

**Appendix E – Synod Policies**  
**West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod of the**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

- 1) That the permanent synod headquarters be located near an interchange of I-79 and that the headquarters be located along that corridor between Routes 68 and 50; that, until a permanent site is selected, the synod council be authorized to rent temporary quarters.
- 2) That there be a synodical publication; that the synod participate in promoting the Every-Home Plan of the Lutheran, with the subscriptions being paid by the congregations to the church publishing house; that the synod accept the offer of The Lutheran to provide four free supplement issues annually.
- 3) That the synod shall maintain membership in the West Virginia Council of Churches and continue support of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia.
- 4) That the synod recognize the ministries of Lutheran Affiliated Services, Glade Run Lutheran Services (formerly Lutheran Youth and Family Services), and Lutheran Service Society of Western Pennsylvania; that the synod participate in the funding of these agencies; and that the synod elect members to the boards of these agencies.
- 5) That the synod affirm the ministry of Thiel College as part of the synod's mission in higher education; that the synod share in the funding of the college; that the synod elect a member of the college board of trustees.
- 6) That the synod affirm the ministry of theological education being carried out by the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; that the synod share in the funding of that seminary; that the synod elect a member to that seminary's board; that the synod recognize the linkage between that seminary and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.
- 7) That the synod affirm the ministry being carried out by the program known as Camp Luther, and that the synod continue that program; that the synod affirm the ministry being carried out by Caroline Furnace and that the synod participate in that ministry through funding and through electing members to that board.
- 8) That the synod affirm the ministries of the campus ministry foundations at West Virginia University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh; that the synod participate in an Inter-Synodical Committee for Campus Ministry along with the Southwestern and Northwestern Pennsylvania Synods.
- 9) That this synod shall have a mission statement.
- 10) That \$.20 (twenty cents) be the mileage reimbursement allowance for those traveling on behalf of the synod. (Synod Council changed mileage to twenty cents per mile at their meeting of November 16-17, 2007, to become effective December 1, 2007.)
- 11) That \$20,000 is available for loan to the Bishop for purchasing a home. This is to be a secured note, to be repaid by the end of the Bishop's term, with no interest.
- 12) That this synod develop a cadre of Synodical Lay Assistants to provide the synod with a supply of qualified, trained, non-ordained persons to give worship leadership to congregations without a full-time pastor and to other congregations with immediate special needs (vacations, illness, etc.).
- 13) That synod Mission Support goals be presented to congregations by the end of August; and that the Budget and Finance Committee be empowered to formulate the goals with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- 14) That Synod Council set the annual assembly fees.
- 15) That the synod (SA '93) encourages congregations of this synod to recognize the first communion practices of other ELCA congregations by welcoming to Holy Communion all communing members of the ELCA.
- 16) That this synod enter into a cooperative arrangement with the ELCA Foundation and neighboring synods and church agencies to have a planned giving officer from the foundation work on behalf of the synods and agencies.
- 17) That this synod ( SA '94) express its desire that the Synod Assembly worship – including but not limited to hymns, prayers, liturgies, etc. – should reflect the breadth and depth and fullness of the Biblical witness of God through the use of a variety of images, metaphors and titles in addressing and speaking of God.

- 18) In response to recurring requests to shorten Synod Assemblies and to avoid Sundays, the 1995 Synod Assembly voted to establish beginning in 1996 two-day assemblies, beginning on Fridays and concluding no later than 5:00 P.M. on Saturdays.
- 19) That the previous resolution concerning global missions be superseded with a resolution from the 1995 Synod Assembly to designate Reformation Sunday (1995) as Missionary Support Sunday with a special offering to be received on that day to support a missionary or missionaries of our companion synod. (In 1996 the date was August 18; in 1997 the date was the Baptism of our Lord.)
- 20) That \$300 shall be saved monthly for the purchase of a future synod car.
- 21) That every three years the synod car is traded for a new vehicle.
- 22) That Appalachian Sunday is celebrated on the second Sunday in October on an annual basis.
- 23) That the cutoff time for receiving new resolutions at the Synod Assembly be 5:00 P.M. on Friday afternoon in order to allow time for distribution on Saturday morning and for debate and discussion on Saturday afternoon.
- 24) That supply preaching fees be reviewed and set by Synod Council. (The last review was in April, 2001).
- 25) That the Nominating Committee, when seeking voting members from this synod to the Churchwide Assembly, make every effort to nominate candidates consisting of those members of the synod who have not previously served as voting members to an ELCA Churchwide Assembly before nominating members of the synod who have previously served as voting members to the Churchwide Assembly.
- 26) That the full-time employees of this synod be given the salary increases as recommended by the guidelines of the Committee for Pastoral Support and be approved by Synod Council.
- 27) That Synod Council approves the director of Camp Luther.
- 28) That the full-time employees of this synod receive an annual Christmas bonus.
- 29) That the pastoral letter distributed in October 1994 titled "Health and Wellness in Our Time," and coming from the Bishops of West Virginia become a policy of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod.
- 30) Vacation time for the synod full-time office administrator shall be as follows: 1-10 years of employment – 2 weeks vacation; 10-15 years employment – 3 weeks vacation; 15 years plus employment – 4 weeks vacation. The Bishop has five weeks of annual vacation to use or lose.
- 31) That the synod pays for Synod Assembly expenses of former bishops and their spouses.
- 32) That Synod Council, when planning for annual congregational Mission Support goals, set goals that will exceed the budget by 1%.
- 33) That the Lutheran World Relief Coffee Project and Equal Exchange be designated the official coffee supplier for the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod office and its congregations are encouraged to follow the lead of the synod office.
- 34) For full-time synod employees, 1 (one) working day for each month worked from date of employment is granted for sick leave. Days may be accumulated for a maximum of 40 working days. Sick leave may be extended in unusual circumstances in consultation with the bishop and synod council. Termination or ending of employment for any reason means accrued time ends. Sick leave is not redeemable. (Sick leave policy revised by Synod Council, April 16, 2011).
- 35) That there be only one signature be required to sign checks, but that two persons be authorized to sign. The two officers authorized to sign checks are the Treasurer or the Bishop.
- 36) That the synod office administrator be entitled to two weeks for continuing education and that \$600 be made available through the 2000 budget.
- 37) That the Bishop of this synod, in working with first call congregations, will not approve a full-time call for less than the approved Synod Minimum Salary Package. In special circumstances the Bishop of this synod will seek Synod Council's advice and approval for any variation of this policy. (approved 7/17/99)
- 38) That in the event of an agreed upon resignation of a Pastor, AIM, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister, due to misconduct or lack of confidence, the congregation being served will be responsible for a severance package of

no less than three months. This severance package will include the following benefits: salary, housing allowance or use of the parsonage, utility allowance or utilities paid in full, social security allowance, pension, and the health benefit. There will be no payments to the resigned Rostered leader for Automobile Allowance, for Continuing Education, or for books or periodicals. (approved 7/17/99)

- 39) That this synod is committed to preventing sexual misconduct within the Church and to responding with justice and compassion when such misconduct occurs. This Synod Council has voted to make ELCA policy the policy of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod regarding sexual misconduct by members of the clergy and Rostered laypersons. (approved 7/17/99)
- 40) That this Synod has a policy on Sabbaticals for all Rostered Leaders. The exact policy is on file in the Synod office and available upon request. (Adopted 6/02/00 and amended 6/08/01)
- 41) That this Synod has a policy for Sabbatical Leave for Synod Staff. (adopted 6/02/00)
- 42) That this council adopt as an additional goal the gift of \$1,000 annually to each of its full-time enrolled seminarians from the Warwood Scholarship Fund; that the fund be maintained in the minimum amount of \$100,000 but otherwise be managed to create such gifts through earned income and sale of assets; and that the Bishop of this Synod be authorized to purchase and dispose of fund assets and distribute the fund's earned income and proceeds from disposition of assets in accordance with the foregoing in continuing consultation with the Synod Executive Committee.
- 43) That for the purposes of promoting cooperation and fellowship and to encourage and strengthen each other, the Potomac Conference shall be structured as follows:
  - a) There shall be two clusters; with each cluster having a dean (appointed by the bishop), a lay moderator, and a recorder – the lay moderator and recorder being elected by the cluster.
  - b) There shall be an Executive Committee to plan and manage the work of the conference. The Executive Committee will include the two deans, two lay moderators; two recorders of the clusters and the conference treasurer – the conference treasurer being appointed by the Executive Committee.
  - c) The Executive Committee will meet at least once a year.
  - d) The clusters will meet to accomplish these purposes and annually report to the Synod Council.
  - e) In meetings of clusters and the conference as a whole: each pastor assigned to the conference shall have one vote; each congregation assigned to the conference shall have one vote. (approved and made Synod Policy on 4/21/2001)
- 44) That this Synod has created a policy for Rostered Leaders' Debt Reduction. (Adopted 7/28/01). That the Synod made this an annual appeal. (Adopted 6/6/2003)
- 45) That the Sexual Misconduct Brochure, which coincides with ELCA policy and policy #42, is synod policy. (Adopted 5/04/02)
- 46) That this Synod has created a Family Leave Policy for all Rostered Leaders. (Adopted 6/07/02)
- 47) That this Synod has a policy on accounting procedures. (Adopted 8/10/02)
- 48) That the Synod has the following policy for vacations for part-time synod office staff:
  - a) Following the two-year anniversary part-time office staff to receive one week of paid vacation equal to normal hourly work week;
  - b) Following the five-year anniversary part-time office staff to receive two weeks of paid vacation equal to normal hourly work week;
  - c) Following the ten-year anniversary part-time office staff to receive three weeks of paid vacation equal to normal hourly work week;
  - d) Following the fifteen-year anniversary part-time office staff to receive four weeks of paid vacation equal to normal hourly work week.

(Adopted 8/3/2003 – Updated 2011.04.16)