

Report of the Synod Vice President

I'm sure you are aware by now that we are electing a new Vice President at this assembly. I'm stepping down after 10 years. It's a job I have truly loved doing, and I thank all of you for electing me and giving me the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I will address this further in my report from the floor of the assembly.

I have met hundreds of wonderful people over the years that I have enjoyed serving with. We have a strong synod in northern Illinois and great leadership. I would encourage any of you to consider serving at the synod level. I believe it gives you a whole new perspective on what it means to be the church. I know that once you have experienced working in the synod you won't regret a minute of it. There are many different ways to connect at the synod level. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Pat Esker at the synod office.

Thank you again. See you at Assembly.

Peace,
Bill Bartlett

Report of the Secretary

"I think God must be very old and very tired. Maybe he used to look splendid and fine in his general's uniform, but no more. He's been on the march a long time, you know. And look at his rag-tag little army! All he has for soldiers are you and me. Dumb little army. Listen! The drum beat isn't even regular. Everyone is out of step. And there! You see? God keeps stopping along the way to pick up one of his tinier soldiers who decided to wander off and play with a frog, or run in a field, or whose foot got tangled in the underbrush. He'll never get anywhere that way. And yet, the march goes on."

The passage above is the opening paragraph to a story called Rag-Tag Army by Martin Bell from the book *The Way of the Wolf* (Seabury Press, 1970). It is a story that I have read numerous times for children's messages, around campfires, for devotions, and from the pulpit. For me, its power is in Bell's simple and wholly accurate depiction of God's church. If you glance around you in the pews on a Sunday morning, at a council meeting, or even at a synod assembly, you might notice that we really don't look like anything special. We are just a rag-tag group of people who are walking together, doing our best to love Christ and love all, for the sake of the world. Yet we are the ones God has chosen to be God's rag-tag army, fallible as we may be.

I am grateful to be a part of this rag-tag army, serving God with the people of the Northern Illinois Synod. I am grateful for the opportunity to walk together with you as the Secretary of the Northern Illinois Synod and share whatever fallible gifts I have for the sake of God's mission through the synod. I am grateful for the support of Deaconess Cheryl Erdmann and her discerning eye in proofreading the minutes of the Executive Committee, the Synod Council, and the Synod Assembly. I am grateful for the support and leadership of Bishop Clements as he joins hands with us in our ministry. I am grateful for the opportunity to walk with Mr. Bill Bartlett, who has faithfully and effectively served as our Vice-President for my entire tenure on the Synod Council. And I am grateful for you, the members of the 2019 Synod Assembly, for your willingness to walk together in our mission to love Christ and love all for the sake of the world.

The report of the Secretary continues within this bulletin of reports with the minutes of last year's Synod Assembly and the report of the Synod Council.

In Christ,

Pastor Donald L. Knowles
Secretary of the Synod

Minutes of the 2018 NIS Assembly

Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Thirty-First Annual Assembly
June 15-16, 2018
Centennial Hall, Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois

First Plenary Session - Friday, June 15, 2018

(Note: the abbreviation “BOR” indicates the “Bulletin of Reports.” Resolutions are noted with an “R” followed by a number. The actions of the Assembly are indexed, with the index of actions located at the end of the minutes.)

Opening of the Assembly - Following the gathering hymn, Bishop Jeffrey Clements led the Assembly in the “Opening of the Assembly” liturgy and prayers. Bishop Clements welcomed all and gave a brief preview of the Assembly.

Introduction of guests - Bishop Clements introduced the following special guests to the Assembly.

- Augustana College: President Steven Bahls: At the invitation of the Bishop, President Bahls greeted the Assembly and spoke briefly about the accomplishments of Augustana students and noted the restructuring of the college administration, especially the creation of a Vice President of Diversity.
- Churchwide Representative and Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director, Domestic Mission Unit
- Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Craig Nesson, Wartburg Theological Seminary
- Portico Benefit Services: Ms. Jennifer Prinz, Regional Representative
- Interns serving in the Synod: Fanya Burford-Berry (First, DeKalb), Paul Gebo (Zion, Rockford), Chelsey Olson (New Life, Bolingbrook)
- ELCA Foundation: Mr. Tim Urness, Regional Gift Planner
- Lutherdale Ministries: Mr. Jeff Bluhm, Executive Director
- Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center: Mr. Russ Senti, Executive Director
- Mission Investment Fund: The Rev. Richard Wehrs
- Mosaic: Ms. Trisha Cratty, Community Relations Manager
- Northern Illinois Synod Women’s Organization: Ms. Kim Choin, President
- ELCA Church Council Representative: Mr. Vernon Veal, St. John’s, Bloomington (Central/Southern Illinois Synod)
- Deaconess Community of the ELCA: Ms. Jan Rizzo, Manager, Administration
- Host Congregation: First Lutheran Church, Geneseo
- Grace Place @ NIU: The Rev. Robert Hansen, Interim Campus Pastor
- Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago: Mr. Clyde Walter, Campaign Director & Major Gift Officer
- Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries: Ms. Amy Hoening, Executive Director
- Head Table: Ms. Tammie Farley, Synod Treasurer; Pastor Don Knowles, Interim Synod Secretary; Pastor Pat Esker, Parliamentarian; Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Assistant to the Bishop. The Bishop noted the Vice-President Bill Bartlett was absent due to a family emergency.
- Lutheran Social Services of Illinois: Mr. Mark Stutrud, Chief Executive Officer; Ms Kathy Hall, Vice President, Advancement. At the invitation of the bishop, Mr. Stutrud gave an update about Lutheran Social Services of Illinois.

The bishop acknowledged the #CycleToSynod group and their effort to raise awareness of and funds for World Hunger.

Credentials Committee Report - Pastor Randy Willers, chair of the Credentials Committee, reported that the following were in attendance: 89 ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members, 23 retired/on leave from call (olfc)/ disability status ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members, for a total of 112 ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members; 7 ministers of Word and Service voting members, 3 retired/olfc/disability status ministers of Word and Service voting members, 224 lay voting members, and 19 youth/young adult voting members, for a total of 253 lay voting members. There were a total of

365 voting members. 30.7% ministers of Word and Sacrament and 69.3% lay voting members. 61 visitors were in attendance. The grand total of registered Assembly attendees: 426. A quorum was declared.

Adoption of the Rules of the Assembly - Interim Secretary Don Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved the adoption of the rules of the Assembly, as found on pages 2-7 of the BOR. Bishop Clements and Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Marilyn Hanson, shared how individuals are to approach the microphones and shared some parliamentary guidance as well as other Assembly guidance and information.

ACTION SA-18-06-01 - The rules of the Assembly were adopted.

Assembly Committee Appointments - Interim Secretary Knowles was called upon to share the names of the Assembly's committee appointments, as follows:

Courtesy Committee: Ms. Carol Swenson (chair) and The Rev. Julane Nease

Election Committee: The Rev. Janet Wold (chair), The Rev. Jessica Bakken, The Rev. Lou Cantrell, Ms. Sue Cording, Mr. Walt Farley, Mr. Ivan Guldenfennig, Ms. Donna Kelly, The Rev. Wayne Melaas-Swanson, Ms. Bridget Reibel, Ms. Amanda Schanze, Mr. Ron Simmons, Ms. Susie Smalley, Dr. David Renneke (advisor)

Credentials Committee: The Rev. Randy Willers (chair), The Rev. Chris Lee, Ms. Laura Nelson

Minutes Review Committee: The Rev. Doug Liston (chair) and Ms. Amanda Schanze

Resolutions Committee: Mr. Mike Reibel (chair), Ms. Cyndi Brockman, The Rev. Pat Esker (parliamentarian), Ms. Judy Milroy, The Rev. William Weidenbach, The Rev. Marilyn Hanson

Parliamentarian: The Rev. Pat Esker

Adoption of the Agenda - Interim Secretary Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved that the agenda for the Synod Assembly, prepared by the Synod Council and found on pages 8-11 of the BOR, be adopted as the agenda for the 2018 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly

ACTION SA-18-06-02 - The motion to adopt the agenda was approved.

Nominating Committee Report - Pastor Andrew Kayes, chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked the committee members and those willing to stand for election. He then presented the list of nominees for each office and position to be elected. He directed the attention of the Assembly to pages 95-100 of the BOR and read the names of those nominated to serve on the Synod Council, Congregational Life Committee, Global Mission Committee, Ministry Support Committee, Outreach Ministry Committee, Social Ministry Committee, Churchwide Assembly voting members. The bishop asked for any nominations from the floor. None were brought forward. Nominations were closed, and the official ballot was accepted.

Pastor Kayes then presented a resolution from the Nominating Committee moving the following individuals elected from the conferences to be Churchwide Assembly voting members be affirmed by the Assembly:

Mr. Ryan Mackey (Central Conference), The Rev. Lou Cantrell (East Conference), Ms. Janice Forrest (North Conference), The Rev. Paul Cannon (Northeast Conference), Ms. Nancy Lillevold (Northwest Conference), Ms. Becky Keller (South Conference), The Rev. Julie Monnard (Southwest Conference), Mr. Keith Enstrom (West Conference)

ACTION SA-18-06-03 - The motion to affirm the Churchwide Assembly voting members elected by the conferences was approved.

Distribution of the Ballot - Pastor Janet Wold, chair of the Election Committee, was called upon to explain the balloting process and the ballots were distributed with the announcement that they would be collected at 2:30 p.m.

Treasurer's Report - Ms. Tammie Farley, Treasurer of the synod, reported that the synod is in good financial standing. She offered thanks to the congregations of the synod for their mission support. Referring to a pie chart she explained how synod money is used in support of the mission of the synod. She reported that the annual audit came back with a "clean" report. Finally, she offered thanks to the bishop, Deacon Erdmann, and June Cain for their support. Her report was received with applause.

First Reading of the 2019 Proposed Budget - Interim Secretary Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved that the budget, prepared by the Finance Committee and adopted by the Synod Council, as it appears on page 39 of the BOR, be adopted as the budget for fiscal year 2019 for the Northern Illinois Synod. Treasurer Farley recognized the work of the Finance Committee, then shared how the budget is formed. It was announced that this motion would be acted upon later within the Assembly.

Portico Report - Ms. Jennifer Prinz, Region 5 Representative for Portico Benefit Services, at the invitation of the bishop, led the assembly in an opportunity to stand and stretch then shared a brief video about Portico. She also noted a couple resources that were available at the Portico display table.

Keynote Address - The Rev. Dr. Craig Nesson of Wartburg Theological Seminary offered the first keynote address on the topic “Shifting Our Thinking as People of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century.” Dr. Nesson took a moment at the beginning of his address to acknowledge, honor, and pay respect to the indigenous people on whose tribal lands we were gathered. He then offered a parable relating the kingdom of God to a church building in which there is a force field at the entrance that repels outsiders from coming in and requiring insiders to compact their discipleship into small compartments in order to get out. He encouraged congregations to dismantle that force field in order to generate movement between sacred spaces and public places. He invited a vision of the mission of the church to equip and send all the baptized into the world to serve Jesus Christ in all their roles and relationships in their daily lives.

Keynote Address - The Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director, Domestic Mission Unit, ELCA made a presentation on the theme “Renewal of the Church of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century.” Using several biblical stories, Dr. Bouman encouraged the members of the assembly to reclaim our call in the world. He said that disciples must ask “Where do I see God in the world?”, must reclaim our baptismal call to follow Jesus, bear witness as wounded healers, be called to new community in which we let go as well as receive, and be called to listen and respond.

Mission Investment Fund - The bishop invited the Rev. Richard Wehrs to make a presentation on behalf of the Mission Investment Fund. Pastor Wehrs showed an MIF video and spoke about sharing funds for ministry.

Greetings from India - The bishop shared greetings from Bishop Raja Socrates of the Arcot Lutheran Church in India.

New Stewardship Resource - The Rev. Kurt Nordby, Assistant to the Bishop, introduced a new stewardship resource he developed called “Growing as Disciples and Stewards.” The resource is available to all the congregations of the synod online, free of charge.

Bishop Clements declared Plenary Session I closed at 12:30 pm. The Rev. Marilyn Hanson, Assistant to the Bishop, was called on to make announcements and the Rev. Bree Truax offered a closing prayer.

Second Plenary Session - Friday, June 15, 2018

Pastor Marilyn Hanson introduced the gathering hymn, “Make Our Church One Joyful Choir,” then called on Pastor Chris Lee, First Lutheran Church, Rock Island, to offer the opening prayer.

Following the prayer, the bishop declared Plenary Session II open for business.

Credentials Committee Report - Pastor Randy Willers presented the updated credentials report. Ministers of Word and Sacrament Voting Members: 139 (33%). Lay voting members: 281 (67%). Total voting members: 420.

Bishop’s Report - Interim Secretary Knowles took over the chair, and Bishop Clements presented his report. The bishop referred to his written report on pages 14-16 of the BOR, especially related to his comments about the need to raise up leaders for the church and the importance of understanding the work of the synod accomplished through congregational mission support. He then spoke on some items that were on his heart. First, he referred to the assembly theme, “Vim, Vigor, Vitality, In Christ a New Creation,” emphasizing the importance of our congregations to be “vital” communities of Jesus that nurture life-changing relationships with God, one another, and the world. The bishop also reported with gladness on a couple of work groups he has convened: one to re-energize youth ministry in the synod and the other focusing on affordable, local continuing education opportunities for rostered ministers. Bishop Clements also shared two justice issues for which he believes the church must continue to advocate: male privilege and white privilege. Regarding racism he raised the memory of Ruthie Fairchild and the work

she did within the synod to raise awareness of the issue and to advocate for racial justice. The bishop encouraged our congregations to mean it when we say that all are welcome. The bishop also acknowledged our global companion relationships and read greetings from Bishop Solomon Massangwa of the North-Central Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Bishop Clements offered thanks for two congregations who have completed their work and closed in the past year: Theodore Street Lutheran Church, Crest Hill and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Nachusa. Finally, the bishop offered thanks for the ministry of ELCA Missionary Carol Stubbs who passed away this year, for the ministry of Mr. Russ Senti as Executive Director of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center who will be retiring in September, and for the support of his wife, Paulette. The bishop's report was received with applause, and the Interim Secretary returned the chair of the assembly to the bishop.

Secretary's Report - The bishop indicated that the secretary's written report could be found on page 19 of the BOR. The report was received with applause.

Certification of the 2017 Synod Assembly Minutes - Pastor Joseph O'Donnell, chair of the 2017 Minutes Review Committee, reported that the committee had reviewed the minutes and found them to be a fair and accurate representation of the proceedings of the 2017 Synod Assembly. Hearing no questions or corrections from the floor, the minutes were voted upon.

ACTION SA-18-06-04 - The minutes of the 2017 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly were adopted as presented.

Synod Council Report - Interim Secretary Knowles presented the report of the Synod Council as found on pages 32-35 of the BOR. The bishop declared the report to be received.

The collection of ballots was called for and took place.

The Rev. Marilyn Hanson was called on to make announcements and the Rev. Jacob Gawlik offered a closing prayer. Dr. Bouman and Dr. Nesson then presented the second part of their keynote addresses. Dr. Bouman met with non-rostered voting members and visitors in Centennial Hall while Dr. Nesson met with rostered ministers and visitors in Wallenberg Hall. Following closing prayers at each location, Plenary Session II was closed.

Gathering on Friday Evening, June 15 at First Lutheran Church, Moline.

Leaders new to the synod - Bishop Clements welcomed leaders who have come to the synod in the past year: The Rev. Jessica Bakken (St. John's, Ashton), the Reverend-Elect Preston Fields (Salem, Sycamore), The Rev. Trudy Foote (retired, interim at Immanuel, Peru and St. Paul's, Tonica), The Rev. Jacob Gawlik (St. John's, Sterling), the Reverend-Elect Seth Hecox (Grace, Wilmington), the Reverend-Elect Debra Kelly (St. John's, Hebron), The Rev. Chris Lee (First, Rock Island), the Reverend-Elect Karyn Kost (St. James, Forrester and Freedom, Oregon), the Reverend-Elect Evan Mayhew (St. John, Joliet), The Rev. Julie Monnard (Calvary, New Windsor). The gathering welcomed them with applause.

Recognition of Synod Council Members and those members completing their terms - Bishop Clements called forth the Synod Council members whose current terms are ending: Mr. George Davis, Ms. Minnette Scott, the Rev. Jeff Fricke, the Rev. Don Knowles, Ms. Sarina Mugino. As they were thanked by the bishop and the assembly, gifts were presented to them.

Recognition of Synod Staff - Bishop Clements offered thanks to those serving on the synod staff: Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Pastor Gary Erickson, Pastor Marilyn Hanson, Pastor Denver Bitner, Pastor Michel Clark, Pastor Kurt Nordby, Deacon Karin Graddy, Ms. June Cain, Ms. Nancy Corey and Ms. Julie Lewis. The bishop gave a special recognition to Deacon Erdmann in honor of her fifth anniversary on the synod staff.

Anniversaries of Rostered Ministers - The bishop recognized those rostered ministers with special anniversaries of service this year. After the names were read, they were honored with applause.

Congregations Celebrating 150th Year Anniversaries - Four congregations of the synod are celebrating 150th anniversaries in 2018: Immanuel, Earlville; First, Monmouth; St. Paul's, Tonica; Bethany, Woodhull. Representatives of the congregations were invited to share some of their congregation's story and a video.

Recognition of Retirements - Rostered leaders who had retired within the last year and were present were invited to come forward. Bishop Clements then thanked the following, those present and those not

present, for their faithfulness: the Rev. Jeffrey Chubb, the Rev. Michel Clark, the Rev. Brant Clements, the Rev. Roger Hurlbut, the Rev. Dennis Hill, the Rev. Michael Lawyer, the Rev. Janet Lepp, Deacon Judy Rooney, the Rev. Randall Swanson.

Fifty Year Ordination Anniversary - The Rev. Marilyn Hanson was called upon to introduce the Rev. Charles Steinke and his wife Betty. Pastor Steinke is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of his ordination this year. He was given the opportunity to share a few words with those gathered. The bishop presented Pastor Steinke with a certificate in recognition of the anniversary.

Prayers of Remembrance - The evening gathering concluded with a service of Prayers of Remembrance, led by Pastor Tammy Anderson. Those pastors of the synod who have died in the past year are the Rev. Robert Burton, the Rev. Robert Pearson, the Rev. Arnold Thoren, the Rev. Peter Holmer, and the Rev. Ronald Ferrell.

Third Plenary Session - Saturday, June 16, 2018

Following the gathering song, "Oh Sing to God Above," and an opening prayer by Deacon Patty Tillman, Bishop Clements declared Plenary Session II open for business.

Credentials Committee Report - Pastor Randy Willers presented the updated credentials report: ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 110; retired ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 34; total ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 144 (34%). ministers of Word and Service voting members: 7; retired ministers of Word and Service voting members: 3; lay voting members: 254; youth/young adult voting members: 21; total lay voting members: 285 (66%). total voting members: 429. registered visitors: 78. The bishop declared a quorum present.

Election Committee Report - Pastor Janet Wold was called upon to share the results of the general election balloting. The following, except as noted for a second ballot, were elected:

- Synod Council: Secretary (4-year term) - Don Knowles
- Synod Council: Laity Female (3-year term) - Minnette Scott
- Synod Council: Laity Male (3-year term) - Jim Spring
- Synod Council: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Brad Haugen
- Synod Council: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Andy Tyrrell
- Synod Council: Youth Representative (1-year term) - Heide Gallagher
- Congregation Life Committee: Laity Female (3-year term) - Kay Johnson
- Congregation Life Committee: Laity Male (3-year term) - Walt Farley
- Global Mission Committee: Laity Male (3-year term) - Art Milton
- Global Mission Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Female (3-year term) - Jane McChesney
- Global Mission Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Daniel Wynard
- Ministry Support Committee: Lay Female (3-year term) - Carol Swenson
- Ministry Support Committee: Laity Male (3-year term) - Bill Nelson and Sam Schlouch on a second ballot
- Ministry Support Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Vince Marolla
- Outreach Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Female (3-year term) - TroyAnn Pouloupoulos
- Outreach Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Brandon Nelson
- Social Ministry Committee: Laity Male (3-year term) - Andy Koresko
- Social Ministry Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - Jacob Gawlik
- Social Ministry Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament Male (3-year term) - David Elliot
- 2019 Churchwide Assembly Voting Member: At Large
 - Laity Female - Tammie Farley
 - Laity Male - Brandon Graves and Mike Wadle on a second ballot
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Female - Laura Kamprath and Pat Esker on a second ballot
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Male - Zachary Baer and Andrew Kayes on a second ballot
 - Person of Color/First Language Other Than English - Miho Yasukawa

- Youth/Young Adult - Cole Bathje
- 2019 Churchwide Assembly nominees for ELCA Church Council
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Male - William Callister
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Male - Frank Langhoff

A second ballot was distributed to be collected prior to Dr. Nesson's keynote later in the morning.

Mr. Brandon Graves (Salem, Sycamore) requested to have his name removed from the second ballot. His request was ruled to be out of order, and his name was to remain on the ballot.

Budget Proposal - Bishop Clements called on Treasurer Tammie Farley to be available for any questions regarding the 2019 budget and he invited discussion on the budget proposal. With no discussion forthcoming, the vote was taken.

ACTION SA-18-06-05 - The 2019 proposed budget for the Northern Illinois Synod was adopted.

Salary Guidelines - Interim Secretary Knowles was called upon to present the 2019 Salary Guidelines, which were printed on pages 136-152 of the BOR. Interim Secretary Knowles moved, on behalf of the Synod Council that the 2019 Salary Guidelines for rostered ministers of the Northern Illinois Synod, as recommended by the Ministry Support Committee and approved by the Synod Council, be adopted.

ACTION SA-18-06-06 - The 2019 Salary Guidelines were adopted.

Resolutions Committee Report - Since the assembly was ahead of time in the agenda, Mr. Mike Reibel, chair of the Resolutions Committee, was called forward by Bishop Clements. Mr. Reibel presented R-1, "Season of Creation." He read the resolves of R-1 and reported that the Resolutions Committee recommended its adoption.

R-1 Season of Creation

WHEREAS, Genesis states that all creation is "good;" and

WHEREAS, as Christians we begin our confession with praise for God as the creator of all things; and

WHEREAS, Luther teaches us in the explanation to the first article of the creed that we ought to thank and praise, serve and obey this creator God; and

WHEREAS, worship is our primary forum for giving thanks and praise to God; and

WHEREAS, prominent Lutheran theologians have provided a liturgical and homiletical framework to offer thanks and praise to God for the goodness of creation (see resource examples below):

- Habel, Rhoads and Santmire, eds. *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.
- <http://www.letallcreationpraise.org/season-of-creation>
- <https://seasonofcreation.com>
- <http://www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org>
- <http://www.bibleandecology.org>
- <http://www.webofcreation.org>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod encourage each of its member congregations to observe a "Season of Creation" as a regular part of the liturgical year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod provide resources and learning opportunities to facilitate congregations in conducting a "Season of Creation."

Pastor Scott Ralston (Faith, Forreston) began to speak in support of the resolution then yielded his time to Pastor Jeff Schlesinger.

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger ("Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish" - Immanuel, Compton & First, Lee) spoke in favor of the resolution as an encouragement for congregations to be attentive to our part in creation in our worship.

ACTION SA-18-06-07 - R-1 ("Season of Creation") was adopted as presented.

Mr. Reibel then read the resolves of R-2 "Stewardship of Creation". He indicated that the Resolutions Committee recommended its adoption.

R-2 - Stewardship of Creation

WHEREAS, the 1993 ELCA Social Statement Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice affirms that “we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth;” and recognizes that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children;” and declares that “each congregation should see itself as a center for exploring scriptural and theological foundations for caring for creation;” and that “as congregations and other expressions of this church, we will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life;” and

WHEREAS, we are united as Christian leaders in our concern for the well-being of our neighbors and of God’s good creation that provides life and livelihood for all God’s creatures. Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. Glaciers are disappearing, the polar ice cap is melting, increasing temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires, and sea levels are rising. Incidents of pollution created dead zones in seas and the ocean and toxic algae growth in water supplies are occurring with greater frequency. Most disturbingly, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is rising at an unprecedented rate. At the same time we also witness in too many instances how the earth’s natural beauty, a sign of God’s wonderful creativity, has been defiled by pollutants and waste; (adapted from A Pastoral Message on Climate Change, September 19, 2014); and

WHEREAS, the Statement of Vision and Expectations for Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stipulates that “the people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. This includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources and its inhabitants. This church expects that its ordained ministers will be exemplary stewards of the earth’s resources, and that they will lead this church in the stewardship of God’s creation;”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod, its congregations, committees, and boards are encouraged to: become stronger advocates for the creation that God has made; utilize available tools and partnerships to establish greening programs for their respective bodies; begin dialogue within and outside their respective walls about actively increasing awareness of the present planetary concerns; reconnect the faithful people of the synod and our communities to the rich diversity of life on earth; guide restoration as it is within their means to do so; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the aforementioned parties be encouraged to host a community environment-centered event (such as community tree planting, community garden development, recycling events) at least once a year, to be God’s hands and feet and make a difference in restoring this beautiful creation.

Pastor Scott Ralston (Faith, Forreston) spoke in support of the resolution as a member of the synod Subcommittee on Climate Change. He said the resolution encourages congregations to take a more active role in caring for creation, especially by taking action in the community outside the congregation’s walls.

Mr. Paul Lockwood (Grace, Woodstock) asked if this resolution should be memorialized to the Churchwide assembly.

Mr. Steve Florschuetz (St. John’s, Mendota) expressed mixed feelings about the environmental issues raised in the resolution. He was concerned about the views of more radical environmentalist and wanted to be sure that our actions are based on fact.

Mr. Kenneth George (Peace, New Lenox) raised a question of authority. He wanted to be sure the resolution is based on hard science not opinion.

Pastor Ron Larson (St. John’s, Creston) spoke against the resolution. He argued that we are theologians and not scientists and that the resolution should be more faith based.

Ms. K-Rae Knowles (Freedom, Oregon) spoke in favor of the resolution as a grass-roots movement, encouraging congregations to do something where they are with what they have.

Ms. Julia Vogt (St. Barnabas, Cary) spoke in favor of the resolution in its encouragement to raise awareness of environmental issues.

Mr. Nathan Knowles (Freedom, Oregon) noted that fulfilling this resolution could involve youth and help younger generations, which was a concern raised in the Friday afternoon session with Dr. Bouman.

Mr. Quinten Crook (Bethlehem, DeKalb) encouraged the members of the assembly to consider all the environmental data available.

Mr. Nick Haws (Faith, Rochelle) commented that whether we believe in climate change or not, to do the things recommended in the resolution would help to make this a better world.

Pastor Janet Wold (All Saints, Byron) called for the question. The assembly voted to end debate.

ACTION SA-18-06-08 - R-2 (“Stewardship of Creation”) was adopted as presented.

Mr. Reibel then read the resolves of R-3 “Budgeting for World Hunger”. He indicated that the Resolutions Committee recommended its adoption.

R-3 - Budgeting for World Hunger

WHEREAS, reaching out to the world through addressing hunger is central to our mission as Christians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), its members and congregations, do that most effectively together through ELCA World Hunger; and

WHEREAS, ELCA World Hunger will be able to most effectively plan its mission and respond in crisis when it has a consistent and predictable stream of contributions; and

WHEREAS, our own faith and commitment to mission is strengthened through regular giving;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod encourage each member congregation to make ELCA World Hunger a regular line item in their budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations submit this budgetary item on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger (“Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish,” Immanuel, Compton & First, Lee) spoke in favor of the resolution. He said that the goal is for every congregation in the synod to give to the World Hunger Appeal and encourages regular giving by including the Appeal as a line item in congregational budgets.

Ms. Michelle Knight (St. Paul, Warren) spoke against the resolution stating that it might create additional financial strain on some congregations and cause a stigma of shame if a congregation cannot do it.

Mr. Paul Lockwood (Grace, Woodstock) moved to amend the resolution by deleting the second resolve, “that congregations submit this budgetary item on a monthly or quarterly basis.” The motion to amend received a second. Mr. Lockwood, in speaking to the amendment, said that removing the second resolve would remove the “accountability” from the resolution.

Pastor Jacob Gawlik (St. John’s, Sterling) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Pastor Robin Caldwell (St. John, Joliet) moved an amendment to the amendment, adding to the first resolve the phrase “regular line item in their budget or host a fundraising event...” The motion to amend the amendment received a second.

Pastor Vince Marolla (First, Monmouth) asked a question about the amendment, which was ruled to be out of order.

Pastor Joseph O’Donnell (St. Paul, Dixon) spoke against the amendment to the amendment because it was inconsistent with the original resolution which called for an ongoing effort to support the World Hunger Appeal.

Pastor Robin Caldwell (St. John, Joliet) believed the amendment to the amendment to be consistent and noted that St. John, Joliet holds an event every year.

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger (Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish, Compton & Lee) said that the intent of the second resolve was not to replace fundraisers, and that it was not a requirement but an encouragement.

Pastor Elizabeth Martin (Trinity, Harvard) spoke in favor of the amendment to the amendment because fundraisers can be held regularly.

With no further discussion, a voice vote was taken, and the bishop declared the amendment to the amendment failed. Division was called for. The results of the second vote were 162 in favor and 164 opposed. The amendment to the amendment failed.

The bishop then called for the vote on the original amendment to delete the second resolve. The motion to amend carried.

Mr. Kenneth George (Peace, New Lenox) asked a question about current accounting practices related to the World Hunger Appeal. The bishop responded that donations are not reported in any delineated form.

Pastor Scott Ralston (Faith, Forreton) called the question and received a second. The motion passed.

The bishop called for the vote on R-3 as amended and declared the motion passed. Division was asked for. 235 voting members voted for the resolution as amended, 81 were opposed. The resolution as amended was adopted.

ACTION SA-18-06-09 - R-3 “Budgeting for World Hunger” was adopted as amended.

The second ballot was collected at 9:38 am.

Keynote Address - Dr. Nesson continued his presentation citing Philippians 2 and suggesting that worship is “life practice” forming us to be the mind of Christ for the world, enabling us to fulfill our vocation as baptized children of God and witnesses of the gospel. He encouraged the use of “Affirmation of Christian Vocation” on page 84 of the ELW.

The bishop offered thanks to Dr. Nesson for his presentations.

Election Committee Report - Pastor Janet Wold was called upon to share the results of the second general election ballot. The following were elected:

- Ministry Support Committee: Laity Male (3-year term) - Bill Nelson
- 2019 Churchwide Assembly Voting member - At Large
 - Laity Male - Mike Wadle
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Female - Laura Kamprath
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament Male - Zachary Baer

The bishop offered thanks to everyone who put their name forward as a nominee.

Churchwide Representative - Dr. Bouman brought greetings to the assembly on behalf of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and showed her video. He offered a word of thanks to Bishop Clements, Pr. Gary Erickson, the staff and the synod for our partnership in ministry.

Keynote Address - Dr. Bouman continued his keynote address by calling attention to three stories of biblical roads. The Emmaus Road calls us to communities of faith (congregations), the Jericho Road calls us to public ministry for justice and social change, and the Damascus Road encouraging us to see living encounters with the risen Christ for faith formation and leadership.

The bishop offered thanks to Dr. Bouman for his presentations.

Resolutions Committee - Mr. Mike Reibel presented R-4 Bread for the World, noting that the Resolutions Committee recommended adoption.

R-4 BREAD FOR THE WORLD

WHEREAS, God calls us both individually and corporately in Holy Baptism: “*to strive for peace and justice in all the earth.*” (“Affirmation by Assembly”, p. 237 ELW); and

WHEREAS, individuals and local congregations need to be made aware of opportunities to fulfill this promise; and

WHEREAS, Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, we provide help and opportunity far beyond the communities where we live (www.bread.org); and

WHEREAS, our Synod has a generous record of ELCA World Hunger Program offerings that continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, members of our congregations and Synod Assembly can be faithful to their Baptismal promises by being effective advocates for the relief of hunger;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly, congregations and congregants be encouraged to: support local anti-hunger efforts and ELCA's World Hunger Program; and integrate hunger concerns in prayer, worship, stewardship and educational activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Subcommittee be encouraged to: educate congregations on the work of Bread for the World and how it acts in tandem with work done by ELCA World Hunger; and invite participation in Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters at each Synod Assembly; and provide congregations with resources regarding Bread for the World, encouraging them to become Covenant Congregations.

Pastor Ken Storck (Gloria Dei, Rockford) spoke in favor of the resolution noting that in the affirmation of baptism liturgy we are called to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. This resolution gives us opportunities to fulfill that commitment. He explained Bread for the World is an ecumenical organization that advocates for justice in the world.

Pastor Rick Meier (Faith, South Beloit) said that each year the World Hunger Subcommittee lifts up different aspects of hunger issues. This year the subcommittee is deliberately raising up the work of a sister agency with an emphasis on advocacy.

Pastor TroyAnn Pouloupoulos (Emmanuel, Rockford) asked why this was not included in R-3.

Pastor Rick Meier (Faith, South Beloit) said that the subcommittee believes this resolution is complementary to R-3 but not identical.

Mr. Larry Cording (Shepherd of the Hills, Scales Mound) indicated he did not feel that he knows enough about Bread for the World to support them.

Deacon Myrna Andersen (First, Galesburg) said that she is a member of Bread for the World and that they provide tools for advocacy.

Deacon Carla Vanatta (Salem, Sycamore) moved to refer the resolution to the Synod Council. The motion was seconded.

Pastor Ken Storck (Gloria Dei, Rockford) spoke against the motion to refer, stating the he believes this assembly ought to be brave enough to do something.

Deacon Carla Vanatta (Salem, Sycamore) said that she was in favor of referring because she did not believe that there was enough time to adequately consider the resolution.

Pastor Roger Asplund (Retired) spoke against the motion to refer. He said that Bread for the World is a reliable organization dealing with hunger and justice issues that has existed since 1972. He said it is time to take action.

Pastor Rick Meier (Faith, South Beloit) asked the assembly to please not refer.

Pastor Jacob Gawlik (St. John's, Sterling) said he was against referral.

With no further discussion, the bishop called for a vote. The motion to refer was defeated.

The bishop then called for a vote on the resolution. R-4 was adopted as presented.

ACTION SA-18-06-10 - R-4 "Bread for the World" was adopted as presented.

Courtesy Committee Report - Ms. Carol Swenson was called on to give the Courtesy Committee Report.

"As we have met together with Vim, Vigor and Vitality, we are reminded that we are indeed free to proclaim that in Christ we are a new Creation. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 states 'So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!'

The Spirit has gathered us as God's people, to this 31st annual Synod Assembly. And as God's people, it is right to give God thanks and praise:

For Augustana College, and their ministry of hospitality. For the food and the hands that made it, for clean restrooms and smiling faces. For First Lutheran of Geneseo for being our host congregation and for First Lutheran in Moline for hosting our special Friday night event, we give thanks.

For Bishop Clements, the synod staff, synod council and committees, for congregations, for new ministries (e.g. Youth summits), continuing ministries, and for all who do the work of this synod day-in-and-day-out. For the people, seen and unseen, who have made this Assembly possible. For you, dear assembly attendees, we give thanks.

For our Church, local, the Northern Illinois Synod, for Bishop Eaton and her reminder that we are *'free of the burden of making ourselves acceptable to God and free for loving and serving others'*. For Rev. Dr. Bouman's reminder that we can recognize God in the world through our everyday lives and that we all can be wounded healers to others, for Rev. Dr. Nesson's message of moving the church's sacred spaces into public places and the universal priesthood of all believers, and for Bishop's Clements' reminder that vital congregations nurture life-changing relationships, we give thanks.

For information and inspiration gleaned at displays, presentations, worship events and dinner conversations, for forum leaders and participants who will return home revitalized for ministry, we give thanks.

For deacons and pastors; for those celebrating milestone anniversaries, especially Rev. Chuck Steinke's 50th anniversary, and for the newly ordained: Seth Hecox, Deb Kelly, and Karyn Kost, we give thanks.

For time together as friends, new or old; together at the table in food and fellowship; together in worship offering prayer and praise; together in celebration and in remembrance, we give thanks.

For the safe arrival of this assembly, by car or by bike or on foot, and for safe travels home again, we give thanks

For youth and youth leaders, for LYO and those traveling to the National youth gathering in Houston, TX we give thanks.

For conversation, consideration and prayerful voting on resolutions and for all those willing to stand for positions of leadership in the Synod, we give thanks.

Finally, that we may experience vim, vigor and vitality in our lives together as the Church, as new creations in Christ, people of God called to go forth into the world to serve, for this, we give thanks and appreciation."

The report was received with applause.

At 11:35 am, following the Courtesy Committee Report, Bishop Clements declared Plenary Session III to be closed. He then called on Pr. Hanson for announcements.

The bishop asked for a motion to adjourn, then led the assembly in the Order for the Closing of the Assembly.

The assembly concluded on Saturday afternoon with a Service of Holy Communion with Rite of Ordination.

ACTION SA-18-06-01 - Rules of the Assembly

ACTION SA-18-06-02 - Assembly Agenda

ACTION SA-18-06-03 - Churchwide Voting
Members elected by the conferences.

ACTION SA-18-06-04 - 2017 Assembly Minutes

ACTION SA-18-06-05 - 2019 Budget

ACTION SA-18-06-06 - 2019 Salary Guidelines

Action SA-18-06-07 - R-1 adopted

ACTION SA-18-06-08 - R-2 adopted

ACTION SA-18-06-09 - R-3 adopted as amended

ACTION SA-18-06-10 - R-4 adopted

Report of the Synod Council

May 1, 2018 - April 30, 2019

Synod Officers:

The Rev. Jeffrey Clements, Bishop (2022)
 The Rev. Donald Knowles, Secretary (2022)

Mr. Bill Bartlett, Vice President (2021)
 Ms. Tammie Farley, Treasurer (2019)

Synod Council:

The Rev. Robert Franek (2019)
 Ms. Heide Gallagher (2019)
 The Rev. Brad Haugen (2021)
 Mr. Ryan Mackey (2020)
 Mr. Craig Peterson (2019)
 Ms. Minnette Scott (2021)

The Rev. Gwen Sefrhans-Murphy (2020)
 Mr. Jim Spring (2021)
 Ms. Carol Swenson (2020)
 The Rev. Andy Tyrrell (2021)
 Deacon Carla Vanatta (2019)
 The Rev. Janet Wold (2019)

Synod Staff:

The Rev. Denver Bitner, Assistant to the Bishop for North and Northwest Conferences
 Ms. June Cain, Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant
 The Rev. Michel Clark, Assistant to the Bishop for the West and Southwest Conferences
 Ms. Nancy Corey, Administrative Assistant to Pastors Erickson and Nordby/Registrar
 Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Assistant to the Bishop
 The Rev. Gary Erickson, Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission
 The Rev. Pat Esker, Assistant to the Bishop, beginning 3/1/19
 Deacon Karin Graddy, Assistant to the Bishop for Communication
 The Rev. Marilyn Hanson, Assistant to the Bishop
 Ms. Julie Lewis, Executive Secretary to the Bishop/Office Manager
 The Rev. Kurt Nordby, Assistant to the Bishop for Stewardship and Development, through 1/31/19

Executive Committee:

Mr. Bill Bartlett
 The Rev. Jeffrey Clements, Bishop
 Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Ex-Officio
 The Rev. Pat Esker, Ex-Officio

Ms. Tammie Farley
 The Rev. Donald Knowles
 Ms. Minnette Scott
 Deacon Carla Vanatta

Finance Committee:

Mr. Bill Bartlett
 Ms. June Cain, Ex-Officio
 The Rev. Jeffrey Clements, Bishop
 Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Ex-Officio through 2/28/19
 The Rev. Gary Erickson, Ex-Officio
 The Rev. Pat Esker, Ex-Officio, beginning 3/1/19
 Ms. Tammie Farley

The Rev. Kurt Nordby, Ex-Officio, through 1/31/19
 The Rev. Nord Swanstrom (2020)
 Ms. Carol Swenson (2020)
 The Rev. Andy Tyrrell (2021)
 The Rev. William Weidenbach (2019)
 The Rev. Janet Wold (2019)
 Mr. Russell Zeskey (2021)

Appointment/Specialized Ministry Committee:

Mr. Bill Bartlett
 The Rev. Jeffrey Clements, Bishop
 Deacon Cheryl Erdmann, Ex-Officio

The Rev. Donald Knowles
 Ms. Minnette Scott
 Deacon Carla Vanatta

Synod Council Meeting Dates and Locations:

May 19, 2018	Synod Office, Rockford
September 15, 2018	Synod Office, Rockford
January 12, 2019	Synod Office, Rockford
April 13, 2019	Synod Office, Rockford

A Summary of Administrative Actions

1. Received the bishop's report at each meeting - including reports from the bishop's staff.
2. Received and approved Synod Council minutes at each meeting.
3. Approved changes to the constitutions and/or bylaws of the following congregations:
 - a) Cross and Crown, Roscoe
 - b) Our Savior's, Seneca
 - c) Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley
 - d) St. John's, Somonauk
 - e) St. John's, Sterling
 - f) Trinity, Derinda
 - g) Trinity, Mt. Morris
 - h) United, Gardner
4. Approved appointments to NIS Standing Committees, Synod Council, Synod Council Committees, Task Forces, and Synod Assembly Committees.
5. Received and accepted the 2018 Synod Assembly minutes.
6. Received reports from the NIS WELCA president.
7. Approved the designation to the Outreach Mission Fund a gift to the synod of \$26,740 from Grace, Woodstock.
8. Approved the Gold+ benefits plan for the staff for 2019 and housing allowances for staff (Ministers of Word and Sacrament only).
9. Approved a request for the Northern Illinois Synod to serve as the fiscal agent for the "ELCA Deacons for Ecumenical Engagement Affinity Group."
10. Approved a Synod Vitality Grant for the Northwest and Northeast Conferences.
11. Approved the Northern Illinois Synod Mission and Vision Statement.
12. Received a report from the Bishop's Task Force on Synodically Authorized Ministers.
13. Approved sending \$10,000 in reserve funds to the Florida-Bahamas Synod and Lutheran Disaster Response for hurricane and wildfire relief in Florida and California.
14. Received updates on the Tanzania Nursing School project.
15. Approved the 2020 Proposed Salary Guidelines.
16. Approved the proposed rules, agenda and ballot for the 2019 NI Synod Assembly.
17. Adopted Personnel Policy revisions.
18. Approved the Resolution for the 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women.
19. Approved a new lease agreement for the Synod Office and the formation of a task force to explore future office space needs.

A Summary of Budget and Finance Actions

1. Regularly received and reviewed the reports of the treasurer, subject to audit.
2. Received the audit report.
3. Approved the 2019 audit contract.
4. Authorized the Treasurer to reinvest funds in the Mission Investment Fund.
5. Approved a distribution from the NIS endowment fund to the Gary Wollersheim Rostered Ministers Education Debt Retirement Fund and to the Rostered Ministers Continuing Education/Sabbatical Leave Fund.

6. Designated the 2019 Synod Assembly offering to the Campaign for the ELCA.
7. Approved the 2020 budget proposal and forward it to the 2019 Synod Assembly.

A Summary of Personnel Actions

1. 1. Approved, renewed or reviewed “On Leave from Call” status to the following:
 - a) The Rev. Robert Franek - (10/1/2018-9/30/2021)
 - b) The Rev. Vince Marolla - (09/1/2018-08/31/2021)
 - c) The Rev. William Weidenbach - (09/1/2018-8/31/2021)
 - d) The Rev. Wendy Popp - (09/1/2018-08/31/2021)
 - e) The Rev. Kimberly Riebe - (08/14/2017-08/13/2020)
 - f) The Rev. Susan Davenport - family leave - (09/1/2017-08/31/2023)
 - g) The Rev. Jana Howson - (11/1/2017-10/31/2020)
 - h) The Rev. Katie Gallagher - (11/6/2017-11/5/2020)
 - i) The Rev. Howard Buchholz (10/08/2018-10/07/2021)
 - j) The Rev. Jenna Couch - Family Leave (11/01/2018-10/31/2024)
 - k) The Rev. Jamie Wallace - Study Leave (1/1/2014-12/31/2020)
 - l) The Rev. Christine Schoon (01/01/2019-12/31/2021)
 - m) The Rev. Kit Neel - Change of status from Disability to On Leave from Call (4/13/2019-4/12/2022)
2. Received a report of rostered ministers not attending the 2018 Synod Assembly.
3. Reviewed the NIS Roster
4. Extended term calls to Deacon Karin Graddy, the Rev. Marilyn Hanson, and the Rev. Pat Esker.
5. Approved retirement requests of rostered ministers
 - a) The Rev. Mike Clark, (12/07/2017)
 - b) The Rev. Jeff Linman, (09/01/2018)
 - c) The Rev. Timothy Kenyon, (10/01/2018)
 - d) The Rev. Larry Conway (11/01/2018)
 - e) Deacon Patty Tillman (12/15/2018)
 - f) The Rev. Kurt Nordby (01/31/2019)
 - g) The Rev. Mark Oehlert (02/03/2019)
6. Appointed/elected/called the following:
 - a) The Rev. Karen Norman Rees, Chaplain at Hill Correctional Center, Galesburg, 3-year term call (04/13/2019-04/12/2022)
 - b) Deacon Cheryl Erdmann appointed to the Grace Place Campus Ministry at NIU Board and to the Lutheran Campus Ministry of Illinois Board (10/01/2018 - 02/01/2022)

Respectfully Submitted,
The Rev. Donald L. Knowles, Secretary of the Synod