

Eighteenth Convention EASTERN SYNOD of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Canada

Eastern Synod Assembly 2021 June 25 – 26, 2021 An Online Assembly via the
Whova and Zoom Platforms

Minutes

Session One – Friday, June 25, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

Welcome and Delegate Orientation

Bishop Michael Pryse welcomed delegates to the Whova/Zoom online format. Rev. Adam Snook led delegates in an orientation to the platform being used for the Assembly, outlining Chat and Poll use and courtesy points to help everyone to participate.

Opening of Assembly

Assembly 2021 began with Opening Worship with Bishop Michael Pryse presiding, and acknowledging the land on which the synod office is located as part of the Haldimand Tract, the ancestral traditional territories of the Neutral, Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe peoples. Worship consisted of pre-recorded readings, Bishop's message, prayers and song (as coordinated by Rev. Hilla Lahtinen, worship coordinator for the Assembly).

At the conclusion of the service, Bishop Pryse declared Assembly 2021 in session, and he called the Eastern Synod Assembly to order.

1 Registration Report

Bishop Pryse presented the registration report of Assembly delegates:

Total registered rostered delegates Registered youth delegates Registered lay officers and lay
Synod Council Registered lay delegates (congregational) Total registered lay delegates

TOTAL REGISTERED DELEGATES Required quorum is 1/3 of registered convention delegates (see
Bylaws Part V Section 5)

133 6 7 112 125

258 86

Establishment of Quorum

The Secretary of Synod, Rev. Wendell Caron Grahlman, declared that a quorum was present.

Introduction of Special Guests

Bishop Pryse introduced the following persons attending as guests at Assembly:

- Rev. Dr. Susan C. Johnson, National Bishop, ELCIC
- The Rev. Dr. Karin Achtelstetter, Executive Director, CLWR
- The Rev. Carla Blakley, Community Relations Director, CLWR
- The Rev. Sani Ibrahim Azar, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land
- Rev. Conrad Plummer, President, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana
- Ms. Lisa Thiessen, Executive Director, ELCIC Group Services, Inc.
- Ms. Trina Gallop, Assistant to the Bishop, ELCIC
- Rev. Dr. Kristine Lund, Martin Luther University College
- Dr. Mary (Joy) Philip, Martin Luther University College
- Dr. Debbie Lou Ludolph, Martin Luther University College
- Heather Main, Martin Luther University College
- Nancy Hilborn, Youth Guest
- Jonathan Hopkins, Youth Guest

Requests to Grant Privilege of Vote and/or Voice

MSC to grant privilege of voice to the Assembly's special guests.

Notice of Consent Agenda Items

- Report of Synod Council – Items not requiring action
- Report of the Statistician
- Necrology Report

- Report of the Archivist
- Report of the Auditor
- Reports of the Standing Committees
- 2 • Adoption of Minutes of 2018 Assembly
- Appointment of Assembly Committees
- Reports of the Ministry Area Deans

Adoption of Agenda

MSC that the Agenda be adopted.

Report of the Bishop

Vice-Chairperson Laurie Knott assumed the chair for Bishop Pryse to present his report.

Bishop Pryse addressed the Assembly (cf BR Section 4-1ff). The bishop also spoke about the synod's Strategic Plan, and of results from a recent survey sent to constituents of the synod regarding pandemic learnings and how practices of congregations and of the synod may change and continue.

Report of Synod Council

The Secretary of Synod directed delegates to the Bulletin of Reports for:

- Notice of Items Requiring Action, BR Section 6-3
- Notice of Proposed Amendments to the Eastern Synod Constitution and Bylaws, BR Section 6-4 and 6-5

Special Order: Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer of Synod, Keith Myra, presented his report (cf. Section 8-1 ff) with a slide presentation outlining the financial stewardship of the Synod, as related to the Strategic Plan and the number of ministries in place throughout the synod. He concluded with a preview of the budget for the next few years.

- 2018 – 2020 Financial Review
- 2021 – 2024 Budget Overview

Report of Nominating Committee

Secretary Wendell Caron Grahlman presented the report of the Nominating Committee for Synod Council.

- Nominations for Synod Council, Section 2-1 to 2-16

The first ballot for Synod Council took place; delegates voted; balloting was closed.

The Secretary and Bishop then outlined the nominations of synodical delegates to the 2022 ELCIC National Convention. Delegates were referred to the nominee names and biographical forms (BR Section 2-24 to 2-57).

3 MSC that the list of Delegates to the ELCIC National Convention be approved.

Elected are:

Lay: Marianne Belau, Selina Broadshaw, Cathy Calvin, Nancy Cook, Maud Danaher, Sandy (Alexandra) Donald, Amer Gill, Rita Hamilton, Valerie Hobson, Benjamin Lukenchuk, Tracy Mittleholtz, Lana Moses, Sarah Pascoe, Julie Ramey, Richard (Rick) Ritz, Gail Schryer, Iris Schweiger, Judy von Wahl, Rebecca Wong.

Rostered: Elaine Boone, Susan Climo, Leanne Darlington, Leena Jensen, Richard Kwiatkowski, David Malina, Martin Malina, Pamela McNeil, Charles Nolting, Seth Perry, Scott Schellenberger, Jordan Smith, Ralph Carl Wushke.

Closing Prayer

Rev. Doug Reble led the Assembly in prayer and the Assembly paused for lunch.

4 Session Two – Friday, June 25, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

Report of the Committee on Elections

Laurie Knott, Vice-chair of synod, reported on the first ballot elections for Synod Council.

For the term 2021-2024, lay people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Susan Dupuis, Judy von Wahl.

For the term 2021-2027, lay people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Selina Broadshaw, Gwenanne Jorgenson, Mark Weingartner.

For the term 2021-2024, rostered people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Rev. Anne Anderson, Rev. Katherine Gohm, Rev. Jordan Smith.

For the term 2021-2027, rostered people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Rev. Mavis Fung, Rev. Brooklynn Lane.

The second ballot for Synod Council took place; delegates voted; balloting was closed.

Special Order

Bishop Pryse welcomed the Rev. Dr. Susan C. Johnson, ELCIC National Bishop, to the Assembly (cf BR Section 3-1 ff). Bishop Johnson addressed the Assembly and spoke about the numerous ways of how ELCIC members are engaging faith and life during the pandemic with respect to the strategic goals of the national church. She also addressed the ways the ELCIC participates in the global Lutheran and ecumenical communities, with a particular emphasis on our partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Report of Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Bishop Pryse welcomed the Rev. Dr. Karin Achtelstetter to the Assembly in her role as Executive Director of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR). She spoke of the work of CLWR with refugees and in several areas throughout the planet in relief and development work, especially among disadvantaged and minority peoples.

Recognition of Rostered Ministers Received into Synod

Bishop Pryse referred delegates to Section 5-1 in the Bulletin of Reports and named and welcomed the rostered ministers received into Synod since Assembly 2018.

Recognition of Congregations Received into Synod

Bishop Pryse welcomed new congregations since Assembly 2018 who have become part of the membership of the Eastern Synod, and invited representatives from those congregations to address the Assembly.

Peace Christian Church, A Lutheran Fellowship, Chatham, Ontario St. Peter's Estonian Lutheran Church, Toronto, Ontario Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hamilton, Ontario

5 Report of Synod Council (continued)

Secretary Rev. Wendell Caron Grahlman introduced the constitutional and bylaw amendments for Assembly action.

ES 21-01 MSC that the existing Synod Bylaw Part VI Section 1 be suspended for Assembly 2021.

(Dealing with term length and eligibility; so that Synod Council elections reset a rotation of terms for Synod Council positions.)

ES 21-02 MSC that the Eastern Synod Constitution, Article VI Section 9 be amended (second reading):

Should a congregation which has ceased to exist or whose membership has so diminished in numbers as to render it impossible or impractical for the congregation to function according to its constitution and bylaws shall, the bishop of the synod shall arrange a after consultation with any remaining members, after which the synod council may deem the congregation be deemed by this synod to be defunct. This synod through If the congregation is deemed to be defunct, the synod council shall appoint trustees, including where feasible former members of the former congregation, who shall take charge and control of the property of said congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the former congregation this synod.

ES 21-03 MSC that the Eastern Synod Constitution, Article XVII Section 2 and Section 3 be amended (second reading):

References of “Waterloo Lutheran Seminary” be changed to “Martin Luther University College.”

ESC 21-04 MSC that the Synod Bylaw Part V Section 1b (this creates Section 1b, with the existing Section 1 becoming Section 1a) be adopted:

Conventions may occur by a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during a convention. Any person entitled to attend the convention and participating in the convention by means of such means is deemed to be present at the convention. Any person participating in a convention who is entitled to vote at that convention may vote by means of any telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that the Synod has made available for that purpose.

ESC 21-05 MSC that the following amendment for Synod Bylaw Part VI Section 1 be adopted:

The membership of synod council shall be the officers of the synod together with twelve (12) additional members consisting of an equal number of rostered ministers serving under call or appointment and lay persons. These additional persons representing a variety of separate regions shall be elected by the convention to serve until the next regular convention a maximum term of six years, with no eligibility of renewal, with half of the council retiring at each regular convention.

No elected member, other than the officers, shall be eligible to serve more than three (3) consecutive terms. However, a term of less than 18 24 months shall not be deemed to be a term of office for this purpose.

6 ESC 21-06 MSC that the following amendment for Synod Bylaw Part VI Section 3 be adopted:

Synod council shall hold at least two meetings annually. Synod Council members may participate in a meeting of the council by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all persons participating in the meeting to communicate adequately with each other. Each council member participating in such a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting.

ESC 21-07 MSC that the following amendment which adds a new Section 5 in Synod Bylaw Part VII be adopted:

The Officers may hold meetings between Synod Council meetings, operating according to a policy as approved by Synod Council.

Greetings from our Global Mission Companions

Bishop Pryse welcomed the Rev. Conrad Plummer to the Assembly. He is the President of our partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana. President Plummer addressed the Assembly and recalled how the pandemic affected the church in Guyana, as well as noting other challenges that have affected his church and country. He concluded by emphasizing the value of our relationship and partnership.

Report of the Committee on Elections

Laurie Knott, Vice-chair of synod, reported the results of the second ballot elections for Synod Council.

For the term 2021-2024, lay people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Robert Murphy Jr.

For the term 2021-2027, rostered people, Bishop Pryse declared elected: Rev. Seth Perry.

The balloting for Synod Council is concluded.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Charlotte Corwin, chairperson, presented the report of the Committee.

ES 21-08 MSC that the following be adopted:

That the Eastern Synod petition Group Services Inc. to prepare a report detailing the advantages and disadvantages of the ELCIC joining a public sector type defined benefit pension plan and to make the report available to ELCIC congregations and GSI pension plan members.

ES 21-09 MS that the following be adopted:

That the Eastern Synod, through the Office of the Bishop, advocate for better funding and health standards within Canada's long term care residences by:

1. Writing to the federal government to advocate for the development of a national strategy for long term care which includes placing long term care residences under the Canada Health Act to ensure consistent standards and funding;

7 2. Petition the federal government to ban the private ownership of long term care residences.

Moved and amended that the second part of the motion be deleted. Carried.

The amended motion reads:

ES 21-09 MSC that the following be adopted:

That the Eastern Synod, through the Office of the Bishop, advocate for better funding and health standards within Canada's long term care residences by writing to the federal government to advocate for the development of a national strategy for long term care which includes placing long term care residences under the Canada Health Act to ensure consistent standards and funding.

Report of the Martin Luther University College Board of Governors

Bishop Pryse welcomed Rev. Dr. Kristine Lund and Heather Main to the Assembly. Dr. Lund is the Principal/Dean of MLUC and Heather Main is the chairperson of the Board (cf Section 10-1 ff). Heather Main thanked the delegates and synodical members for their support of the capital campaign for the building renovation of the seminary, and the gift of the house which houses the Glebe Counselling Centre. She also spoke to a few other areas of the seminary's programme and its leadership of the recent past and present Principal/Dean.

Recognition of Those Celebrating Significant Anniversaries of Ordination

Bishop Pryse offered congratulations to all those who have celebrated anniversaries of ordination in the past triennium and introduced a video montage:

Twenty-five Years

Rev. Kevin McLeod (1994) Rev. Daniela Mertz (1994) Rev. Diane Raddatz (1994) Rev. Neil Thomsen (1994) Rev. Nancy Kelly (1995) Rev. Joan Lee (1995) Rev. Sharron Reykdal (1995) Rev. Michael Hackbusch (1996) Rev. Paul Jensen (1996) Rev. David Malina (1996) Rev. Charles Nolting (1996)

Forty Years

Rev. Bruce Bartleman (1979) Rev. Larry Ehrhardt (1979) Rev. Peter Mikelic (1979) Rev. Ed Bastian Jr (1980) Rev. Mark Harris (1980)

8 Rev. André Lavergne (1980) Rev. Kristine Lund (1980) Rev. Bruce Schenk (1980) Rev. Jim Halmarson (1981) Rev. Pamela Harrington (1981) Rev. Doug Kramer (1981) Rev. Rebecca Larson (1981) Rev. Jukka Saarinen (1981) Rev. Bob Shantz (1981)

Fifty Years

Rev. Bill Brown (1969) Rev. Dick Holm (1969) Rev. Melvin Janke (1969) Rev. Peter Mogk (1969) Rev. Matti Terho (1969) Rev. Barry Boeckner (1970) Rev. Willis Ott (1970) Rev. Bart Beglo (1971) Rev. Dick Crossman (1971) Rev. Paul Yap (1971)

Sixty Years

Rev. Rev. Lloyd Wiseman (1959) Rev. Glen Nelson (1960) Rev. Robert Hutchison (1961) Rev. Bob Zimmerman (1961)

Presentation of Eastern Synod Leadership Awards

Bishop Pryse and Vice-chair Laurie Knott made the presentations to this year's recipients of the synod's leadership awards. Each recipient addressed the Assembly with their thanks and gratitude.

Exemplary Service to the Wider Church – Rostered – Rev. David Tin

Exemplary Service to the Wider Church – Lay – Heidi Van Schaik

Exemplary Service to the Wider Church – Youth – Nancy Hillborn

Exemplary Service to the Wider Community – Rostered – Rev. Tuula Van Gaasbeek

Exemplary Service to the Wider Community – Lay – Mrs. Esseleyne Bell

Exemplary Service to the Wider Community – Youth – Emily Walker

Closing Prayers/Worship

Rev. Susan Climo led worship with a time of silent reflection. The Assembly paused for supper.

9 Session Three – Friday, June 25, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Theme Presentation

Bishop Pryse welcomed and introduced Dr. Diana Butler Bass as one of the keynote presenters to Assembly 2021.

Diana spoke to the theme of the Assembly, “Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing!” (Isaiah). She drew a journey of God’s way in doing new things (via Jeremiah, Deuteronomy, Matthew and John), bringing hearers to Jesus who became known as the way: the way to live in new ways and new possibilities that might have not otherwise been available to the people of God’s earth. “Do not be afraid!” as we wander and cross thresholds into new life.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

Worship included the names and memory of those rostered and family members who have died in the past triennium, and those congregations who have closed in the same period. (cf BR Section 5)

10 Session Four – Saturday, June 26, 2021, 8:30 a.m.

Opening Prayer/Worship

The second and last day of Assembly began with worship of song, reading, reflection and prayer, led by Rev. Christie Morrow-Wolfe.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Charlotte Corwin, chairperson of the Committee, presented further motions (BR Section 2-17ff).

ES 21-10 MSC that the following be adopted:

That the Bishop of the Eastern Synod write to the Federal Government to call on Canada to continue with the urgent work laid out in the Paris Agreement, starting with meeting the adjusted 2030 interim goal of decreasing carbon emissions by 45% of 2005 levels, and that the government remain committed and accountable to meeting these targets, and that the Eastern Synod establish and provide funding for a Climate Justice Task Force to help support the work of the ELCIC Carbon Neutrality Task Force and to seek ways the Eastern Synod can become a greening church.

ES 21-11 MSC that the following be adopted:

That the Eastern Synod, through the Office of the Bishop, write to Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to voice support for bill C273 and encourage the Federal Government to make Guaranteed Basic Income a priority in their COVID-19 economic recovery plan.

ES 21-12 MSC that the following be adopted:

In ongoing commitment to Eastern Synod Assembly 2018 Motion 18-11, we, as a Synod, ministry areas, congregations, and individual members commit to the vital and urgent work of confronting the sin of racism and to the dismantling of racist and colonial attitudes present in ourselves, our church and our society.

We commit to doing so by:

1. Reacquainting with and recommitting ourselves to the ELCIC's Statement on Inclusiveness and Diversity and the ELCIC's Resolution on the Doctrine of Discovery for their continued use in the work of dismantling racism;
2. Continuing the practice of in-depth self-reflection and learning with respect to the issues of racism, privilege, diversity and right relationships. One of the ways we will accomplish this goal is by gathering stories and information on the racial diversity of the Synod's rostered leaders, leadership teams, committees and Synod employees as a means of acquiring narratives that will provide a clearer picture of systemic inequalities, that they might be more fully acknowledged and addressed;
3. Committing ourselves and reasonable funding to procure anti-racism training for the Synod and by making such training mandatory to all rostered leaders and Synod employees;
- 11 4. Creating, with the support of the Racial Justice Advisory Committee and the Circle for Reconciliation and Justice, a calendar of significant dates, including worship materials and additional resources to support learning and development on issues of racism, diversity, and culture; and
5. asking congregations and ministry areas to report and provide feedback annually to the Assistant to the Bishop for Public Policy and Service Ministries on learnings, steps and actions taken on the issues of racism, diversity, culture, and right relationships.

Theme Presentation

Bishop Pryse welcomed and introduced Jeff Chu as one of the keynote presenters to Assembly 2021.

Jeff spoke to the theme of the Assembly, "Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing!" (Isaiah). He reminded us that each of us is a theologian of the cross, regardless of the background and life we have, and that each of us, as a child of God, is loved. Jeff challenged hearers, in the midst of Assembly and life, to be people who respect the little miracles of awareness of self, Sabbath rest, and spiritual compost.

Report of Synod Council (Continued)

Keith Myra, Treasurer of synod, presented the recommendations for the budgets of 2021 – 2024 (cf BR 8-27ff).

ES 21-13 MSC that the 2021 Revised Budget and 2022-2024 Proposed Budgets be adopted.

Reflections from our Global Mission Companion

Bishop Pryse introduced and welcomed Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar to the Assembly. Bishop Azar is bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, a partner church of the Eastern Synod. He spoke about the pandemic consequences to Palestinian people, to ELCJHL schools, and the tourism industry related to the economic well-being of the nations, and also commented on the political circumstances recently in the news. He ended with some hopes and goals of his church's ministry, and an invitation to visit the Holy Land.

Closing Prayer

The Assembly was sent into a lunch and rest break with song, "Behold, I am doing a new thing."

12 Session Five – Saturday, June 26, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer/Worship

Rev. Hilla Lahtinen opened the session with song, readings and prayer.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

Charlotte Corwin presented the report (cf BR Section 2-22ff).

The following, upon the Committee's recommendation, was declared out of order and affirmed by the chair. The chair was challenged and upheld by the Assembly.

That this Synod encourage presiding ministers within its territory that, whenever inviting members of the congregation to Holy Communion, always give a short address to the congregation as to the nature and extent to which Christ is present in the sacrament. Such short description would enable people to decide whether to partake and how to prepare themselves. This would not be a long treatise on consubstantiation, but a brief indication in two or three sentences conveying that what the communicants are about to receive is really the true body and blood of Christ, and that the preparation required is to repent and believe this. Nobody will be turned away, but some might decide not to come to Communion.

That all future liturgies approved by this Synod include in the invitation to Communion a statement as to the nature and extent to which Christ is present in the sacrament. Such short description would enable people to decide whether to partake and how to prepare themselves.

This would not be a long treatise on consubstantiation, but a brief indication in two or three sentences conveying that what the communicants are about to receive is really the true body and blood of Christ, and that the preparation required is to repent and believe this.

ES 21-14 MSC that the following be defeated:

That this Assembly instruct Synod Council to appoint to future National Conventions at least one delegate from the Province of Quebec and at least two delegates from the Provinces of Nova Scotia and/or New Brunswick in the exercise of its authority to appoint ten delegates.

ES 21-15 MSC that the following be adopted:

That Synod Council investigate providing childcare at in-person Synod Assemblies as well as reimbursement (e.g. a child care grant) for existing childcare for in-person and online Synod Assemblies, and if no childcare options are determined to be feasible, an explanation be communicated in the next Assembly call for delegates.

ES 21-16 MS that the following be adopted:

In response to the Lutheran World Federation's 2017 resolution on youth involvement in the church, (LWF defines youth as 18-35) the synod will continue to affirm the importance of youth participation in the church and will work towards implementing 20% youth participation at all levels of leadership and committee membership in the Eastern Synod, and will encourage

13 congregations across the synod to do likewise so as to ensure youth involvement in decision making, planning, strategizing and a right to vote.

Moved, amended and carried that:

...implementing at least 20% youth participation at all levels of leadership and committee membership and at least 30% youth participation on the Climate Justice Task Force in the Eastern Synod...

The amended motion reads:

ES 21-16 MSC that the following be adopted:

In response to the Lutheran World Federation's 2017 resolution on youth involvement in the church, (LWF defines youth as 18-35) the synod will continue to affirm the importance of youth participation in the church and will work towards implementing at least 20% youth participation at all levels of leadership and committee membership and at least 30% youth participation on the Climate Justice Task Force in the Eastern Synod, and will encourage congregations across the synod to do likewise so as to ensure youth involvement in decision making, planning, strategizing and a right to vote.

ES 21-17 MSC that the following be adopted:

That the Assembly express its thanks to the Assembly 2021 Planning Committee made up of Bishop Michael Pryse, Rev. Adam Snook, Rev. Susan Climo, Rev. Hilla Lahtinen, Kim Marcy, Rev. Christie Morrow-Wolfe, and Liz Zehr for creating the first ever Eastern Synod Assembly online event. A labour of love that we never envisioned but allowed us to see that even the church can change and pivot when needed; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to Rev. Hilla Lahtinen, Rev. Ronnie Smith, Trevor Hicks, and all those who offered music and prayers and who shared their gifts in worship leadership. Praise God from whom all blessings flow; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to Rev. Jordan and Carmen Smith who created the video honouring our rostered ministers celebrating significant anniversaries which reminded us that God uses people to proclaim and serve; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to the Assembly Tech Support Team of Kristina Kuhnert, Rev. Sebastian Meadows-Helmer, Emily Savage, Rev. Jordan Smith, Rev. David Tin, and Kevin Lee who gave us the gift of their eagle eyes and nimble fingers; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to the Reference and Counsel Committee of Charlotte Corwin, Rev. Katherine Gohm, Rev. Steve Hoffard, Brian Koivu, Rev. Philip Mathai, Emily Walker, and Rev. Douglas Reble who have reminded us that good order allows ministry to happen; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land and to the Rev. Conrad Plummer, President of the Evangelical

14 Lutheran Church in Guyana, who reminded us that the church is bigger than our ELCIC and that we need each other to be the church; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to our National Bishop, the Rev. Dr. Susan Johnson, the Rev. Dr. Karin Achtelstetter, Executive Director of CLWR and the Rev. Carla Blakely, Director of Community Relations at CLWR, who reminded us that the church is bigger than our congregations and Eastern Synod and that no is anyone without everyone as we share God's love in word and deed around the world; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to Diana Butler Bass and Jeff Chu who fed our minds and hearts and emboldened us to be the people that God called us to be in our baptism, a light to the world, for the love of the world; and

that this Assembly express its thanks to our Bishop, the Rev. Dr. Michael J. Pryse, to his assistants, the Rev. Adam Snook, the Rev. Christie Morrow-Wolfe, and the Rev. Douglas Reble,

to the Secretary of Synod, the Rev. Wendell Caron Grahlman, to the Synod Vice-Chairperson, Laurie Knott, to the Synod Treasurer, Keith Myra, and to the Synod Office Staff, Kim Marcy, Liz Zehr, Cindy Stubbs, Sue Heimpel, and Danielle Arsenault for their tireless partnership in ministry; and

finally, a second thank you to our Bishop Michael Pryse, who reminded us in this Assembly that God is calling us “to do a new thing.” With grace, wisdom, commitment, and strength, he encourages us to answer that call from God. And, together, we all say YES!!!

Theme Presentation

Bishop Pryse welcomed Diane Butler Bass and Jeff Chu again to Assembly. Rev. Adam Snook and Rev. Christie Morrow-Wolfe convened a conversation wherein each could respond and offer their own comments of the other’s presentation, and then to respond to more questions as offered by them. They concluded with some thoughts regarding the resumption of in person worship, and where they have perceived hope within the pandemic time.

Recognition of service for Synod Council members who finished their term of office:

Bishop Pryse recognized and thanked those members of Synod Council who have concluded their terms: Rev. Janaki Bandara, Margaret Christenson, Anne Drouillard, Rev. Davis Kaneps, Rev. David Malina, Rev. Joanna Miller, Emily Savage, Bonnie Wepler, Dave Wilk.

Closing Worship

With portions pre-recorded, Bishop Pryse led a service of Holy Communion, acknowledging the diversity of practice for Holy Communion that has taken place during the pandemic, and the ELCIC’s commitment to a study to guide the church in one of its significant acts of worship.

Adjournment of Synod Assembly 2021

Bishop Pryse declared the Eighteenth Assembly of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC to be concluded. Amen.