



Report of the Executive for Administration

Always
being made
New.

25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

The Executive for Administration is given the following responsibilities by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)*:

At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall:

- a. supervise the day-to-day functioning of the churchwide organization and coordinate the work of the churchwide units;*
- b. coordinate the strategic planning and day-to-day staff activities within the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the functioning of the administrative team;*
- c. facilitate the interdependent functioning of churchwide units in the fulfillment of the responsibilities assigned to them;*
- d. develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget; and*
- e. provide staff services and documentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council. (ELCA Constitution 15:12.A10)*

What follows is a report of strategic planning, budgeting, and general operations in the churchwide organization for the 2011–2013 biennium. See the unit reports provided in this section, Section III of the *Pre-Assembly Report* and the e-binder, for a more detailed accounting of the work of the churchwide organization.

Strategic Planning

Implementation of the New Design of the Churchwide Organization

The churchwide organization was redesigned in the fall of 2010. A detailed report of the redesign was provided to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. The redesign reduced the organization staff by 61 full-time equivalent positions. From 2008 until the redesign, the churchwide organization budget was reduced by more than \$20 million. The new design focused the organization on increased efficiency and collaboration. Currently, the organization is positioned to support the work of congregations and synods, provide communications and messaging about this church's identity and mission, enhance our resource development, build capacity with global partners, and continue support for ecumenical and interreligious partnerships. The design also created more efficiency in financial management, meeting planning, information technology, human resource management, and gift processing within the organization. For example, we introduced a new payroll system, moving from ADP to Ultipro. We changed our email and calendaring system from Novell-GroupWise to Microsoft-Outlook. We changed job classifications from the Hay System to the Broad Banding System. We brought the new ELCA constituent information system (ECIS) online, and introduced a new gifts processing system.

2011–2013 Operational Plan

As the churchwide organization lived into the new organizational design, we developed and implemented an operational plan for 2011–2013. The plan built on and implemented the outcomes of previous strategic planning and development processes, including:

- The ELCA Mission Plan (2003);
- The churchwide organization Strategic Priorities (endorsed in 2009);
- 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly decisions arising from the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT) task force report; and
- The churchwide organization redesign (2010–2011).

The two strategic priorities that framed the direction for the operational plan are:

The churchwide organization, working collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions, and other partners, will give priority to:

1. *accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and*
2. *building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.*

The plan set goals and objectives for the churchwide organization to fulfill the two strategic priorities. Units were assigned lead responsibilities for various goals and objectives. Cross-unit teams were convened to manage work in key areas of the plan: multicultural ministry; international development planning, monitoring, and evaluation; networks and gatherings; and leadership development. The Administrative Team (presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, unit executive directors, and the executive for administration) is responsible for the overall implementation and review of the plan. The plan contains six major goals and six cross-cutting commitments. The Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council received regular reports on the implementation of the plan and conducted its review of units based on the plan goals, objectives, and commitments. Below is a listing of the Operational Plan Goals and brief summary statements about our progress and challenges.

Our Goals

1. The ELCA is an evangelizing, multicultural, multigenerational church growing in faith and witnessing to God's mission locally and globally, with more people worshipping in new and renewed congregations and living out their faith in the world.
 - a. We experienced significant progress in engagement of young adults and youth through the Young Adults in Global Mission program and the ELCA Youth Gathering; the proportion of new starts in ethnic specific and multicultural communities; congregational mission planning; and the maturing of the role of the directors for evangelical mission. (Directors for evangelical mission are churchwide staff deployed in each of the 65 synods. They are responsible for working with the bishop and synodical staff to support congregations and the synod through synodical missional strategies, new and renewed congregations, and stewardship/Mission Support tables.)
 - b. We made less progress in achieving the number of desired new starts and growth in worship attendance.
2. The ELCA is contributing to the alleviation of poverty and hunger globally and within the United States, and to the achievement of just, peaceful and sustainable livelihoods for impoverished and vulnerable people and communities.
 - a. We achieved our goals in contributing to the alleviation of poverty and hunger. We increased capacity in companion church relationships, reviewed ELCA World Hunger, and began implementing recommendations to strengthen ELCA World Hunger along with disaster response.
 - b. Further work is needed to strengthen our administration, monitoring, and evaluation of grants.
3. The churchwide organization is connecting with ELCA members through coordinated messaging and engaging communication that increases their understanding and involvement with God's mission through this church.
 - a. We have made progress in work on the ELCA's identity. The eight value statements and common messaging increased in use during the biennium. We also completed Phase I of the redesign of the ELCA.org website.
 - b. We continue to work at identifying baseline measurements of growth for this goal.
4. The churchwide organization is achieving a growing and sustainable revenue base through strengthening mission funding and planned giving.
 - a. We met and exceeded our goals for ELCA World Hunger and the ELCA Malaria Campaign. We also experienced an increase in planned giving.
 - b. Growing Mission Support income continues to be a challenge. The development of a new mission funding model was not achieved.
5. Governance of the ELCA is strengthened in ways that ensure the future vitality, sustainability, and effectiveness of this church and the churchwide organization.
 - a. This 2013 Churchwide Assembly will receive a package of proposed constitutional amendments to strengthen the governance of this church. In addition, a Three Leadership Table (Executive Committees of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops, and the Administrative Team of the churchwide organization) was convened, and continues to function, focusing on the leadership and future vitality of this church.

- b. Work continues to review and develop governance processes to improve practice.
- 6. The churchwide organization is characterized by strong and inclusive leadership, a competent and well-supported staff team, efficient and effective systems and processes, and a culture of continuous improvement and learning.
 - a. There was significant investment in updating systems across the organization. Also, a leadership development plan for churchwide staff was adopted and funded.
 - b. Our information and data management systems continue to be improved. The role of senior leaders (who report directly to unit executive directors) needs more definition.

Our Commitments

The following cross-cutting commitments were integrated throughout the organization by working groups and assigned staff.

1. **Theological discernment and formation** – ensuring our evolving identity and self-understanding, our worship, and our practice of mission continue to be grounded in Lutheran theology
2. **Poverty and wealth** – keeping alleviation of poverty and hunger at the center of our efforts locally and globally and challenging policies and systems that increase the wealth of some while failing to address the root causes of poverty and injustice
3. **Leadership development** – forming and developing healthy, skilled leaders, both lay and clergy, in the churchwide organization, congregations, synods, and other institutions of the ELCA, and in its companion churches
4. **Gender justice** – embedding gender analysis in all aspects of the churchwide organization’s work and making gender equity a commitment in our work within the ELCA and through the programs we manage
5. **Racial justice and ethnic diversity** – living out the commitment to being a multicultural church, in the churchwide organization and throughout this church, and working against racial discrimination within this church and society
6. **Young adults** – embracing youth and young adults as vital to the worship life, mission, and future sustainability of this church and raising them up as leaders in all its expressions

While units gave attention to the cross-cutting commitments in their overall work, the results were uneven. However, good progress was evidenced with young adults.

2014–2016 Operational Plan

Development has begun for the next churchwide organization operational plan. The Administrative Team is working with the Planning and Evaluation Committee (including the synodical bishops assigned to advise this committee) of the Church Council and other partners to prepare the 2014–2016 Operational Plan for presentation to the November 2013 meeting of the Church Council.

Churchwide Budget

We closed the 2011 fiscal year with underspending to budget. This was a result of good stewardship across the organization. We did our best to estimate income and expenses for the organization’s new design. Given the underspending, we were able to release funds for synod grants for the directors for evangelical mission, provide additional funding for new starts and renewals, companion churches, and other operational priorities. Final spending for 2011 was at 99.57 percent of budget. This represented a \$269,551 positive variance to budget.

We closed fiscal year 2012 with expenses under budget and total income exceeded budget. Once again, we were able to release grants to synods for the directors for evangelical mission. Final spending for 2012 was at 96.70 percent of budget. This represented a favorable variance of \$2.1 million. The Church Council voted to place these funds in a designated account, anticipating funding of a 25th ELCA Anniversary Campaign.

In 2013 we continue to monitor Mission Support and other income. At its April 2013 meeting the Church Council revised 2013 income estimates by \$1,725,730. The largest category of revenue change was in “other income.” These funds include charges for services provided by the churchwide organization to separately incorporated and self-supporting ministries. We made adjustments on the expense side of the 2013 budget primarily for insurance premiums and compensation and benefits.

The 2014–2016 Triennial Budget Proposal presented at this 2013 Churchwide Assembly is a symbol of the trust and expectation placed in and on the churchwide organization as it serves with and on behalf of this church. Please refer to Section V: Recommendations of the Church Council for detailed information on the 2014–2016 budget proposal.

Living Into the Future Together

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly adopted implementing resolutions proposed by the Church Council for Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT). One set of resolutions called for “providing a means to continue the work assigned to the task force.” The action directed the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops, to carry out the actions identified in the resolution. In November 2011, the Church Council appointed an advisory committee to assist the Office of the Presiding Bishop in carrying out the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action to continue the work of LIFT. Furthermore, in 2012, the Church Council approved a resolution “to authorize the LIFT Advisory Committee to continue to fulfill these important roles in moving forward on the LIFT report and recommendations and the implementing resolutions adopted by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and to refer to it hereafter as the ‘LIFT II Committee.’”

The original LIFT task force pursued its goals mainly through research, analysis of the data gathered, and the production of a report and recommendations submitted to the Church Council. The LIFT II Committee is primarily focused on two areas:

A. Ongoing implementation of the resolutions passed by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly

There were seven recommendations forwarded by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. These seven are listed below with summary statements regarding the status of their implementation.

1. To facilitate review of the constitutional responsibilities of synods in order that synods continue to increase their roles as catalysts for missional planning
 - a. The following proposed constitutional amendments are being presented to this 2013 Churchwide Assembly:
 - i. ELCA 8.21. – addition of networks as a way to assist congregations and synods in performing their mutual responsibilities;
 - ii. ELCA 10.21. and bylaws following (and S6.03. and bylaws following) – focusing the work of the synod in four areas and thereby prioritizing them from the current list of 17 responsibilities;
 - iii. ELCA 10.91.01. – providing for cross-referrals between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council; and
 - iv. C10.03. and C12.13. – authorization for congregational meetings, congregational council meetings, and congregational committee meetings to be held electronically.
2. To facilitate a broad-based process addressing legislative decision-making in this church
 - a. This work is still under development;
 - b. The Communal Discernment Task Force has provided a report to this 2013 Churchwide Assembly in Section VI: Other Assembly-Related Documents; and
 - c. The Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force has provided a report to this 2013 Churchwide Assembly in Section VI: Other Assembly-Related Documents.
3. To initiate a process to expand the consultative role of the Conference of Bishops for the Church Council to refer issues to it and for the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council
 - a. The chair of the Conference of Bishops is now a member of the Church Council;
 - b. Proposed amendment to ELCA 10.91.01. – providing for cross-referrals between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council will be presented to this 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and
 - c. The Three Leadership Table has been established to increase collaboration. It includes the churchwide organization’s Administration Team, and the Executive Committees of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops.
4. To explore the use of social media and technology in order to allow greater participation of ELCA members in meetings of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly
 - a. The entire 2013 Churchwide Assembly will be live-streamed;
 - b. The Mission Advancement unit continues to work with the Offices of the Secretary and Presiding Bishop to increase the use of media and technology for the Church Council and Churchwide Assemblies; and

- c. Ninety-eight percent of the voting members of this 2013 Churchwide Assembly will use iPads.
5. To initiate collaborative work by congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, institutions of this church, and others to create and support diverse non-legislative forums and events that bring together leaders of this church to address missional issues, participate in theological study and reflection, foster leadership development, and enhance the interdependence of this church
 - a. The churchwide organization continues to address this item in its meeting and event planning. The Women of the ELCA Gathering, Lutheran Men in Mission Gathering, ELCA Youth Gathering, and Global Events continue to be examples of attention to this directive.
 6. To request units of the churchwide organization to propose to the Church Council ways of receiving grassroots input on and disseminating information about their work through the use of emerging forms of communication, taking care to include those engaged in multicultural, ethnic-specific, justice for women ministries, youth and young adult networks, and various ministry partners
 - a. The Mission Advancement unit is working with a cross-unit team on networking and gatherings related to connecting with this church's grassroots. It has completed Phase I, a report of findings, and is now in Phase II, strategizing the promotion of improved networking.
 7. To request that annual reports related to this work be presented to the Church Council through 2013
 - a. Reports on the above six items were presented to the Church Council during the past biennium.

B. LIFT II Committee's On-Going Role

The LIFT II Committee will serve as a(n)

- Observer of the ministries of this church;
- Catalyst for promoting change by seeking out bright spots in the current activities of this church; and
- Participant, actively working with others for change in congregational vitality, assisting in defining the role and function of synods, fostering a culture of discernment and non-legislative gatherings, exploring new possibilities for participating in God's mission, and asking provocative questions and positing new visions.

Day-to-Day Organizational Matters

Reviews and Evaluations

As part of its ongoing role of evaluating and monitoring the work of the churchwide organization, the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council reviewed the work of the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Mission Advancement units during the past biennium. In addition, ELCA World Hunger and *The Lutheran* magazine had major review and assessments during the biennium.

General Administration

As we live into the 25th anniversary theme, "Always Being Made New," churchwide staff experience the reality of ongoing change in the life of the organization. Leadership author, John Kotter says, "Leadership is about coping with change." He further states, "Leaders don't solve problems or organize people, what they really do is prepare organizations for change and help them cope as they struggle through it." (*Leading Change and What Leaders Really Do*)

Like most denominational offices, the churchwide organization has experienced significant change over the past two years. While units responded to plans and opportunities with partners, they also worked at deepening internal collaboration and building efficiency and effectiveness in how the work gets done. This simultaneous pull of energy continues to be at play in the organization.

I continue to be grateful for the commitment and high performance of churchwide staff. I am honored to serve with them, with and on behalf of this church, as together we are always being made new.

The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, *executive for administration*