



## Report and Recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force

On April 6, 2013, the Church Council voted [CC13.04.20]:

To receive with thanks the report and recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force, “With Hearts and Hands and Voices,” and to express gratitude to task force members for their generous and capable service;

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops, facilitate implementation of the task force’s recommendations to foster moral deliberation, to increase involvement in the deliberative processes of this church, and to expand the use of ELCA social teaching (Recommendations 1-5);

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary and the Conference of Bishops, prepare a written proposal that addresses implementing the recommendations for procedural changes in the processes for addressing social concerns in this church, including proposed revisions to “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2011), and to report on the progress of this work to the Church Council beginning in November 2013 (Recommendations 6-8); and

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop review the allocation of resources in the churchwide organization and explore the possibilities for partnerships with other groups and individuals to assist the church in responding to social issues, in word and deed, as part of its evangelical mission in the world, and to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council to authorize the funding and personnel necessary to implement these recommendations (Recommendation 9).

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### “With Hearts and Hands and Voices”

#### Our Charge

The Addressing Social Concerns Review (ASCR) Task Force was established in response to an implementing resolution brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly by the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT) Task Force; the implementing resolution adopted by the Churchwide Assembly called for “a review of the process for addressing social concerns based on a spirit of communal discernment.” The ASCR Task Force was established by the Church Council and charged with engaging the concerns (both critical and affirming) of ELCA members; reviewing and clarifying this church’s purpose for addressing social concerns; and reviewing and making appropriate recommendations concerning the processes for addressing social concerns (including the development of social statements).<sup>1</sup>

#### Our Approach

The task force met at the Lutheran Center in Chicago four times between January 2012 and February 2013 and also held several virtual meetings to further its work. At each meeting, the members spent time “Dwelling in the Word,” using Luke 10:1–12 as our text. In this passage, Jesus sends the seventy “on ahead of him ... to every town and place where he himself intended to go.” This text was an important touchstone for our work.

Several important considerations shaped how the task force approached its task:

1. The task force took seriously the broad scope of its charge to review the many ways in which the ELCA addresses social concerns, not simply to review the process for the development, adoption, and implementation of social statements.

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<sup>1</sup> The complete task force charter is provided as an appendix to this report.

2. The task force understood the review process to be directed toward the future life and mission of this church rather than a reactionary response to past decisions.
3. The task force returned repeatedly to the question of what it means to be a church that addresses social concerns in “a spirit of communal discernment.” Recommendations either to change or to affirm our current policies and procedures will not be effective unless we are able to address fundamental issues of trust and mistrust within this church.

## What We Learned

The ELCA has created a significant body of social teaching over the years. Since 1988, thirteen social messages have been adopted by the ELCA Church Council and eleven social statements have been adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Social statements and social messages are taught in our college and seminary classrooms; are well regarded by our ecumenical partners; and are used by our social ministry organizations and other agencies to inform their work. They are also used by individuals and congregations for information and for moral guidance.<sup>2</sup>

Part of the charge to the task force was to engage the concerns (both critical and affirming) expressed by members of this church about the ELCA’s role in addressing social concerns. In the course of its work, the task force sought input from the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council. It also conducted an open web-based survey to which 4,011 people responded. Survey data yielded several important insights:

- Addressing social concerns is a very emotional issue for many in this church. Some respondents felt strongly that the ELCA should stay out of social and political issues, while other respondents strongly commended the ELCA for its engagement in social and political issues.
- Although there are multiple opportunities for input in the process of developing social statements, many respondents are unaware of these opportunities.
- Many respondents are eager for resources to study social concerns and social statements and are unfamiliar with the resources that already exist.

While a vocal minority opposes the ELCA taking formal positions on social issues, almost three-fourths of survey respondents expressed the view that it is important for the ELCA to address social concerns both through direct service (responding to disaster, providing support to hunger ministries, etc.) and by making public statements. In the words of the seventeenth-century hymn “Now Thank We All Our God,” one might say that members of the ELCA believe it is important for this church to address social concerns not only with our hearts and hands but also with our voices.

Even those who believe the ELCA should make public statements on social issues do not find ELCA social teaching as useful as it could be:

37.5 percent of respondents report that social statements are often too long<sup>3</sup>

25.4 percent of respondents report that social statements are too difficult to understand

44.6 percent of respondents report that social statements are perceived to have a political agenda

53.5 percent of respondents report that social statements are not well publicized or are too hard to find

A significant minority of survey respondents<sup>4</sup> were not even aware of the existence of ELCA social statements other than *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) and *Abortion* (1991). This lack of awareness of ELCA social teaching is especially discouraging given the strong support expressed for developing statements on important social issues.

Given these results, it is perhaps not surprising that more respondents called for “better execution” in the development of the ELCA’s social teaching than for “fundamental change.”<sup>5</sup> The recommendations of the ASCR Task Force reflect this emphasis on “better execution,” recognizing that better execution is not simply a matter of revising how this church does things but also of forming and nurturing community.

<sup>2</sup> During the most recent year for which data is available, each English-language social statement had more than 1,700 online pageviews on the ELCA website and each of the social statements was studied in ELCA congregational forums (1.1 percent to 10.9 percent of congregations filing an annual report for 2011, depending on the social statement). While the numbers vary widely, it is significant that even the social statements adopted in 1991 (more than 20 years ago) are still being used by individuals and congregations.

<sup>3</sup> The average length of social statements approved between 1991 and 1995 is 12 pages, while the average length of social statements approved since 1997 is 44 pages.

<sup>4</sup> The “significant minority” being 25 percent to 45 percent of non-rostered respondents and 10 percent to 20 percent of rostered respondents.

<sup>5</sup> The group most likely to express a desire for “fundamental change” was the Conference of Bishops, but this was not the majority position even among the bishops.

## Why We Address Social Concerns

The ELCA's commitment to address social concerns through public statements and advocacy efforts has sometimes had a polarizing impact on this church. There is a strong perception among some that the ELCA's involvement in social issues promotes a liberal political agenda. In the words of one survey respondent, "I would like the ELCA to stop writing social statements. They aren't just perceived as political; they are political." Yet in the words of another respondent, "Some people do not believe that churches should be involved in social justice. . . . They think that social justice is political, but I think social justice is often based on God's teachings." Because of such differing views, it is essential for the ELCA to state clearly and persuasively its evangelical and missional purpose in addressing social concerns.

In 1991, the ELCA adopted its first social statement, *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective*. This social statement set forth a vision of the church's role in society that is grounded in this church's "identity as a community that lives from and for the Gospel." Affirming St. Paul's understanding of "faith active in love" (Galatians 5:6), the ELCA committed itself to

- sustaining the vocation of its members in their callings in daily life,
- fostering moral deliberation on social questions, and
- witnessing in its life and work as an institution.

First, this church seeks to support the priesthood of all believers and their vocation to serve others in daily life from friendship to citizenship in both private and public callings. This church seeks to nurture vocation by forming character, outlook, and moral conviction and by connecting members who share common callings.

Second, because all callings raise questions about the shape of love and because we cannot love others without attention and communication, the ELCA affirms and seeks to engender communities of moral deliberation that seek to "discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). This communal discernment seeks sustained and inclusive conversation that enlarges our understanding and opens us more fully to God's love and to each other.

Third, this church affirms and supports many public ministries for the common good as an institution of congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and affiliated organizations. For example, in its communal discourse, it can model civil discourse for democratic society. It can address human need through educational and social ministry organizations as well as congregational and synodical initiatives. By enacting social policy, this church can be a voice among others that informs and guides public discourse and decision making. It can speak for those who have no voice. It can mediate conflict and injustice in witness to God's peace.

The task force believes it is essential for the ELCA, in all of its expressions, to continue to lift up these three commitments and to communicate clearly how the church's response to social issues is part of its witness to the Gospel in both word and deed.

## How We Address Social Concerns

Through its review, the task force concluded that the ELCA has been more effective in witnessing as an institution than in fostering a culture of genuine moral deliberation. Moreover, the resources the ELCA has produced for study and guidance related to social concerns, though valuable, are not as well-known and as well-utilized by our membership as they are intended to be. In part, staff and budget reductions have limited the resources available to fulfill all three of our commitments equally well.

Task force recommendations fall into two main categories: recommendations intended to foster moral deliberation, to increase involvement in the deliberative processes of this church, and to expand the use of ELCA social teaching; and recommended procedural changes.

### Recommendations intended to foster moral deliberation, to increase involvement in the deliberative processes of this church, and to expand the use of ELCA social teaching

The task force recommends that the ELCA:

1. *Expand its communication efforts, including the use of new and emerging media, in order to distribute information to members and congregations, to receive feedback from members and congregations, and to facilitate conversation among members, congregations, and the communities of which they are part.*

**Rationale:** Given the lack of awareness of existing social statements and resources, it's clear that what we are currently doing is not adequate in a world of rapidly evolving technology and constant media competition for people's attention. We need to reach people we aren't reaching. We need to create additional opportunities for participation and to broaden the range of participants. We should support—and learn from—networks where constructive theological engagement is already taking place.

2. *Devote increased attention to forming communities of moral deliberation within this church, by producing resources for moral deliberation, by training and equipping leaders who can model moral deliberation, and by connecting diverse communities.*

**Rationale:** Moral deliberation and communal discernment require a set of skills and attitudes that are not intuitive. Appropriate resources and resource people can model respectful communication and foster genuine engagement with and respect for diversity of experience and opinion. When the church engages and embraces diversity within the one body of Christ, we are a powerful witness in an increasingly polarized world.

3. *Identify and equip resource persons for the church's ministry of addressing particular social concerns.*

**Rationale:** Churchwide staff and task force members neither can nor should be the only human resources available to communicate this church's social teaching. Teaching theologians, those working in social ministry organizations, those nominated but not selected for task forces, and those with particular interest or expertise in certain areas can serve as speakers and facilitators for groups who wish to engage in conversation about a social issue and as advocates and interpreters for the church's social teaching. Developing regional and national networks of resource people is good stewardship both of human interests and energy and of financial resources.

4. *Identify, provide, and make available a variety of enhanced resources for individual and congregational engagement with social concerns (including resources developed by others).*

**Rationale:** Early in its work, the task force began to think in terms of a 'toolkit' for each social statement, message, or concern, including a concise summary of the core convictions of each statement or message, study guides, video resources, case studies, success stories, etc. Summaries of, and study guides for, ELCA social statements exist but are not well known. Additional kinds of resources, such as video clips and "success stories" related to social issues, etc., would engage a broader group of participants than lengthy statements and study guides alone. Case studies presenting the complexity of social issues would stimulate deeper engagement with an issue and with other participants, discouraging over-simplified responses. Few of our existing social statements have resources specifically directed at youth; if our goal is not simply to address issues but to foster moral deliberation, providing age-appropriate resources for our younger members is important. While it isn't the job of the churchwide organization to develop all these resources itself, the churchwide organization can play an important role in facilitating networks of resource sharing.

5. *Regularly review existing social statements and social messages, including the possibility of adopting new implementing resolutions or policy resolutions when appropriate.*

**Rationale:** As with our ecumenical agreements, the goal of the ELCA's social teaching is not just adoption but ongoing reception, the process of living more fully into our commitments. The ASCR Task Force conducted the majority of its work during 2012. We noted that health care and the economy were highly contested issues in the 2012 election. While the ELCA has social statements on both of these complex issues, we wonder how widely these "old" statements are known and whether they were used by our members to inform their views and to foster conversation with others. A cycle of regular review will help this church to remind itself of the work it has done and to apply its social teaching in new circumstances.

### Recommended Procedural Changes

As a result of our review of existing ELCA social teaching, our engagement with the views expressed by members, and our own deliberations, the task force recommends that the ELCA:

6. *Adopt a new process for determining how best to address a social concern.*

The ELCA addresses social concerns in many ways, including study, preaching and teaching, advocacy, and direct action, as well as through policy resolutions, social messages, and social statements. Social statements often become a lightning rod, distracting attention from the other ways in which the ELCA responds to social concerns. Because of the prominent attention given to the development of social statements, they are sometimes assumed to be the highest form of addressing a social concern, as if issues for which a social statement is authorized are more important issues than those for which a social message, social policy resolutions, or a pastoral letter is issued.

The task force came to the conclusion that an attitude of communal discernment is important not only for what this church says about a particular social concern but also for deciding how to address that concern in the first place. Currently the development of a social statement is authorized by the Churchwide Assembly. The task force recommends *a process of formal exploration of a particular social concern, authorized by the Church Council, before a decision is made about the most appropriate way(s) of addressing that concern.*

Steps in the recommended process:

- a. *The Church Council initiates formal exploration of a social concern.*  
This may be in response to a Churchwide Assembly action, or may be at the impetus of the Church Council itself, or a request may come to the Church Council from another source (for example, a synod council, a synod assembly, the Conference of Bishops, individual members, etc.).
- b. *The Church Council identifies a group to explore the social concern.*  
This may be a group whose composition resembles the composition of a task force, but this may be another kind of group, including an existing group (churchwide staff, teaching theologians, etc.). In appointing any new group, ELCA representative and participatory commitments shall be honored.
- c. Following exploration of and deliberation concerning the social concern, *the exploratory group makes a report to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council including its recommendations regarding appropriate next steps* for responding to the social concern. Possible recommendations include, but are not limited to: taking action, developing resources, issuing a pastoral letter, developing a social message based on existing social statements, and/or proceeding with the development of a new social statement.

We envision this recommended process as a tree (a more organic image than a flow chart), showing multiple entry points (roots) into the process of addressing social concerns, as well as many possible fruits.

#### **Rationale:**

- We think the approach proposed above models a process and spirit of communal discernment.
- We think this process will strengthen the awareness that the ELCA responds to social concerns in multiple ways, hopefully reducing the perceived separation (or even antagonism) between ministries of service and ministries of advocacy.
- We think this process will challenge the misperception that issues addressed by a social statement are more important than issues addressed by a social message, and we hope it will defuse misperceptions about social statements as an expression of a top-down political agenda.
- We think the process of exploration prior to making recommendations will encourage us to draw on and continue to use existing resources. The role of the Church Council in this process is not to be a gatekeeper but to facilitate study, engagement, and action in appropriate ways.

- We think an exploratory process without a predetermined outcome or product will encourage creativity in responding to social concerns.
- By shifting the responsibility for starting a study process to Church Council and by having the exploratory group make recommendations to the Church Council, the proposed process provides greater flexibility in responding to social concerns in a timely way, especially given the shift to a triennial Churchwide Assembly (see ELCA Constitution 14.11).
- Some staff and former staff have expressed the view that we may be close to having a complete “body” of social statements and that a majority of issues that arise in the future can be dealt with by social messages drawing on existing social statements. This broadened process allows for the development of future social statements, when necessary, but does not privilege social statements as the most important way that the church addresses a social concern.

7. *When the decision is made to proceed with the development of a social statement, the task force recommends that:*
- a. *the comment period for responding to a draft be lengthened.*

**Rationale:** The current March–October period for commenting on a draft, because it spans the summer, is not conducive to input from congregational study groups or from college and seminary classes.

- b. *two distinct types of hearings be identified and held, initial hearings intended to introduce members both to the issues and to the draft and additional hearings intended to gather feedback from members who have studied the draft statement.*

**Rationale:** Currently, those who attend hearings held at synod assemblies, rather than freestanding hearings, have typically not read the social statement draft before the hearing. Offering introductory hearings prior to feedback hearings better equips members for the task of moral discernment, encourages them to share what they learn in their congregations, and should generate more thoughtful feedback.

- c. *the task force charged with development of the social statement consider developing multiple products, in different formats and for different audiences and purposes, rather than considering itself bound to create a single lengthy document.*

**Rationale:** The fact that many ELCA members find social statements too long and too difficult should prompt us to think about the most beneficial forms of communication. Not all issues need to produce the same kind of document(s). Although social statements deal with complex issues, requiring significant analysis, we believe that each social statement should be accompanied by a brief statement of the core theological principles informing the ELCA’s approach to the social issue being addressed. The context and data required to make a sustained theological argument will change over time, but we trust that the core theological principles will be consistent, and they should be highlighted in a brief, accessible form.

Other recommendations necessary for implementation

8. *To revise the “Policies and Procedures” document to reflect the new process and to emphasize the three commitments of “The Church in Society.”*
9. *To provide sufficient funding and personnel to interpret and help equip this church for responding to social issues, in word and deed, as part of its evangelical mission in the world.*

## **Members of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force**

Pr. Kathryn A. Kleinhans, task force chair, teaching theologian at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa  
Mr. Per Anderson, ethicist, professor and associate dean at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn.  
Mr. Paul G. Archer, Church Council member, Dearborn, Mich.  
Ms. Linda Bobbitt, Rocky Mountain Synod vice president and former member of the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT) Task Force, Thornton, Colo.  
Bp. Wm. Chris Boerger, Northwest Washington Synod, Everett, Wash.  
Ms. Rebecca J. Brakke, Church Council member, Dallas, Texas  
Ms. Sylvia Bull, member of First English Lutheran Church in Great Falls, Mont., and seminarian, Princeton, N.J.  
Pr. Margaret E. Herz-Lane, pastor of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Md.  
Mr. Christopher Meade, member of Geneva Lutheran Church, Geneva, Ill.  
Mr. Arthur Norman, member of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas, attending St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile, Ala.  
Pr. Fred S. Opalinski, pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading, Pa.  
Ms. Rosemarie Stephens-Booker, member of First Lutheran Church in Norfolk, Va.  
Ms. Suzanne G. Wise, chair of the Communal Discernment Task Force, Siler City, N.C.  
Bp. David B. Zellmer, South Dakota Synod, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**2011 Churchwide Assembly Action**

**LIFT Implementing Resolution on Social Statement Review Process**

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.14]:

To authorize the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Communal Discernment Task Force, to establish a review process of current procedures for the development and adoption of social statements, following the consideration of the genetics social statement, *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility*, at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and

To bring no social statements other than *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* to any Churchwide Assembly until completion of a review of the process for addressing social concerns based on a spirit of communal discernment. This review shall be completed and brought to the fall 2012 Church Council meeting, with a report to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. During this review, the process for developing the criminal justice social statement and the justice for women social statement may continue, without alteration of the process already under way for the statement on criminal justice, which is to be completed and reported to the 2013 assembly.

In November 2011 the Church Council voted [CC11.11.78]:

To respond to the authorization of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly that the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Communal Discernment Task Force, establish a review process of current procedures for the development and adoption of documents addressing social concerns;

To request that the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Program and Services Committee, appoint members to serve on the “Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force” by its December 2011 meeting;

To approve a charter with specific interim reports to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council for the work of the task force; and

To anticipate that the task force will bring a report to the November 2012 meeting of the Church Council, which will serve as the basis for a report with possible recommendations to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly.

**Charter for  
Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force**

**I. Organization and Purposes**

**Churchwide Assembly authorizing action**

*CA11.04.14*

*LIFT Implementing Resolution*

To authorize the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Communal Discernment Task Force, to establish a review process of current procedures for the development and adoption of social statements, following the consideration of the genetics social statement, *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility*, at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and

To bring no social statements other than *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* to any Churchwide Assembly until completion of a review of the process for addressing social concerns based on a spirit of communal discernment. This review shall be completed and brought to the fall 2012 Church Council meeting, with a report to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. During this review, the process for developing the criminal justice social statement and the justice for women social statement may continue, without alteration of the process already under way for the statement on criminal justice, which is to be completed and reported to the 2013 assembly.



## **II. Background Information**

### **LIFT Task Force recommendation (2011 Pre-Assembly Report, Part V, p. 28)**

#### *Communal Discernment*

The task force commends the work of the Communal Discernment Task Force formed by action of the Church Council in 2008, which seeks better ways to engage emotional and divisive issues and make difficult decisions in this church by means that increase mutual trust, build respect for each other as the body of Christ and deepen spiritual discernment. The task force commends the spirit of communal discernment to the whole church.

The task force recommends that the ELCA:

1. Nurture a culture of faithful discernment in all its expressions, assemblies and councils, the churchwide organization, synods, congregations, institutions, and small groups. This culture will contribute to healthier decision-making and stewardship of mission and build relationships of greater trust and respect for one another.
2. Shape churchwide meetings and gatherings, including Churchwide Assemblies, to include a focus on identity and mission in order that participants gain a deeper understanding of what God is calling this church to be and do.
3. Undertake sustained, ongoing conversations and deliberation regarding this church's identity and its implications for our participation in God's mission. Link mission and identity rather than seeing mission as one more activity of the church.
4. Affirm the responsibility of the presiding bishop (see ELCA 15.12.G11.) to be the prime catalyst in this church's conversations and deliberations on identity and mission. This would include working with:
  - the Conference of Bishops, the presidents of the seminaries, and the Convocation of Teaching Theologians to fully address this church's discourse on identity and mission.
  - the churchwide organization and synods in developing their ability to engage congregations and their members deeply and expansively in ongoing critical conversations and deliberations.
5. Bring no social statements to churchwide assemblies until a review process is completed. This review of current procedures for the development and adoption of social statements, established by the Church Council in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, should reflect the spirit and culture of communal discernment.
6. Continue work on current social statements.

## **III. Responsibilities**

### **A. The Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force shall:**

1. Review, more broadly, "the process for addressing social concerns," and specifically, "current procedures for the development and adoption of social statements";
2. Review the existing body of ELCA social statements, social messages and social policy resolutions, their use and their effect;
3. Review the processes for
  - a. identifying social concerns to address and the means of addressing them;
  - b. developing statements;
  - c. study, discussion, deliberation and decision;
  - d. publicizing, distributing, promoting and using social statements and messages;
4. Review the missional, theological and evangelical purpose and goals for addressing social concerns;
5. Engage the criticisms and critiques that ELCA members have expressed concerning:
  - a. the processes for developing social statements and messages;
  - b. the reasons and goals of addressing social concerns through statements;
  - c. the effects of the ELCA's addressing social concerns on other aspects of its mission and its overall life, with particular attention to the LIFT Task Force report of "disconnect" and to the experiences of division and exclusion in congregations, synods and in the ELCA as a whole;
6. Clarify the reasons for addressing social concerns and the purpose of the statements and messages developed to address them; and
7. Review and, as needed, recommend revisions to Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns.

### **B. Throughout its work the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force shall:**

1. Consult with the Conference of Bishops, the Communal Discernment Task Force and the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council;

2. Attend to the convictions and hopes of both those who value the ELCA's work of addressing social concerns through statements and messages and those who have serious reservations about it or seek to discontinue it;
3. Engage the full diversity of experience, expertise and wisdom among ELCA members for addressing social concerns, with particular attention to persons whose voices are too often excluded or ignored;
4. Consult with the Mission Advancement unit and marketing and research consultants regarding awareness, distribution and use of social statements; and
5. Consider opportunities for learning and collaboration with ecumenical partners.

#### **IV. Membership and Leadership**

- A. The task force shall be composed of 10-12 members, consistent with the ELCA's representational principles. Task force membership shall include:
  1. at least 2 synod bishops;
  2. at least 1 member each of the Communal Discernment task force; the LIFT task force; the Program and Services Committee; and
  3. at least 1 youth or young adult; 1 ethicist; 1 teaching theologian; and 1 person with expertise in communications and marketing.
- B. Initial members of the task force and its chairperson shall be appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Program and Services Committee. The Presiding Bishop may make additional appointments in consultation with Executive Committee.
- C. Staff members shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop.
- D. The term of service for all members shall be until the completion of the task force's work.
- E. The task force may invite additional staff, advisors, consultants and guests.

#### **V. Meetings and Funding**

- A. The full task force shall meet in person at least three times during 2012 (preferably winter, spring, summer).
- B. Additional meetings of the task force or work groups may be held either in person or by conference call.
- C. The work of this task force shall be funded by strategic initiative funds.

#### **VI. Timetable for Actions**

- A. A report and recommendations shall be brought to the Church Council at its fall 2012 meeting.
  1. Interim reports, including a preliminary report of findings, shall be presented to the spring meetings of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.
  2. A preliminary report with recommendations shall be presented to the fall 2012 meeting of the Conference of Bishops for review.
  3. The task force may revise the preliminary report and recommendations for presentation to the fall 2012 Church Council meeting.
- B. The task force shall present a final report to 2013 Churchwide Assembly.

