

Resolution #4

Submitted by: United Lutheran Church Council, Gonvick, Minnesota

A Resolution in Support of Two-Thirds Majority Vote

1 WHEREAS, the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on
2 Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly
3 on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of
4 this church;” and

5 WHEREAS, the Constitutional and Legal Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that “any
6 motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current
7 policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in
8 ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption;” and

9 WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council voted 19-10 to delete this provision and is recommending rules of
10 procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly which would require only a simple majority vote to
11 change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual
12 relationships; and

13 WHEREAS, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions including the adoption of an
14 ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

15 WHEREAS, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in
16 same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and
17 congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

20 WHEREAS, a super-majority vote — such as a two-thirds majority — would require an overwhelming
21 majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church
22 teaching and practice;

23 WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-
24 thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders;
25 therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly recommends that the ELCA Churchwide
27 Council add the following provision to the rules of procedure for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide
28 Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this
29 church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers,
30 associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for
31 adoption; ” and be it further

32 RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution
33 to the ELCA Church Council for consideration and possible action prior to the 2009 Churchwide
34 Assembly.

35 RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFERENCE AND COUNSEL: **To consider**

36 RECOMMENDATION OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL: _____