

Resolution #3

Submitted by the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Council at their 2/11/17 meeting

Regarding Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call

1 **WHEREAS**, *the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran*
2 *Church in America* has included, since 1993, bylaw 7.41.04; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the opportunity to issue non-stipendiary calls to ministers of Word and Sacrament
4 has opened up the possibility that synods may deploy the gifts of ministers of Word and
5 Sacrament who may be employed in other fields of endeavor, and/or are willing and able to serve
6 without financial compensation; and

7 **WHEREAS**, there has been a dramatic decline in the number of ministers of Word and
8 Sacrament available to serve in calls to congregations and other ministries; and

9 **WHEREAS**, synods need to expand options for deploying all the gifts for ministry that God is
10 providing, including ministers able to serve in non-stipendiary ministries; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the requirement of 7.41.01 that each non-stipendiary Call must be approved by the
12 ELCA Conference of Bishops diminishes the flexibility with which synod bishops can facilitate
13 such Calls in response to emerging missional needs of this church; and

14 **WHEREAS**, one of the principles of organization of this church is that “whenever possible, the
15 entity most directly affected by a decision shall be the principal party responsible for decision
16 and implementation, with the other entities facilitating and assisting” (5.01.c); therefore be it

17 **RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, in assembly, memorialize the
18 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to amend 7.41.04 as
19 follows:

20 **7.41.04. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission
21 needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria,
22 policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the
23 Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to a minister of Word and
24 Sacrament for non-stipendiary service ~~after the Synod Council has sought and received approval~~
25 ~~by the Conference of Bishops.~~ Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the
26 world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ministers of
27 Word and Sacrament for their convenience, status, or personal preference. A call to non-
28 stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only
29 as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod
30 Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.