

Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee Part 2
August 17, 2011

Responses to Requests for Amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Amendment 1

A. Serena S. Sellers Southeastern Pennsylvania

Substitute for LIFT Recommendation on Interrelationships and Networks
10.61 by addition

This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and partners as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, institutions, and other partners.

B. Serena S. Sellers Southeastern Pennsylvania

Substitute for LIFT Recommendation on Interrelationships and Networks
S12.01 by addition

This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods, institutions and other partners as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, institutions, and other partners.

Rationale of the Reference and Counsel Committee

This provision, 10.61 is a constitutional provision. Under the rules of the ELCA Constitution, any proposed amendment to a constitutional provision that is brought at the CW Assembly, requires that no vote may occur on such a provision until the next CW Assembly. So, if the amendment is accepted, the current changes are rejected and no vote can take place on 10.61 until 2013.

Second, it is the intent of the Lift recommended language to broaden the scope of the current provision. The provision reads that conferences, clusters coalitions, areas subdivisions and other networks should be enabled to foster interdependent relationships between congregations, synods, the CW organization and **other partners**. (Emphasis added)

Section IV, page 29 of the LIFT Report states, “To invite members, congregations, synods, regions, the churchwide organization, colleges and universities, institutions and agencies”.....and further a subsection of Section V on page 27 defines agencies, institutions, and other ministries.

This new language is meant to include and it does include all other partners, which would certainly include any and all institutions.

In light of the fact that an amendment to a constitutional resolution at this time bars consideration for two year, and since the current provision is broader than the amendment, the committee recommends rejections of the amendment.

Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee

To recommend to the assembly to decline these two motions on Interrelationship and Networks.

Amendment 2

A. Peter C Aldrich Minneapolis Area

WHEREAS, the centralization of decision-making powers necessitates a critical review of its make-up, and

WHEREAS, the proposed elimination of youth advisory and ethnic-specific members does not address a means of replacing these members, and

WHEREAS, in the report of Synod Assembly surveys by the LIFT Task Force, one of the top responses to the question, “What is God calling the ELCA to be and do over the next 10 years?” was “Youth and families valued young adults (V:56A), therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America meeting in assembly amend proposed constitutional amendment 14.31, as recommended by the LIFT Task Force, to read “The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the four churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops and at least 33 and not more than 45 other persons, of whom a minimum of 10% shall be under the age of 30 at time of election and of whom a minimum of 10% shall be persons of color, elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

B. Dianha Ortega-Ehreth Metropolitan Chicago

WHEREAS, the assembly wishes to acknowledge and strengthen the work of the churchwide organization in including more youth and young adults in its decision-making, and

WHEREAS, ELCA Constitution 6.02.A09. (continuing resolution) calls for a goal of at least 10% of voting members to be youth and young adults, and

Whereas, the youth advisory members to Church Council are proposed for being eliminated and an intentional naming of youth and young adults is necessary to underscore the value they bring to the table, then be it

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly amend the proposed ELCA Constitution 19.02 amendment from the LIFT Task Force as follows:

“With respect to the other nominees, the Church Council shall review its size and composition and ~~take into consideration the~~ demographics included age, ethnic background, and varying abilities, experience and expertise ...”

C. Michael Andrew Dubsky Delaware-Maryland

14.31.02

The Nominating Committee shall establish processes that in addition to following the criteria established in 5.01.G shall provide for inclusion on the church council of at

least 1 (one) youth member, 1 (one) young adult, 1 (one) member of African Descent, 1 (one) member of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, 1 (one) member of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage, 1 (one) member of Latino heritage, 1 (one) member of American Indian and Alaska Native Association and 1 (one) European-American member.

Rationale of the Reference and Counsel Committee

We express gratitude for the raising up of our church's representational principles as set forth in our Constitution. The Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provide significant direction regarding demographic representation of this church's governing bodies (including assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units). The sections below address this church's commitments to inclusivity and representation.

5.01f.

5.01g.

5.01.A87.

5.01.B87.

5.01.C00.

6.02.A09.

This church remains committed to these representational principles if the constitutional changes to the composition of the Council are adopted. These constitutional provisions address the concerns raised by the proposed amendments.

Further, the report of the LIFT Task Force communicates an ongoing commitment to uphold these representational principles going forward. Specific references within the LIFT Task Force report may be found in Section V:

Page 22-23

Page 25, column 1, point 5

Page 25, column 2, #3, point 2 and #6

Page 26, column 1, #4

Page 26, column 2, point 6

Page 28, column 2, paragraph 1

Page 30, column 2, point 5

Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee

To recommend to the assembly to refer these motions to Church Council in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary. We ask the Church Council:

- To develop a process for honoring our existing commitments (referenced above) for appropriate representation on the Church Council, both in the transition years to the new size of the Church Council as well as into the future.

- To invite synods to encourage nominations for Church Council (as well as assemblies, committees, boards, and other organizational units) that reflect current representational principles
- To include a description of the specific steps taken and care given to representational principles for the composition of the Church Council in their November 2012 report.

Amendment 3

A. Michael Andrew Dubsky Delaware-Maryland

Amendment to 14.31.01

The voting members of the church council shall consist of the four churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and sixty-five (65) other persons, one from each synod, elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

Rationale of the Reference and Counsel Committee

The LIFT Task Force addresses this in Section IV, page 33 B. The text is following:

The LIFT task force believes that the current size of the Church Council is in a reasonable range from a governance perspective. Given the current number of synods, it would not be desirable, either from a cost standpoint or a governance perspective, to increase the size of the Church Council to 69 members. Further, increasing the size to 69 by election of a voting member from each synod would not address the issue of ensuring the requisite skills and expertise of the council. It also necessarily would increase the role of the Executive Committee.

This is reiterated in Section V, page 78, number two.

Recommendation of the Reference and Counsel Committee

To recommend to the assembly to decline this amendment.