed as amended - changes in bold**

WHEREAS, the supply of seminarians has now reached a critical stage, because of prohibitively high tuition costs, and the retreat from funding of this vital mission by the synod and the national church body of the ELCA, resulting in a critical shortage of qualified, dedicated, rostered personnel;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA establish a scholarship fund to provide financial assistance to persons sensing a call to Christian service as rostered personnel; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Assembly direct the Synod Council to oversee the details of the plans to bring this resolution before the 2003 Synod Assembly.**

Submitted by William Christianson, United Lutheran Church, Red Wing.

**Resolution 2002-04**  
**ELCA Sexuality Study**  
**Passed as amended - changes in bold**

WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in 2001 authorized the following actions:

1. Required the development of a social statement on human sexuality with a proposed statement to be brought to the 2005 assembly
2. Required a churchwide study on homosexuality with a first report to be presented to the 2003 Churchwide Assembly
3. Required the development of a plan and timeline leading to a decision on ordination of people in committed same-gender relationships with an initial report to be presented at the 2003 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA council members involved in these studies hope for the broadest possible participation with the stated goal “of widespread prayer and discussion in every congregation;”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in conjunction with the national studies being conducted by the ELCA, that each and every congregation of the ELCA be given the franchise to vote their approval or disapproval of the studies’ recommendations, with the majority of the votes cast by the congregations favor or opposition to the studies’ recommendations determining the official position of the ELCA on these matters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the constitution of the ELCA be amended at the 2003 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to ~~restore~~ **give** direct representation to each and every ELCA congregation as it relates to the studies mentioned in this resolution and that each and every congregation’s vote be weighted in proportion that its membership bears to the entire membership of the ELCA; **and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council to forward this resolution to the ELCA Church Council for consideration and possible action.**

Submitted by Tom Hill, United Lutheran Church in Red Wing; and Bill Christianson, United Lutheran Church in Red Wing, Cannon River Conference.

**Resolution 2002-05**  
**Supporting Ordinations Outside the Historic Episcopacy**  
**Failed**

WHEREAS, one of the clear Biblical expressions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is “freedom” (John 8:31-32, 36; Galatians 5:1, and others); and

WHEREAS, Christian freedom is always in danger of being lost in human rules and regulations, not least of all within the sphere of the church itself; and

WHEREAS, one of the fundamental issues of the Reformation for Martin Luther was freedom in Christ for individuals and for the Christian community, and the necessity to distinguish between what was necessary and not necessary (a distinction in regard to adiaphora); and

WHEREAS, many people in the Blue Earth River Conference of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod still see the policy and practice of the Historic Episcopacy as infringing on a desirable and healthful freedom; and

WHEREAS, the administration of the Historic Episcopacy ordination policy may be intimidating to vulnerable seminary graduates who have been approved for ordination; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly passed a bylaw accepting ordinations apart from the Historic Episcopacy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOVLED, that the Blue Earth River Conference of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA support seminary graduates who seek ordination apart from the Historic Episcopacy by the approval of this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ~~it shall be the policy of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod~~ **the Blue Earth River Conference memorialize the Southeastern Minnesota Synod to affirm the policy** that any qualified seminary graduate shall not be denied ordination because of a preference for ordination apart from the Historic Episcopacy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Historic Episcopacy is a matter of adiaphora, that is, not an essential matter of faith and practice, in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.

Submitted by David Hernes and Daniel Baker, by the Blue Earth River Conference, February 10, 2002.

**Resolution 2002-06**  
**2003 Minimum Compensation and Benefits Guidelines**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, the Lay and Clergy Leadership Development Team has reviewed the *2002 Compensation and Benefits Guidelines* document;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2002 Synod Assembly adopt the revised document, *2003 Compensation and Benefits Guidelines for Pastors, Associates in Ministry, Lay Professionals and Support Staff*.

Proposed document follows.

Submitted by the Southeastern Minnesota Synod's Lay and Clergy Development Team, Rev. Nancy Dreier, Chairperson.

**Resolution 2002-07**  
**Voting Privileges at Synod Assembly**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has long upheld the importance of involving lay people in active participation in the governance of the church structure; and

WHEREAS, one of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Ministers is a lay person not on a roster of lay persons in the ELCA;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA amend its bylaws with the inclusion of the following:

**S7.21.03 Any non-rostered lay Synod Minister on the bishop's executive staff in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod shall be a voting member of the Synod Assembly, provided that such an individual is also a voting member of a congregation of this synod.**

Submitted by the Executive Committee of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council.

**Resolution 2002-08**  
**Stand with Africa – Year 2**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in Assembly in 2001 affirmed the three year campaign for advocacy, education and giving by encouraging the use of the Launch Kit, the educational material “Open a World of Possibility” – World Hunger Project in Tanzania, the Bread for the World offering of letters seeking aid for Africa and by making connections with our Companion Synod, the Central Diocese of Tanzania;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod encourages congregations to participate in the campaign and update the congregations on the progress of the Stand with Africa Campaign, including use of the following resources:

- Stand with Africa web site: [www.standwithafrica.org](http://www.standwithafrica.org)
- Advocacy component at [www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org) (click on “SWA Advocacy Update.”)
- Request copies of “*AFRICA ADVOCACY*.” This is a public policy newsletter published by the ELCA Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs and Lutheran World Relief in support of Stand with Africa. It is available through [www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org) or also through [www.standwithafrica.org](http://www.standwithafrica.org)
- Printed materials are available through the ELCA World Hunger Appeal or [www.elca.org/co/hunger](http://www.elca.org/co/hunger).

Submitted by the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Hunger Task Force.

**Resolution 2002-09**  
**Hunger - 25 By 5 (\$25 Million By 2005)**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, the Bible leaves no room for doubt about God's intention for us by embracing us in love and stirring us to seek justice for those who are oppressed:

*Is this not the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice, to  
undo the thongs of the yoke, to let  
the oppressed go free, and to break  
every yoke?*

*If you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the  
darkness and your gloom be like the  
noonday. (Isaiah 58:6, 10)*

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in Assembly has faithfully lifted up the issues of hunger and poverty each year, encouraged individuals and congregations to generously contribute to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and made these great needs an integral and visible focus in the life of this Synod; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA World Hunger Appeal response in 2001 was \$15.55 million, including the response to Stand With Africa of \$329,000, congregational giving was up \$200,000, but the overall giving to the World Hunger Appeal was about equal to 2000. The impact of the events of September 11 had a significant effect on the giving to the Hunger Appeal, but also resulted in record giving to the New York/Washington D. C. Lutheran Disaster Response with total giving by congregations and individuals of around \$7 million;

WHEREAS, this synod has affirmed the challenge to double giving to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal by the year 2005, and has moved toward that goal by increasing the giving in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod by \$20,000 in 2001;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that words of thanksgiving and gratitude be expressed to synod congregations for the generous support that has been given on behalf of the hungry and impoverished in the world, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation continue to work toward doubling giving to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal by increasing the per confirmed member goal this year by \$.75 from \$4.40 to \$5.15, reaching a five-year goal of \$7.30 per confirmed member by the year 2005.

Submitted by the Hunger Task Force of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

**Resolution 2002-10**  
**Welcome: Peace Lutheran Church, Eyota**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, Peace Lutheran Church of Eyota, Minnesota, has been properly organized according to the requirements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, Peace Lutheran Church of Eyota, Minnesota, officially organized on October 7, 2001;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Peace Lutheran Church of Eyota, Minnesota, be welcomed into membership in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Submitted by the Mission Planning & Action Team of the Synod Leadership Team, Mr. Byron Stadvold, Chair.

**Resolution 2002-11**  
**Mission Emphasis Sunday**  
**Passed as presented**

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod gives thanks for the generosity shown in previous Mission Emphasis Sunday offerings; and

WHEREAS, these offerings have made possible new ministry starts in the synod; and

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is in the planning process to begin another new ministry start;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in assembly encourages congregations to continue to emphasize synod mission partnership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2003, each congregation of the synod seek to give \$1 per baptized member to synod mission partnerships; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the proceeds be shared between a new ministry start in the Northfield/Dundas area, Peace Lutheran Church, Eyota or another area yet to be named, with the Mission Planning & Action Team to determine distribution.

Submitted by the Mission Planning & Action Team of the Synod Leadership Team, Mr. Byron Stadsvold, Chair.

**Resolution 2002-12**  
**Hearing the Boring Cry of Colombia**  
**Passed as amended - changes in bold**

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia and other Christian Churches in Colombia, continue to request the prayers, advocacy and solidarity of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Division for Global Mission has recently passed two resolutions on Colombia; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran Churches of Latin America, at their Mission Consultation, November 2001, requested ongoing advocacy and support for the churches and people of Colombia; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran World Relief has established Colombia as one of its top advocacy priorities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2002 Assembly of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, uplift before its congregations and members the October, 2001, and the March, 2002, resolutions of the ELCA Division for Global Mission on Colombia, as well as the Colombian advocacy efforts of the Lutheran Office of Governmental Affairs, Lutheran World Relief and other ELCA related ecumenical organizations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod congregations and individual members be encouraged to include Colombia in their private and public prayers, as well as intentionally promote education and advocacy regarding the critical situation of Colombia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that individuals within the congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod be encouraged to write their U.S. congressional representatives expressing ~~serious concern for the increased military aid to Colombia, requesting instead greater support for humanitarian purposes, alternative development for the poor and displaced, judicial reform and protection of all human rights and advocates in Colombia.~~ **their concerns regarding how U.S. military and humanitarian aid is used in Colombia.**

Submitted by Members of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Global Mission/Companion Synod Committee: Rev. Byron Meline, chair; Rev. Nick Fisher-Broin, Ms. Ruth Reppe, Rev. Linda Helberg, Mr. David Neale, Mr. Randy Stangler, Ms. Joni Groth, Rev. Roger Knudson, Bishop Harold Usgaard (Synod Staff Member), May 3, 2002.