



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

March 2021

Dear friends,

God's blessings to you this Lenten season. The Church Council will meet virtually for a multi-day meeting starting on Thursday, April 15 and ending on Saturday, April 17. Due to this virtual meeting environment, you are strongly encouraged to read the materials ahead of the meeting as many of the reports will not be shared verbally. As we did at the fall 2020 meeting, we will offer guidelines to help provide structure for our meeting process.

During the multi-day meeting, we will focus on essential matters and spend time in small groups to reflect on the Future Church design. The purpose of the design is to strengthen and renew this church's purpose to "activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love."

There will be two significant recommendations coming to the Church Council for its consideration, actions for *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* and Sanctuary church body definition and guidelines. The Committee on Appeals will present the revised *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* on Friday afternoon and answer your questions. Action on the revised document will be Saturday morning. The guidelines for Sanctuary church will be reviewed by Program and Services Committee. Their committee recommendation will come to you on Saturday morning as well.

The Board Development Committee is planning two evening opportunities for conversation. On Thursday evening, April 15, we will enjoy a relaxing time reconnecting and engaging in informal fellowship with one another. On Friday evening, April 16, space will be provided for council members to process and reflect on three specific interest topics.

The three topics chosen by the Board Development Committee are Authentic Diversity, Sanctuary Church, and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*. The topics will be offered simultaneously for 60 minutes of group conversation and then repeated for the next 60 minutes. A Board Development Committee will help moderate the time as resource staff are not expected or required to be part of the informal conversations.

The Friday evening conversation is designed to mimic the conversations council members have had with one another in the hallway, over a meal, or hanging out in the evening at the Marriott during in-person meetings. It is space for us to process and reflect on topics with one another without a structured report/update. We hope these evening conversations will be Spirit-filled for your work as a council.

The agenda will be posted about two weeks prior to the meeting. All reports and updates will be posted to the Church Council Microsoft Teams site in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Files tab. If you have difficulties accessing the Church Council Teams site, I encourage you to reach out to Jodi Slattery, Jodi.Slattery@elca.org. She will be happy to help you.

As we prepare for this meeting, my prayers are with you and remember Christ walks alongside us.

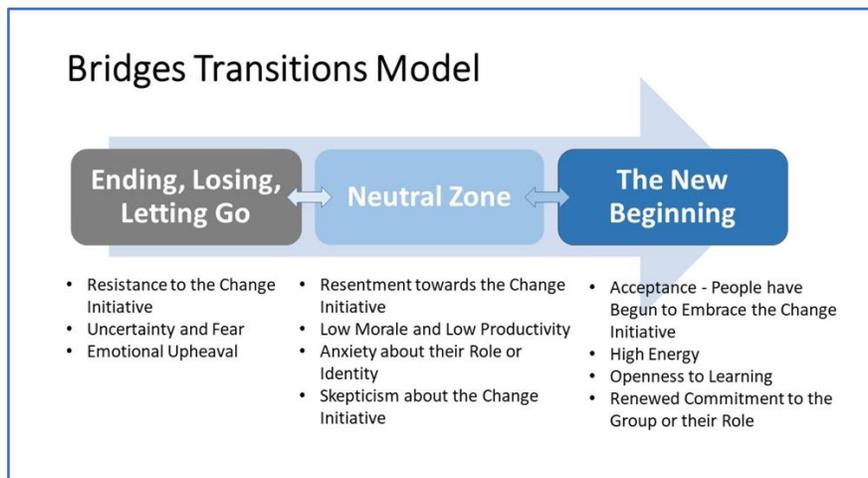
Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop

Report from the Presiding Bishop

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

Imagine more people knowing Jesus. Imagine creating communities of love and justice online and in real life. Imagine our online communities and pews filled with new, young and diverse members. Imagine spending more of your time collaborating with others to have a bigger impact in our neighborhoods and in the world. That is what the future of the ELCA will look like. This is an invitation to be part of something that God is doing. It will take all of us putting our heads together, trying new things, failing, succeeding, and learning from one another. Doing what we do best – being church together for the sake of the world.

We are almost 100 days into this new way of organizing ourselves to work more effectively across the three expressions of this church and make a stronger impact with our programs, reaching new, young, diverse people. Leadership is working hard to help staff through transitions, striving to get everyone to *The New Beginning*.



New things are happening every day that are helping staff shape, embrace, and own what the future of this church is. They are coming up with new ways of thinking, collaborating across the ecology of this church, and they aren't scared to fail or to celebrate success. The work has already begun in the areas below and in many others.

Shared Leadership Tables

We have begun to form our shared leadership tables in the new design of the churchwide office. The Operations Leadership Team and the Strategy Leadership Team have been formed, and the Ops Leadership Team has had its first meeting.

Open Doors Grant Program

As more and more of us are vaccinated and the church gathers again in physical spaces, the churchwide organization is launching the Open Doors Grant to learn from congregations. Any ELCA congregation can apply for grant funding with a specific and actionable idea for how its ministry might meet new people while regathering in community as COVID-19 considerations allow. All applications that meet the base criteria will be eligible for consideration, then randomly selected for a set grant award amount. Because there is no widely known set of “best practices” for meeting new people following a global pandemic, we can eliminate any biases about what can and cannot work by selecting grant award

recipients randomly. Those not selected will receive a small amount to honor their time for the application and their commitment to learning together in the next three years.

The Open Doors Grant application is scheduled to open Wednesday, April 21, 2021. More communication about the initiative will be shared widely the week of April 12 on elca.org/opendoors along with email and social media.

Digital Ministry Grant Program

Through our partnerships with [Vanco](#) and [Tithe.ly](#), we are able to offer our congregations the ability to operate online giving tools at rates a congregation would not be able to get on its own. As part of the agreements with the two vendors, the ELCA receives residual funds at a percentage of dollars spent by our congregations each year.

With the funds we are getting back from these vendors each year, we believe the right thing to do is push those dollars right back into this church by creating a Digital Ministry Grant program for our congregations and other ministries. This program would allow ministries across this church to enable or enhance their online presence through website creation, improvement or maintenance; online giving tools; online worship tools, etc. The goal is to provide our congregations and ministries that are in need with the money to increase their digital footprint, giving them new ways to invite people into the way of Jesus.

We have approximately \$70,000 from the two vendors in FY 2020, and we predict to be at or above this level in future years. Between Tithe.ly and Vanco, we have nearly 4,800 congregations participating in some sort of digital platform to enhance their online presence.

We currently have a committee working out the details of this grant, and we will launch this to the wider church later this spring/early summer.

Being a Boss Training

We have selected approximately 90 people from the churchwide office and the Conference of Bishops to be part of the “Being a Boss” training, a cohort-based learning experience. *Being the Boss: The 3 Imperatives for Becoming a Great Leader*,” a best-selling business book, captures the research of Dr. Linda Hill and her colleagues and will be our resource for this initiative.

The journey will start with a quick self-assessment on leadership styles and a case to read. We will explore these resources at various points in the initial leader-led kickoff workshop. Check out [this video](#) from Dr. Hill about her work on this project.

Following the kickoff, the cohort will begin their 18-step activation path, where they will learn and apply the key principles and actions from Dr. Hill’s book. During this activation period they will meet three times with their colleagues to share best practices, discuss issues or interests, and review what they have learned so far and what is coming up in the next section.

Project Hub

As the churchwide organization transitions to the new future church design, a transparent project development process will help teams and individuals develop their own projects and move priority work forward. The ELCA Project Hub is a space for churchwide organization staff to share important information about projects, invite feedback and access tools and resources to work effectively. To submit a project to the hub, staff are invited to share an overview of their project for review by a team in their home area. Once a project is posted to the hub, others are invited to get connected, work together and share updates and feedback.

I look forward to continuing this work together, to share with you what we are learning and to dream big with all of you. God’s plan has always given us a future full of hope.

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18).

Report from the Vice President

- ¹ *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.*
- ² *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*
- ³ *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.*
- ⁴ *Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.*
- ⁵ *Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.*
- ⁶ *You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.*
- ⁷ *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*
- ⁸ *Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.*
- ⁹ *Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.*
- ¹⁰ *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.*
- ¹¹ *Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.*
- ¹² *Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.*

- Psalms 51:1-12

It is good to see you all virtually again. I can't wait to see you in-person at the fall meeting, God willing. It is my practice to meditate on the lessons each Sunday to hear what God is up to in my life, and how I might apply the word to my work vocation and daily walk with my congregation, family, and neighbors.

Before I share my meditation I want you to know that as a veteran, public administrator, and Lutheran, along with other hats I wear, my outrage continues regarding the attack on the capitol on January 6, the mass killings in Atlanta and Boulder, and the voter suppression efforts across the nation. I believe we have become more vulnerable to domestic violence as a nation as never before in my lifetime. I am discerning what level of protest is appropriate for me to let my voice and actions be heard. Being angry and upset is not enough. I must do more, but I don't quite know what path I want to take.

I don't know how you have reflected on your life since the COVID-19 pandemic and the November 2020 election cycle, but I have had so many different emotions due to unexpected events whether it be international, local, state, or the national scene. A lot of the events have angered me while others have given me hope. Despite all of that, I still find myself facing the reality that I have homework to do with myself. Herein lies the focus of my meditation on Psalm 51. I can't engage my neighbor and racially and gender biased people that I may unknowingly interact with if I am not where God wants me to be as a follower of Christ. I must be vulnerable if I want others to be vulnerable.

Our mayor, police chief, and I recently met with white neighborhood association representatives who had experienced a drive-by shooting due to a feud that spread to their racially diverse neighborhood. They were fearful and had enough of drug trafficking and retaliations from some of their neighbors and wanted city leaders to address their concerns and complaints. The mayor, police chief, and I made ourselves vulnerable in order to request that the neighborhood representatives make themselves vulnerable by responding to our specific questions designed to understand them better and get a more accurate picture of what is really happening in the neighborhood. It was an honest conversation that asked them to explain the racial climate in the neighborhood and why their group did not include their minority neighbors. At the end of the meeting the group felt they were being heard. They all agreed that all neighborhood residents needed to be engaged to identify the best solutions to their problems.

I believe that I am most effective in my work and interaction with people if I bring a clean heart to the conversation and problem solving. I believe that I am most effective when people see me acknowledging

that I don't have all the answers, but I am willing to listen and try different approaches to make life better for all concerned. Asking God to give me a clean heart helps me to be more authentic, transparent, and forgiving in the most uncomfortable settings that I may experience. This is a manifestation of the freedom that God gives me through Christ.

My report will give you a brief highlight of my activities since our last Church Council meeting. I have continued to assist the Future Church Implementation Team (FCIT) with conversation and ideas as they work deliberately to define how the new administrative design home areas will do their work. One of the most innovative aspects of the new design is we are building the airplane while we are flying it. This is probably the most un-Lutheran nature of this that is most uncomfortable to a church culture nurtured on structure. This is not a criticism. It simply highlights that we will experience less permanent church structured processes. We will create new processes and when they are no longer needed, we will discard them and create new ones to address our needs more accurately. We learned a lot through our experience with the COVID-19 Response Fund, and you will likely see more relevant activities like this as synods and congregations inspire the church to respond creatively to doing God's mission in the world. The new church design has made the ELCA vulnerable in many ways, but our faith in Christ will guide in our actions.

I believe Florida may be completely open by the time the Church Council meets in April. The vaccination programs are numerous, and the age criteria is being revised weekly allowing everyone over 18 to get the vaccines on April 5, 2021. We have 8.3% of my workforce who have been infected by COVID-19 since March 2020 and less than 1% who are not currently working. My wife and I are fully vaccinated.

I have a full schedule to attend the following synod assemblies:

- Sierra Pacific Synod, May 7-9, 2021, Bishop Election in Burlingame, CA
- Minneapolis Synod, April 23-24, 2021, Virtual gathering
- East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, May 14-15, 2021, Virtual/Oshkosh, WI
- North Carolina Synod, June 3-5, 2021, Bishop Election, Virtual/Location TBD

I have been attending the Synod Vice President monthly meetings along with Pr. Walter May, who has since retired. Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe has taken over the role of Executive, Synod Relations. This is a very informative meeting for me to attend because it gives me greater insight into how the synods work with each other from a laity perspective. These lay church leaders share a lot of information with each other that I believe make our synods more effective in what they do as an expression of this church. They clearly compliment the synod bishops they work with. They recently published a survey that focused on their role and responsibilities. The results indicate there is no need to make constitutional changes in this area at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. They are looking forward to a better understanding of how their professional skills can be used to make the Future Church implementation achieve its purpose.

I attended the Conference of Bishops (COB) virtual meeting in March. Their open meeting segment was focused primarily on committee reports, an update from the Committee on Appeals regarding revisions to the *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* document scheduled for Church Council approval at our April 2021 meeting, a panel discussion on the Post-Pandemic Church by three pastor-theologians and a discussion on Future Church Design and the Conference of Bishops' role in it. Joe Nolte and Pr. Dan Gerrietts attended the meeting as our Church Council member invited guests.

My scheduled retirement in 2020 from my position as city manager of Clearwater was delayed to Spring 2021. The City Council and I have negotiated a June 2021 timeline, and a recruitment firm has been hired and is busy working to have me replaced during the month of June.

Finally, a few closing thoughts. I still believe that Joint Leadership Table collaboration is still the way forward to achieve the Future Directions 2025 goals. However, the Future Church project will influence what this looks like. I believe this collaboration still improves with good governance. A Church Council that fully understands its role and responsibilities and relationship to the other church expressions and Separately Incorporated Ministries of this church makes a better partner to all. I believe we need to get behind Future Church and make it work as intended and leave our egos at the door. We have no choice but to tackle the most difficult challenges and problems that we face in the church. Church Council decision-making must meet the expectations of rostered ministers, lay leaders, and congregational members. God is calling the ELCA to do God's mission in the world. I believe we are all committed to getting it done in Christ's name. The cultural wars that have gripped the political parties and political culture will challenge the church to strengthen its prophetic voice and commitment to social justice. This will be hard work to do. A question that remains in my mind following the 2019 Churchwide Assembly is how we can be the bold church we believe God is calling us to be and balance the disagreement that exists within us. It is not an "either/or," but a "both/and." It is hard to pull that off.

God's Work. Our Hands.

Report from the Secretary

What a difference a year makes! When we gathered at Eaglewood last spring, we thought we were “making history” as the Conference of Bishops and Church Council met jointly for the first time. Little did we know how much history would be made in the following months as the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, just a few short days after our meeting concluded. While so much has changed during these past 12 months, much of the work of the Office of the Secretary remains constant. This report will highlight both.

FUTURE CHURCH/NEW OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

On February 1, we ushered in Future Church. While the work and staff of the former Office of the Secretary continue, we are grateful for the new Office of the Secretary (OS) which now includes the areas of Synod Relations and Governance. In these early days, I have so appreciated new opportunities to work together and value the even closer collegial relationships that this new design allows.

Yet just as we are settling into the new OS, change is already part of our new reality. The Rev. Walter May retired from his service as Executive, Synod Relations on March 20. On March 19 churchwide staff gathered online to celebrate Walter’s many years of faithful service. I have valued Walter as colleague and friend during his 13 years on the churchwide staff. We first worked together closely in his supervision of the regional coordinators when campus ministry was added to their portfolio in 2009. During my last eight years in the Office of the Secretary, we have had many opportunities for close collaboration as we each related to synods in our unique ways. Whether serving as congregational pastor, synod staff, or as Executive, Synod Relations, his love for this church, the people of this church, and the God whom we serve has always been wonderfully evident. We wish him well in his new vocation of retirement and look forward to keeping in touch.

We are delighted that Deacon MaryAnn Schwabe accepted the call to serve as the new Executive, Synod Relations. MaryAnn most recently served as the coordinator of the Systems Academy, and that work follows her into the Office of the Secretary, given the significant ways it serves as a resource for synod staff. She began her new role on March 6, allowing a two-week overlap with Walter for the purpose of orientation and training.

We are also delighted to welcome Sarah Bartelt to the Office of the Secretary as a member of the meetings team. A primary piece of this position’s responsibility will be to serve as registrar for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, so you will get to know her and work with her in that capacity.

2021 SYNOD ASSEMBLIES/BISHOP ELECTIONS

Walter May and I completed our one-on-one conversations with nine of the ten synods holding bishop elections in 2021. Of those ten synods, we know that we will welcome at least seven new bishops. Most of the synods are planning to hold electronic meetings, and I’m grateful to staff members from three of the synods that held online assemblies/elections in 2020 for sharing their wisdom in a webinar in January.

2021 is the year that synod assemblies elect voting members to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Information regarding allocation of voting members per synod was shared with synod bishops, vice-presidents, and secretaries last October, as well as information regarding the 16 synods that will vote on nominees to be presented for election to the ELCA Church Council at the next Churchwide Assembly. A listing of churchwide representatives to synod assemblies is provided in an addendum to this report.

2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

At this point, we remain hopeful that we will be able to gather in Columbus, Ohio, August 8–12, for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. We have set July as a deadline for making a final decision regarding the safety and feasibility of meeting in person. In anticipation of that assembly, we hosted a webinar on Memorials and Resolutions February 25, just one example of ways the new OS is working together. My thanks to Keith Fry, Marit Johnson, and Jodi Slattery for their collective efforts in making this a reality, and to Cheryl Chatman for being part of the webinar.

CONGREGATION REPORTS

We are grateful for the congregations that have filed their annual Congregation Report. In our efforts to accommodate all the permutations of in-person, online, and hybrid worship, the team working on Form A came up with a formula for calculating the combined average that they realized—too late—would not give the desired result. There will be an enormous asterisk in the record books beside any numbers that come out of this pandemic experience. But I have been encouraged to see congregations discovering that, in spite of everything, they have helped reach millions of people with Good News in surprising and creative ways this year, ways that many of them might not have imagined or undertaken had it not been for the strange blessing of this time.

CHURCH COUNCIL CALLS

The Church Council has authorized the secretary of this church to issue letters of call on its behalf and has requested an annual report of the letters of call issued. I am attaching to this report an addendum that lists all Church Council calls to ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service issued in 2020.

ROSTER MANUAL UPDATE

In response to a request from the Service and Justice unit, the Office of the Secretary has collaborated with those responsible for global mission in developing a set of protocols for ministers of Word and Sacrament from Lutheran World Federation companion churches who are seeking to serve in congregations and other ministry settings in the ELCA. The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops has had opportunity to review the suggested process. These protocols, should they be approved by the Church Council, would become part of the roster manual.

COMMITTEE ON APPEALS/DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

The Committee on Appeals has shared with the Church Council its proposed revision of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* for potential council approval. Meeting on average bi-monthly, this committee has brought such earnest care and concern to the task set before them. While I'm deeply grateful to all 12 members of the committee, I particularly want to thank Murray Sagsveen, chair; Pastor Fritz Fowler, vice-chair; and Pastor Cheryl Meinschein, secretary, for the considerable time and attention they have devoted to this effort. They will once again join the Church Council as you engage in conversation and decision-making relative to these proposed guidelines.

Change and constancy. Seeming opposites that regularly meet and mingle in this journey we call life. We give thanks to the God who accompanies us in the midst of both.

#	SYNOD	DATE	ELECTION	REPRESENTATIVE
5E	Western Iowa	April 10, 2021		Christopher Otten
5H	Northwest Synod of Wisc	April 17, 2021		Judith Roberts
3G	Minneapolis Area	April 23-24, 2021		Bill Horne
7F	Southeastern Pennsylvania	April 23-24, 2021		Phil Hirsch
1A	Alaska	April 23-25, 2021		Iain Chester
1D	Northwest Intermountain	April 23-25, 2021		Judith Roberts
4D	N.Texas - N. Louisiana	April 24, 2021		Christopher Otten
2E	Rocky Mountain	April 29-May 1, 2021		Christine Mangale
3E	Northeastern Minnesota	April 30-May 1, 2021		Bishop Eaton
5J	Greater Milwaukee	April 30-May 1, 2021		Amy Reumann
1E	Oregon	April 30-May 2, 2021		Rafael Malpica-Padilla
4C	Arkansas-Oklahoma	April 30-May 2, 2021		Ruben Duran
2C	Pacifica	May 1, 2021		Sue Rothmeyer
2A	Sierra Pacific	May 6-8, 2021	X	Bill Horne
7A	New Jersey	May 7-8, 2021		Phil Hirsch
3I	Southeastern Minnesota	May 8, 2021		Judith Roberts
5G	Northern Great Lakes	May 13-15, 2021		Bishop Eaton
1C	Southwestern Washington	May 14-15, 2021		Kristen Opalinski
3H	Saint Paul Area	May 14-15, 2021		Mikka McCracken
5I	East-Central Synod of Wisc	May 14-15, 2021		Bill Horne
1B	Northwest Washington	May 15, 2021		Christopher Otten
6B	North/West Lower Michigan	May 15, 2021		Jodi Slattery
6A	Southeast Michigan	May 15, 2021		Lori Fedyk
3D	Northwestern Minnesota	May 21-22, 2021		Ruben Duran
4F	Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast	May 21-22, 2021		Lamont Wells
5D	Southeastern Iowa	May 21-22, 2021		Carmelo Santos
7D	Upstate New York	June 3-5, 2021	X	Victoria Flood
7E	Northeastern Pennsylvania	June 3-5, 2021		Jodi Slattery
9B	North Carolina	June 3-5, 2021	X	Bill Horne
1F	Montana	June 4-5, 2021		Ruben Duran
2B	Southwest California	June 4-5, 2021	X	Phil Hirsch
3A	Western North Dakota	June 4-5, 2021		Robin Brown
3C	South Dakota	June 4-5, 2021		Amy Reumann
4B	Central States	June 4-5, 2021		Judith Roberts
6F	Southern Ohio	June 4-5, 2021		Bishop Gafkjen
8C	Allegheny	June 4-5, 2021	X	Sue Rothmeyer
8D	Lower Susquehanna	June 4-5, 2021		Christopher Otten
8F	Delaware-Maryland	June 4-5, 2021		Iain Chester
8G	Metropolitan Washington, DC	June 4-5, 2021		Mikka McCracken
4E	Southwestern Texas	June 4-6, 2021		Carmelo Santos
9D	Southeastern	June 5, 2021		Albert Starr
4A	Nebraska	June 5, 2021		Rafael Malpica-Padilla
5A	Metropolitan Chicago	June 5, 2021		Keith Fry
5C	Central/Southern Illinois	June 5-6, 2021		John Weit
3F	Southwestern Minnesota	June 6, 11-12, 2021	X	Rafael Malpica Padilla
2D	Grand Canyon	June 10-11, 2021		Albert Starr
6C	Indiana-Kentucky	June 10-12, 2021		Javier Goitia
8A	Northwestern Pennsylvania	June 10-12, 2021		Nick Kiger

8B	Southwestern Pennsylvania	June 10-12, 2021		Jill Beverlin
5F	Northeastern Iowa	June 11-12, 2021	X	Lori Fedyk
6E	Northeastern Ohio	June 11-12, 2021		Bishop Eaton
9A	Virginia	June 11-12, 2021		Mary Streufert
7B	New England	June 12, 2021		John Weit
5L	La Crosse Area	June 12-14, 2021	X	Sue Rothmeyer
5B	Northern Illinois	June 18-19, 2021		Victoria Flood
9F	Caribbean	June 18-19, 2021		Javier Goitia
8E	Upper Susquehanna	June 19, 2021		N/A
9C	South Carolina	June 26, 2021		Lori Fedyk
3B	Eastern North Dakota	August 13-15, 2021		Tammy Jackson
7C	Metropolitan New York	August 20-21, 2021		
9E	Florida-Bahamas	September 17-19, 2021		
6D	Northwestern Ohio	September 24-25, 2021		Nick Kiger
7G	Slovak Zion	Fall (Nov/Dec)	X	Bishop Eaton
5K	South-Central Synod of Wisc			N/A
8H	West Virginia-Western MD		X	Bishop Eaton

Report of the Secretary: Addendum B

Church Council Calls Issued in 2020

Name	Start Date	Job Title	Organization
Carmelo Santos Rolon	1/6/2020	Director, Theological Diversity & Engagement	ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop
Joshua C. Johnson	1/26/2020	Chaplain	
Rachel A. Eskesen	2/1/2020	Area Desk Director for Europe	
Adrainne J. Gray	2/1/2020	Communion Relations	Lutheran World Federation
Kaari M. Reiersen	2/1/2020	Corporate Social Responsibility Associate	ELCA - Advancement Services Team, Chicago
Grant R. Applehans	2/1/2020	YAGM Country Coordinator	Madagascar
Amanda R. Applehans	2/1/2020	YAGM Country Coordinator	Madagascar
Andrea E. Roske-Metcalf	2/1/2020	YAGM Country Coordinator	Nepal
Zachary S. Courter	2/1/2020	YAGM Country Coordinator for Central Europe	
John E. Weit	2/7/2020	Executive for Worship	ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop
Norman K. Fry	2/10/2020	Assistant to the Secretary	ELCA Office of the Secretary
Joshua J. Semovoski	3/13/2020	Chaplain	
James A. Mossman	3/23/2020	Director for Evangelical Mission	Western Iowa Synod, ELCA
Carolyn M. Schneider	4/1/2020	Seminary Faculty	Philippines
J. D. Peterson	4/6/2020	Director for Evangelical Mission	Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA
Laura J. Gifford	5/4/2020	Candidacy & Leadership Manager, Reg. 1 & 2	
Shannon E. Johnson	5/4/2020	Project Coordinator	
Marianne B. Brock	5/4/2020	Regional Gift Planner	ELCA Foundation
Barbara J. Lund	7/6/2020	Senior Director	
Martine Joseph	7/10/2020	Chaplain	
Brooke N. Petersen	7/15/2020	Candidacy Coordinator	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Dominic S. Smyth	7/16/2020	Chaplain	
Kate R. Bohmer	7/20/2020	Chaplain	US Department of Veterans Affairs
Robert G. Erwin	8/1/2020	President	United Lutheran Seminary - Philadelphia
Sara L. Wilson	8/22/2020	Associate Director of Seminary Relations	Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
Sherri L. Frederikson	9/1/2020	Pastor	The American Lutheran Congregation
Kathryn A. Grindberg	9/21/2020	Director of Contextual Education	Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
Peter Vethanayagamony	10/2/2020	Professor	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Report from the Treasurer

Unrestricted Operating Results

Much has happened over the past twelve months, but this year has been a reminder that God will provide. The net operating results of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were favorable to the budget for the year ended January 31, 2021 by \$1.6 million. While Operating Revenues fell short of the budget and prior year by \$6.2 million and \$8.1 million, respectively, reductions in operating expenses of \$7.8 million versus budget more than offset the difference. Spending was \$6.4 million less than the prior year. It is important to note that the expenditure savings were administrative in nature and not due to a reduction in grants or support of our ministries. Not only did revenues exceed expenditures, but this was done without the need to utilize \$3.1 million of reserves that were included in the original budget. These reserves are currently expected to be needed in 2021.

The generosity of our members, congregations, and synods through sharing gifts in the form of Mission Support certainly surpassed our expectations at the onset of the pandemic. Mission Support for the year held strong at 97.6% of the FY20 budget and 95.6% of FY19. Thank you! In 2020, the median of mission support shared by congregations with synods was 5.7% and the average shared by synods with the churchwide organization was 45%. The remaining operating revenue shortfall of \$3.0 million is primarily in fundraising categories, especially related to missionaries and young adults in global mission – programs that had to be suspended due to COVID-19. See Revenue Summary. Total gifts (including mission support and restricted gifts) stewarded by the fundraising team exceeded \$76 million and over 96% of budget plus \$1.8 million of unplanned gifts raised in support of COVID-19.

As mentioned previously, expenses were significantly below the budget, running at 88.5 percent of the spending authorization. Near the beginning of the pandemic, in anticipation of significant revenue shortfalls, the Administrative Team (officers and senior executives) agreed to reduce unrestricted spending by over \$8 million or 12 percent. As the year progressed and mission support continued to be stronger than expected, programmatic grants were at risk in the initial reduction strategy were released to provide planned levels of support to these ministries. Like many organizations, much has been learned about new ways to operate and will continue to shape our future work.

ELCA World Hunger

Total ELCA World Hunger revenues for the year exceeded \$24.4 million vis a vis a spending plan of \$21.5 million. The year was benefitted by a single bequest of \$2.0 million. Giving from individuals, congregations, and synods was \$19.1 million, just 105,000 or 0.5% below the budget. This compares to \$19.3 million in direct giving in FY19. Thank you for your continued support of this work!

ELCA World Hunger expenses were lower than budget primarily due to reduced administrative costs and delays in some grant distribution. Because over half of ELCA World Hunger annual funding typically is received in the last 3 months of the fiscal year, we carry forward a fund balance to allow for consistent spending during the beginning of the next fiscal year. As a result, the proposed FY21 budget includes incremental spending of \$2.7 million to assist in our ministry of feeding the world, both domestically and internationally.

Lutheran Disaster Response

Support received for Lutheran Disaster Response in FY20 was \$7.4 million, including the final receipts for a 3-year pass-through grant funded by FEMA to support rebuilding after Hurricane Harvey. During FY20 \$10.7 million was distributed to support disaster efforts both domestically and internationally. This included \$2.0 million for international COVID-19 support.

COVID-19 Appeal

In April 2020, a fundraising appeal to offer direct operational ministry support for congregations, synods, and local ministries was launched. Over \$1.8 million has been received to date and nearly \$1.6 million has been distributed through 190 block grants to 63 synods, serving the needs of over 400,000 people and funding more than 830 ministries across this church.

Despite the challenges that the pandemic has presented, the financial results of the organization were solid. This is truly a reflection of what it means to be church together and to trust in God's faithfulness. One of my favorite scripture passages is Jeremiah 29:11, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." I remain excited about the possibilities of Future Church and the work that we will do together.

Report from the Conference of Bishops

Bishop Tracie Bartholomew, Chair

The March 4-5, 2021 meeting of the Conference of Bishops (COB) was our second meeting held via Zoom. While this technology has allowed us to gather virtually, I long to be in person and hope that our October meeting will be held in person in Chicago. We thank the Rev. Dan Gerriets and Mr. Joe Nolte for joining our meeting as representatives of the Church Council. I am especially grateful to the Rev. Walter May and Ms. Jennifer Johnson for the support that makes our online meetings possible.

Thursday, March 4 was more focused on the “business” side of our conference work. We approved recommendations from the Roster Committee and appointed Bishop Kevin Strickland as liaison to 1517 Media; we heard reports from Deacon John Weit (Executive, Worship), Treasurer Lori Fedyk, and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; we spent significant time reviewing the draft *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*; and we engaged with Ms. Judith Roberts (Senior Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) in continuing conversation to move us toward authentic diversity in the ELCA.

The COB received the latest draft (version 21) of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* from the Committee on Appeals for our review, as we have several times over this past year. Officers of that committee led us through the updates. After considerable conversation, the sense of the COB is that we support this revised document, except paragraph B5. The COB is equally divided about B5 for a variety of reasons and reached no consensus to support it as written in the draft shared with us. The liaison bishops are prepared to speak to this during the Church Council consideration of this document.

The bishops thank the members of the Committee on Appeals for their hard work on this document. We recognize the enormity of the task they had and appreciate their deep listening and faithfulness in crafting a clear document. Our hope is this document will be a living document that is reviewed and updated more often than it has been in the past.

The COB is committed to working for diversity, equity, and inclusion in this church, which means eradicating racism in all its forms and expanding leadership. Several years ago, we agreed to using part of every COB meeting for this work. At this meeting, Ms. Judith Roberts introduced us to Mr. Richard Webb and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). Several synods are already engaging Mr. Webb and the IDI tool in their work; the COB will be looking at how we can use this tool in our work together.

In response to growing anti-Asian racism over this past year, the COB affirmed a statement brought to us from the Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders and committed to standing against racist rhetoric and action directed toward our Asian siblings.

Friday, March 5 was spent less on the business of the conference and more on looking forward. We engaged in conversation about The Post-Pandemic Church, led by panelists Rector Mary Hinkle Shore (Dean of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary), Dr. Anthony Bateza (Associate Professor of Religion at St. Olaf College), and the Rev. Peter Marty (Pastor of St. Paul, Davenport, IA). Bishop Ann Svennungsen moderated this insightful conversation.

We received updates from and had conversations with Dr. Krish Vignarajah of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services; our ELCA Future Church Team (with an invitation to participate in a leadership cohort with Paradox Strategies, utilizing *Being the Boss* by Dr. Linda Hill); and a look at our shared values across all expressions of our church.

This was the last meeting for Pr. Walter May (Executive, Synod Relations) before his retirement later this month. He has been a partner in this work for 13 years, working with the COB and serving as a gateway into the churchwide organization for the bishops. Walter’s was often the first voice new bishops heard following election as he called to welcome us on board, and one of the last voices as he conducted

exit interviews with those leaving the COB. Often behind the scenes, Walter's contributions to our work were those of encouragement, support, accountability, and pastoral care. He will be missed.

The COB has a long list of conversations and work that will continue beyond our meeting. What we do together, whether regarded as routine institutional business or embarking on exciting new ventures in the world, is borne from a deep love for and commitment to the ELCA expression of the church of Jesus Christ. I am honored to be a part of this group of faithful servants.

Standing Rules for April 2021 Church Council Meeting

The following standing rules will serve to facilitate the work of the ELCA Church Council at its April 2021 meeting. Relevant portions of the ELCA Constitution and the *ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual (GPM)* are provided as background.

Background Information:

Members of the Church Council

Church Council Voting Members

14.31. The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the four churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and at least 32 and not more than 45 other persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

Advisory Members

14.32.01. The Church Council shall have as liaison members nine synod bishops, each elected by the Conference of Bishops to one four-year term. One bishop shall be elected from each region.

14.32.02. Liaison members of the Church Council shall have voice but not vote.

14.41.02. Liaison bishops, ecumenical guests, and other advisors to the Church Council may serve as advisory members to the council's committees with voice but not vote.

Visitors/Guests

GPM, pp. 18–19: In accordance with the Open Meetings policy, visitors are welcome to attend open sessions of meetings of the Church Council or its committees, but they do not have voice or vote. At the discretion of the chairperson and within the constraints of the agenda, the chairperson may invite comments or call upon visitors to speak. When a matter on the agenda is pending, debate and discussion ordinarily will take place among Church Council members before comments from visitors are invited.

Members of the Church Council, staff and guests share the responsibility to maintain good order and to not disrupt meetings. To assist in maintaining good order, persons in the meeting space are requested to mute electronic devices and to refrain from behavior that disrupts the meeting. Electronic recording or live-streaming of Church Council or committee meetings is not authorized without prior permission of the chairperson.

Meeting Procedures

14.12.02. The Church Council shall use parliamentary procedure in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the council.

GPM, pg. 16: In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, the Church Council may meet in executive session, either when indicated on the agenda or upon adoption of a motion to enter executive session. Prior to beginning an executive session, the chairperson shall identify which staff members and others are invited to participate in the executive session. If actions are taken in executive session that may be publicly disclosed, the chair will report those actions when the Church Council returns to open session. If confidential minutes are taken in executive session, they will remain confidential unless authorized for public distribution by the Executive Committee.

En Bloc Resolution

The responses to certain churchwide assembly actions, synod council actions, and previous Church Council actions may be approved by an *en bloc* resolution. In addition, Church Council committees may place recommendations *en bloc*. *En bloc* resolutions requiring two-thirds vote of the voting members present will follow the proper voting procedures.

Standing Rules:

Voting Procedures

Voting normally will take place using a separate link through a voting form or poll app. For council members who do not have access to the link, they may submit their vote electronically to a designated person. As directed by the chair, voting may also take place through a voice vote.

Obtaining the Floor

In plenary sessions of the Church Council, the voting members have prior right to obtain the floor, unless the chair determines that it is in the best interests of the council to call upon a liaison bishop, a churchwide staff member, or another individual with voice. Voting members may indicate their intention to speak by using the "Raise hand" feature in Microsoft Teams. Once a voting member has been called upon, the member should click on "Lower hand." The conversation or chat window is not to be used for comments or questions during the meeting.

Questions of Privilege

Questions of privilege that relate to the council as a whole may be raised in the course of the meeting by using the "Raise hand" feature. These would include such concerns as technical issues or emergencies of various sorts. Questions of personal privilege that are not urgent and do not relate to the Church Council as a whole are out of order. Requests for time in plenary session for questions of personal privilege (e.g., personal announcements, comments on matters not on the agenda, reflections on the meaning of votes after they are taken) must be submitted electronically to Joseph Schmidt at Joseph.Schmidt@elca.org. The chair may allow such matters to be addressed at a later time.

En Bloc Agenda and Deadlines

To call for separate consideration of an item in *en bloc* or to submit new business, a voting member must submit notification electronically to the secretary of this church (Sue.Rothmeyer@elca.org) prior to the established deadline, Friday, April 16, 2021, 12:00 p.m. (CDT).

Technical Details

Plenary sessions will be recorded for minutes purposes only. The recordings will not be made public. Electronic recording or live-streaming of Church Council or committee meetings is not authorized without prior permission of the chairperson.

Microphones should be muted unless a person is speaking or presenting.

Church Council members and liaison bishops are encouraged to use video and may wish to use a virtual background or blur their background for privacy purposes. All other meeting participants are asked to turn their video off to conserve bandwidth, unless they are invited to speak or present, at which time the individual is encouraged to turn on the video.

The conversation or chat window will be disabled for the meeting. If enabled for a specific purpose, the conversation or chat window should be used solely for that purpose.

Report of the Treasurer

Church Council

April 17, 2021



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Unrestricted Fund Results

Unrestricted Fund Results thru 1/31/2021

(in Thousands)

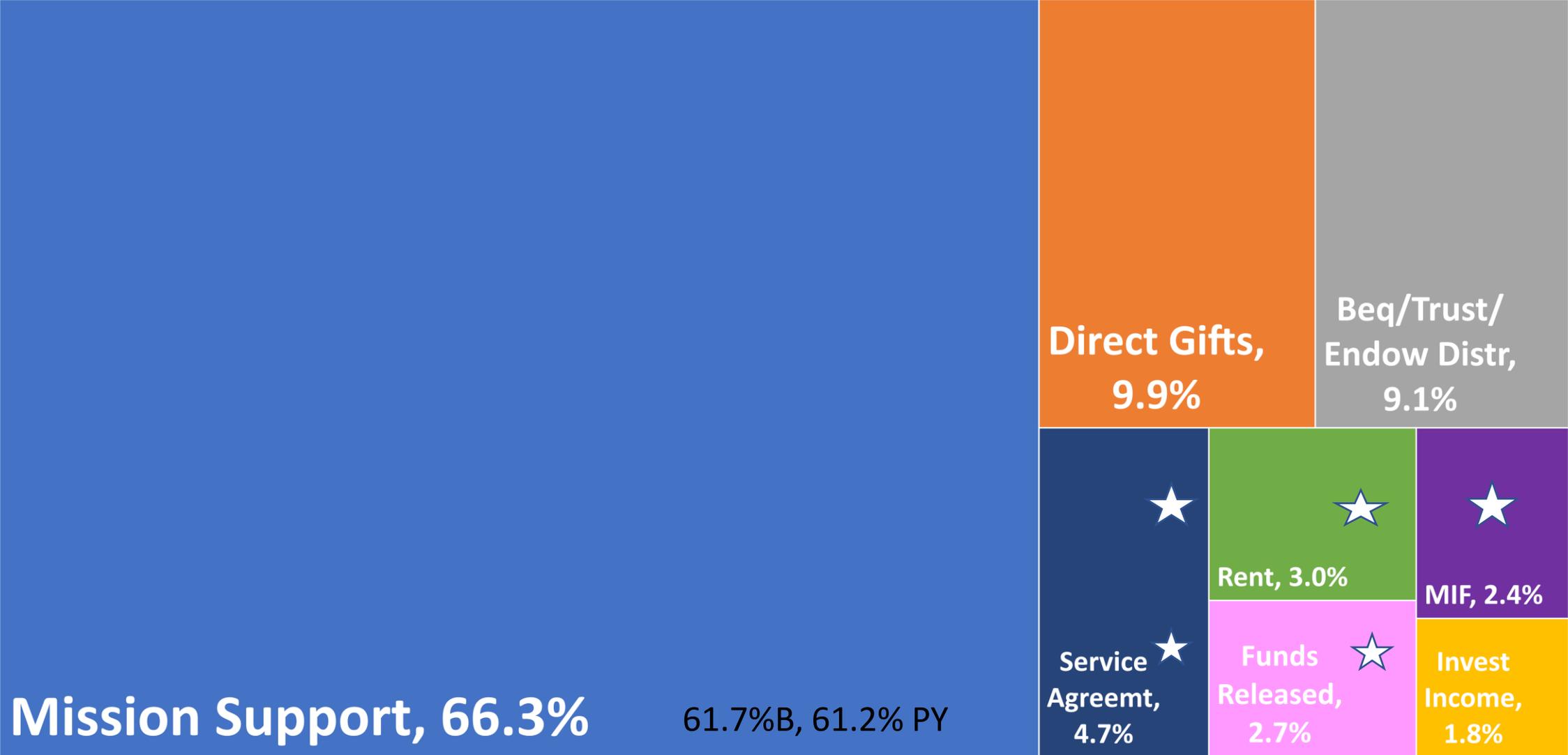
	Actual	Fav (Unfav) Variance From	
		Budget	Prior Year
Revenue			
Mission Support	\$40,739	\$(1,011)	\$(1,850)
Other	<u>19,066</u>	<u>(2,037)</u>	<u>(4,983)</u>
Total Revenue	59,805	(3,048)	(6,833)
Des/Res Funds Released	1,688	(3,126)	(1,241)
Expenses	<u>(59,887)</u>	(7,780)	(6,435)
Rev in Excess of Exp	\$1,606		



Unrestricted Fund Sources of Revenue (in 000s)

	Actual	Fav (Unfav) Variance From	
		Budget	Prior Year
Mission Support	\$40,739	\$(1,011)	\$(1,850)
Direct Gifts	6,111	(3,021)	(659)
Investment Income	1,100	(575)	(4,153)
Beq/Trust/Endow Distr	5,608	361	(1,131)
Rent	1,850	105	36
Service Agreements/Other	2,897	1,093	924
Mission Investment Fund	1,500	---	---
Release from Rest/Des Fund	1,688	(3,126)	(1,241)
Total	\$61,493	\$(6,174)	\$(8,074)

Sources of Unrestricted Income

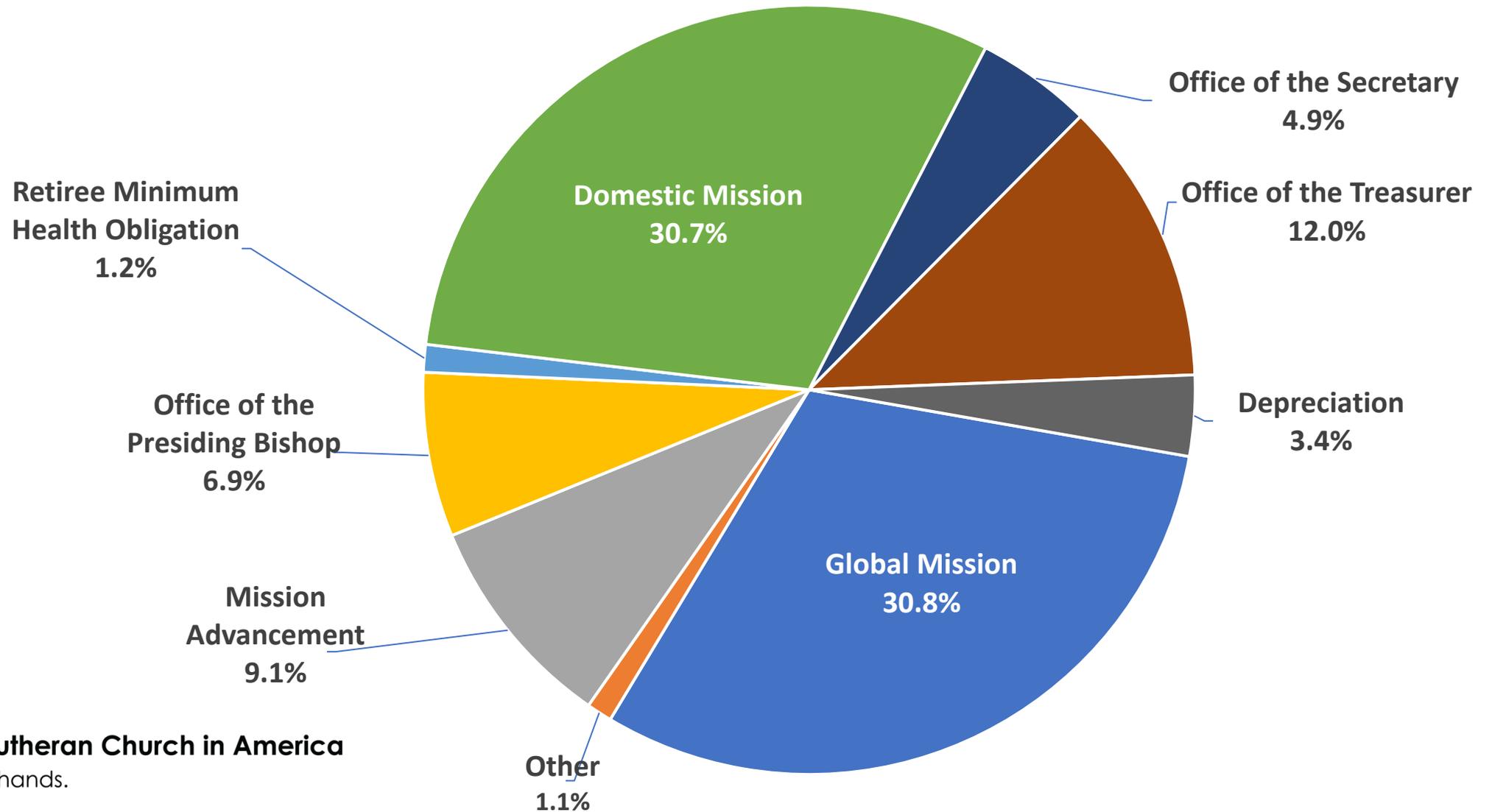


2020 Spending by Office/Unit

	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Spending Authorization</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	<u>Percent of Budget</u>
UNITS				
Domestic Mission	\$21,555,260	\$ 24,407,179	\$ 2,851,919	88.32%
Global Mission	10,799,475	14,012,772	3,213,297	77.07%
Mission Advancement	4,359,274	5,159,277	800,003	84.49%
OFFICES				
Presiding Bishop	5,455,748	6,257,531	801,783	87.19%
Treasurer	9,444,690	9,449,667	4,977	99.95%
Secretary	3,831,902	4,079,026	247,124	93.94%
OTHER				
General Treasury	842,817	151,200	(691,617)	557.42%
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	917,718	1,150,000	232,282	79.80%
Depreciation	2,680,099	3,000,000	319,901	89.34%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$59,886,984</u>	<u>\$ 67,666,652</u>	<u>\$ 7,779,668</u>	<u>88.50%</u>



Expenditures by Churchwide Unit/Office, including World Hunger



2020 ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger

- Over \$24.4 million in income was received during 2020
- Direct giving from individuals, congregations and synods was \$19.1 million, representing a decrease of less than 1% over the prior year
- Total WH revenues were benefitted by a single \$2 million bequest for total bequest income of \$4.2 million
- Expenditures were lower due to canceled events and some delays in grants due to satisfaction of requirements
- 2019 Decision to reserve spending of bequests for following year. New restricted fund to enhance tracking.



2020 Lutheran Disaster Response

Lutheran Disaster Response

- \$7.4 million in gifts were received during 2020 and \$10.7 million was distributed
- \$2 million of support was provided for international COVID-19 relief



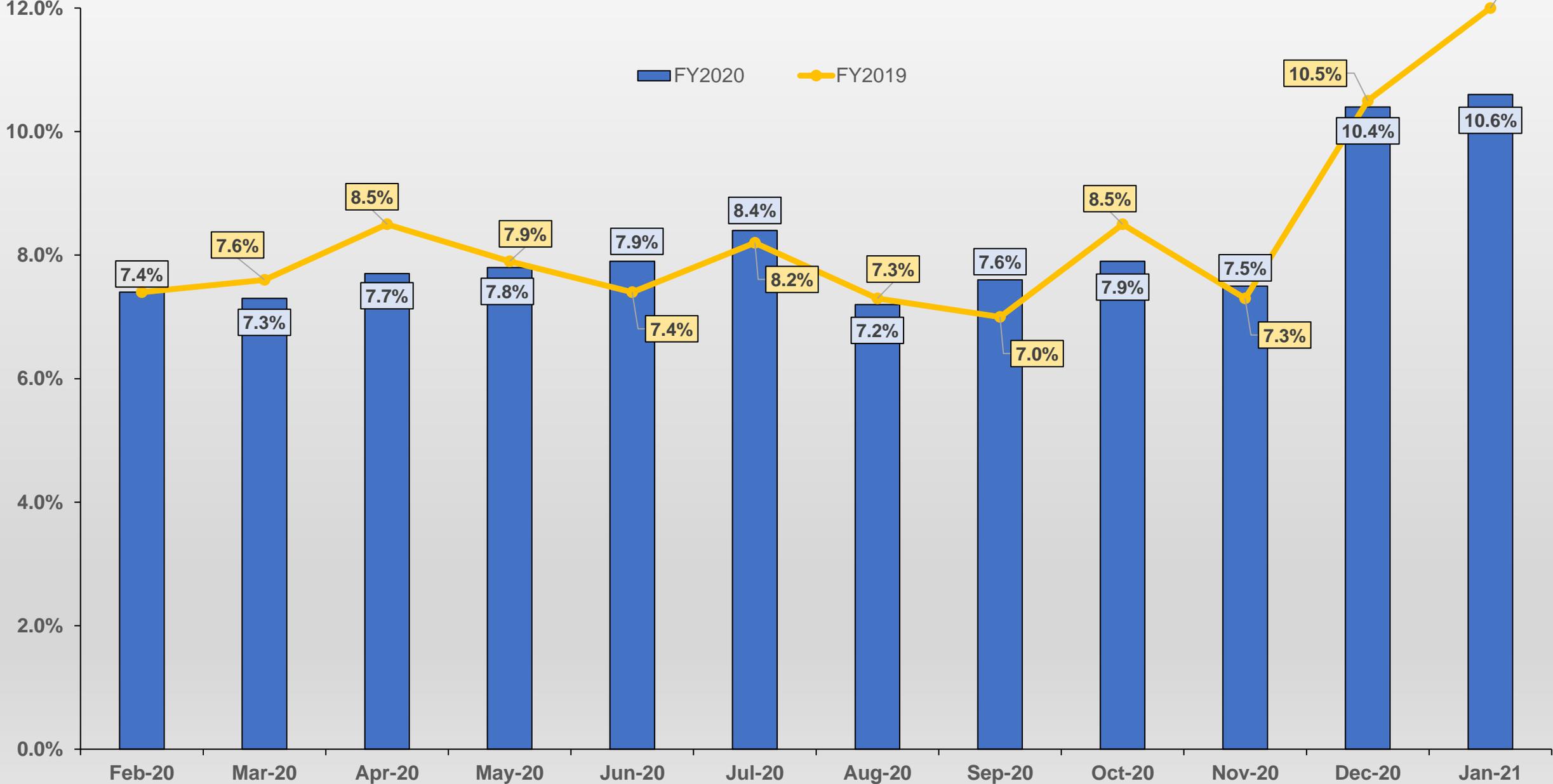
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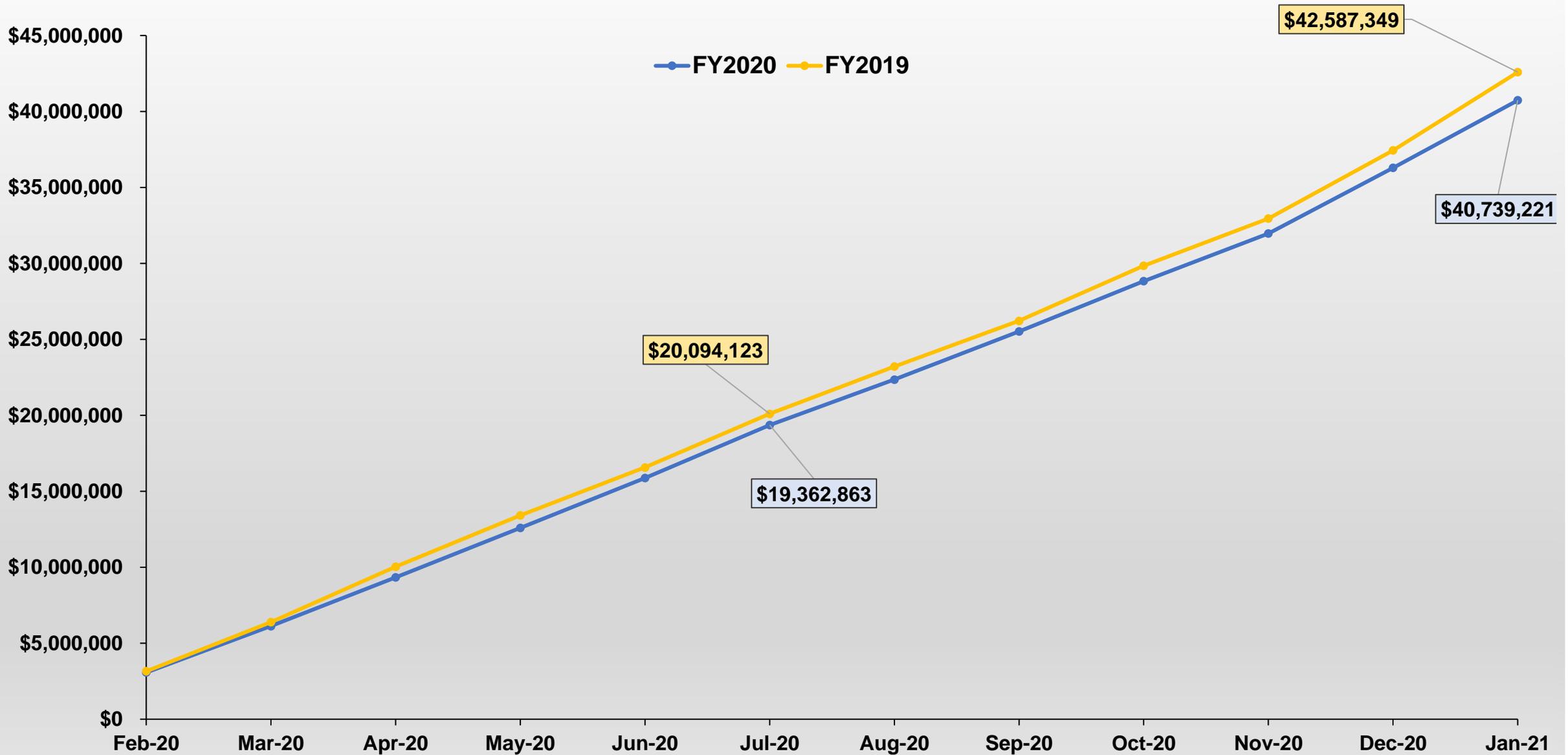
Mission Support Update

2019 vs 2020 Monthly Pattern of Synod Mission Support Sharing

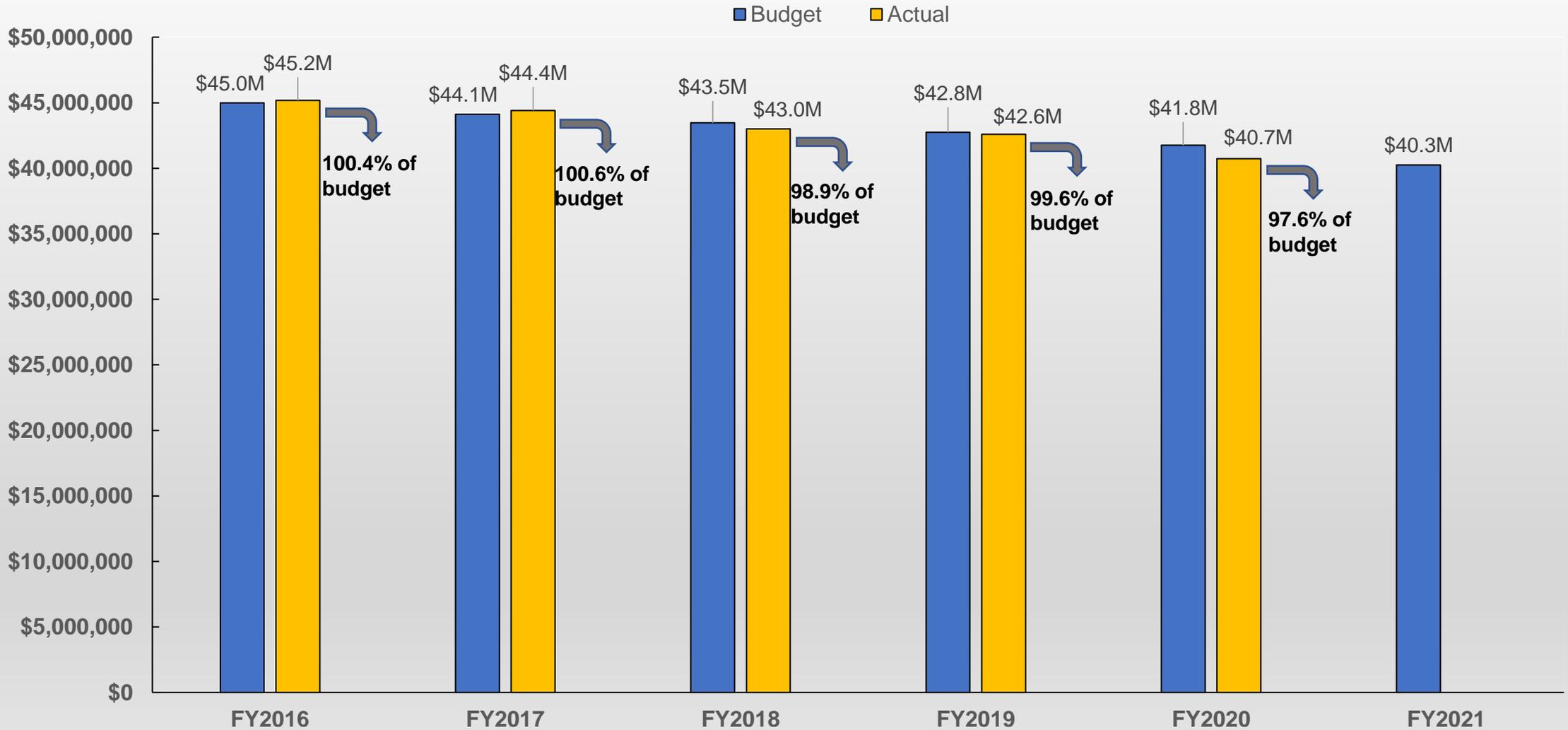
(Percents represent the percent of annual budgeted Mission Support revenue received by the churchwide organization each month)



Monthly Aggregate CWO Mission Support Revenue



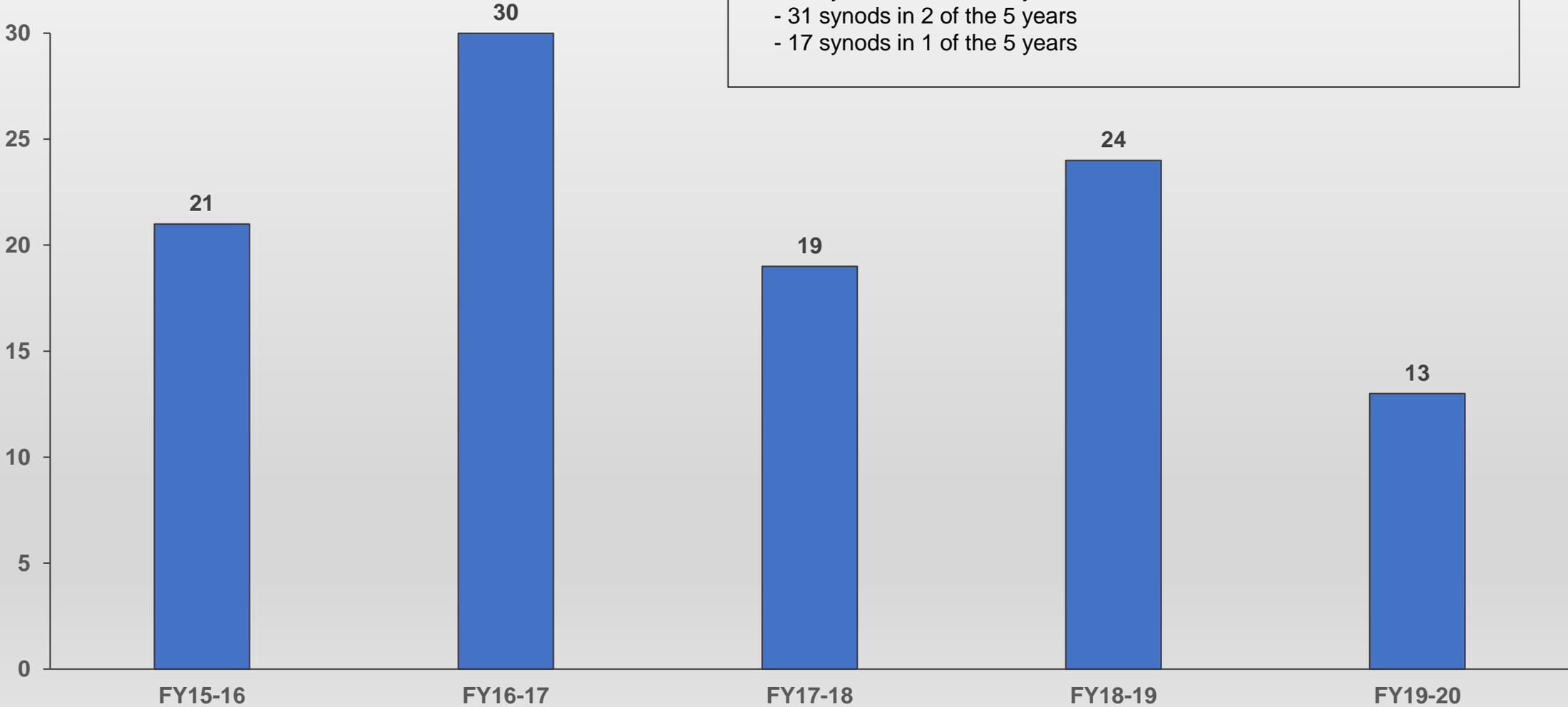
Churchwide Organization Mission Support Budget vs Actual FY2016 - FY2020



Number of Synods with Higher Dollar Mission Support Share Year-Over-Year

57 different synods represented in at least 1 of these years:

- 0 synods in all 5 years
- 1 synod in 4 of the 5 years
- 8 synods in 3 of the 5 years
- 31 synods in 2 of the 5 years
- 17 synods in 1 of the 5 years



FY21 Spending Authorization

FY21 Spending Authorization

Home Areas	2021 Budget			% of Total
	Unrestricted	World Hunger	Total	
Christian Community and Leadership	\$ 22,268,376		\$ 22,268,376	25%
Innovation	2,111,697		2,111,697	2%
Service and Justice	12,560,316	23,500,000	36,060,316	40%
Operations				
Office of the Presiding Bishop	11,962,108		11,962,108	13%
Office of the Secretary	5,061,939		5,061,939	6%
Office of the Treasurer	8,732,564		8,732,564	10%
General Treasury	150,000		150,000	-
Depreciation	3,000,000		3,000,000	3%
Total Spending Authorization Requested	\$ 65,847,000	\$ 23,500,000	\$ 89,347,000	100%
Total Approved at November 2020 meeting	65,847,000	21,500,000	87,347,000	
Additional Requested	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	

Questions?



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
For the Period Ending Jan 31, 2021

	2020 ACTUAL	2020 BUDGET	2019 ACTUAL	2nd Close Year-to-Date Variance	
				ACTUAL vs. BUDGET Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	40,739,221	41,750,000	42,589,108	(1,010,779)	(1,849,887)
Other	16,810,319	16,353,214	16,186,721	457,105	623,598
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED	57,549,540	58,103,214	58,775,829	(553,674)	(1,226,289)
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Direct Gifts	2,255,670	4,750,000	5,062,571	(2,494,330)	(2,806,901)
Other	-	-	2,799,878	-	(2,799,878)
TOTAL TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	2,255,670	4,750,000	7,862,449	(2,494,330)	(5,606,779)
TOTAL REVENUE	59,805,210	62,853,214	66,638,278	(3,048,004)	(6,833,068)
TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds Released	1,687,534	4,813,438	2,928,843	(3,125,904)	(1,241,309)
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT	61,492,744	67,666,652	69,567,121	(6,173,908)	(8,074,377)
LESS TOTAL EXPENSES	59,886,984	67,666,652	66,321,573	(7,779,668)	(6,434,589)
NET REVENUE OVER (UNDER) EXPENSES	1,605,760	-	3,245,548	1,605,760	(1,639,788)

REVENUE SUMMARY

For the Period Ending Jan 31, 2021

2nd Close

	2020		2019	Year-to-Date Variance	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL vs. BUDGET Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	40,739,221	41,750,000	42,589,108	(1,010,779)	(1,849,887)
Direct Gifts	5,355,499	5,880,000	3,207,879	(524,501)	2,147,620
Investment Income	1,100,091	1,675,380	5,253,397	(575,289)	(4,153,306)
Bequests and Trusts	2,258,643	2,064,000	2,485,550	194,643	(226,907)
Endowment	3,349,445	3,185,460	1,453,933	163,985	1,895,512
Rent	1,849,989	1,744,855	1,813,535	105,134	36,454
Service Level Agreements/Other	2,896,653	1,803,519	1,972,427	1,093,134	924,226
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED	57,549,540	58,103,214	58,775,829	(553,674)	(1,226,289)
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Global Mission - Missionaries	577,768	2,200,000	1,882,232	(1,622,232)	(1,304,464)
Global Mission - YAGM's	177,902	1,050,000	992,218	(872,098)	(814,316)
Bequests and Trusts *	-	-	1,051,326	-	(1,051,326)
Endowment *	-	-	1,748,552	-	(1,748,552)
Direct Gifts	-	-	688,121	-	(688,121)
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	-	-
TOTAL TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	2,255,670	4,750,000	7,862,449	(2,494,330)	(5,606,779)
TOTAL REVENUE	59,805,210	62,853,214	66,638,278	(3,048,004)	(6,833,068)
TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds Released	1,687,534	4,813,438	2,928,843	(3,125,904)	(1,241,309)
Net Operating Revenue and Support	61,492,744	67,666,652	69,567,121	(6,173,908)	(8,074,377)
	-	-	-		

* Actual and budget Temporarily Restricted Bequests and Trusts, Endowment and Direct Gifts are included in the totals for Unrestricted Bequests and Trusts, Endowment and Direct Gifts for this year.

ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION
For the Period Ending Jan 31, 2021

2nd Close

	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Spending Authorization</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	<u>Percent of Budget</u>
UNITS				
Domestic Mission	21,555,260	24,407,179	2,851,919	88.32%
Global Mission	10,799,475	14,012,772	3,213,297	77.07%
Mission Advancement	4,359,274	5,159,277	800,003	84.49%
OFFICES				
Presiding Bishop	5,455,748	6,257,531	801,783	87.19%
Treasurer	9,444,690	9,449,667	4,977	99.95%
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OTHER				
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Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	917,718	1,150,000	232,282	79.80%
Depreciation	2,680,099	3,000,000	319,901	89.34%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u><u>59,886,984</u></u>	<u><u>67,666,652</u></u>	<u><u>7,779,668</u></u>	<u><u>88.50%</u></u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
ELCA WORLD HUNGER
Rollforward of Fund Balance
For the Period Ending January 31, 2021

	<u>2020 ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL VS. BUDGET</u>	<u>2019 ACTUAL</u>
BALANCE, BEG OF YEAR	\$ 2,880,299			\$ 3,406,883
Income				
Direct Giving	19,144,151	19,250,000	(105,849)	19,330,035
Endowments and Donor Requested Pmts	881,417	750,000	131,417	722,361
Bequests & Trusts/Misc	4,167,021	1,500,000	2,667,021	2,548,406
Release - Covid-19 Appeal	248,000		248,000	
Release - Campaign Where Needed Most				750,000
Total Income	24,440,589	21,500,000	2,940,589	23,350,802
Expense				
Transfer Excess Bequest to support Future Yr WH	2,667,021	-	2,667,021	2,548,406
Fundraising Allocation	2,203,308	2,825,000	(621,692)	2,929,435
Domestic Mission	2,652,056	3,543,404	(891,348)	3,542,949
Global Mission	13,537,094	14,006,250	(469,156)	13,801,142
Mission Advancement	647,928	1,221,940	(574,012)	1,055,454
Total Expense	21,707,407	21,596,594	(2,556,208)	23,877,386
NET for 2020	2,733,182			(526,584)
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 5,613,481			\$ 2,880,299

Bequest and Trust income is recognized as received; however, spending of Bequest and Trust income is deferred to the following fiscal year, beginning with FY19.

Summary of Updates to 2020 Boycott and Divestment Review

The inability to gather in person in 2020 and the social and economic strictures engendered by the COVID pandemic made the year an unusual one. Represented below are the categories where there was some degree of change to the previous year's boycott report.

Cruelty to Animals

[People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals \(PETA\)](#) continues to work to encourage clothing companies not to use cruelly treated animals in clothing: Canada Goose, Urban Outfitters/Anthropologie, and Forever 21 are currently targeted for boycott. Conditions for workers in slaughterhouses in the COVID-19 epidemic lead PETA to join with Iowa LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) to call for a meat [boycott](#).

Gun Manufacturers

In 2020, shareholders through ICCR (Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility) have been filing resolutions at Visa and Olin Corporation, as well as American Outdoor Brands (Sturm Ruger). Discussions with Dick's Sporting Goods resulted in the company no longer selling assault rifles and moving away from selling guns at all. Some organizations, such as [state pension funds](#) have divested of gun manufacturers. The 2020 round of resolutions from the ICCR addressed gun and ammunition safety, the role of credit cards in enabling gun purchasing, and lobbying expenditures by Sturm, Ruger.

Fossil Fuels

According to <https://gofossilfree.org/divestment/commitments/>, over 14 trillion dollars' worth of assets have been divested from fossil fuels. In January 2021, General Motors announced it plans to sell only zero-emission vehicles by 2035.

Israel/Palestine Concerns

Several lists concerning the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement continue to be available on sites such as: <https://bdsmovement.net/get-involved/what-to-boycott>. COVID has limited activities, but online campaigns continue.

In March 2020, Microsoft divested from AnyVision, an Israeli facial recognition company whose technology powers Israeli military surveillance of Palestinians living in the West Bank.

Legislators have also pushed back against the BDS movement. The Foundation for Middle East Peace maintains lists of [state](#) and [federal](#) legislation that punishes businesses which engage in BDS. Anti-BDS legislation has been passed in 41 states. Most disallow companies engaging in BDS from getting government contracts.

Treatment of Palestinians and the Palestinian work force during the COVID epidemic has raised a lot of concern but no specific boycotts of private industry were called in relation to that concern.

Facial Recognition Software

IBM has stopped selling facial recognition software, and Amazon paused the development of the technology after pressure from civil liberties advocates. The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility filed shareholder resolutions pressing Amazon on this topic in 2020.

2020 Boycott and Divestment Review

The ELCA's [Boycott Policy](#) policies and procedures document calls for the director for advocacy to review boycotts across the nation and the world annually and will convene, as needed, an inter-unit review group. If a meeting of the group has been convened, a report will be submitted to the ELCA Church Council. The 2020 review does not warrant the convening of an inter-unit review group, as no boycott is recommended.

Background

In recent years social media has changed the landscape surrounding boycotts. The rise of websites such as www.moveon.org, www.avaaz.org/page/en/, and www.change.org has made it possible for a very small group of people to develop a global platform for their concerns. These campaigns seem to form quickly but often disappear just as quickly. Some websites have been developed just to provide information on the status of boycotts including www.ethicalconsumer.org. This site appears to keep its information current and notes when boycotts have been resolved. The [Boycott Owl](#) site provides space for starting a boycott; lists the most popular boycotts; and displays the number of participants in each listed boycott.

Another focus in recent years has been the rise of divestment campaigns regarding the use of fossil fuels. It is worth recalling that the ELCA has no generic policy and procedure surrounding divestment. This report focuses on both boycott and divestment. The report covers the areas listed below.

- Boycott Campaigns
 - Fast Food – Wendy's;
 - Cruelty to Animals (including animal testing);
 - Breast Milk Substitute and Water Extraction;
 - Gun violence;
 - Airlines and global deportation of asylum seekers; and
 - Refusal to purchase Israeli settlement products, sponsorship of Israel Football Association, etc.
- Divestment Campaigns
 - Fossil Fuels;
 - Companies operating in Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank;
 - Private prisons.

There is no recommendation for the ELCA to pursue a boycott or divestment based on this 2020 review.

Boycotts

- **Fast Food- Wendy's:** Calls continue for Wendy's to join the Fair Food Program (FFP). The [FFP](#) seeks to provide protection for workers by implementing human rights codes of conduct; and purchasers agree to pay a small premium per pound of tomatoes. Historically, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has issued calls to boycott Wendy's for its refusal to join the FFP as it continued to purchase tomatoes from suppliers in Mexico where there were allegations of abuse of workers, including sexual violence. The website www.boycott-wendys.org/why-boycott-wendys/ additionally alleges that Wendy's is profiting from farmworker poverty. On June 5, 2018, Wendy's issued an announcement in the [Wall Street Journal](#) of its intention to stop sourcing its supply of tomatoes from Mexico, and source instead from greenhouse producers in the United States and Canada. The switch to greenhouse producers is not without controversy, however. Similar violence and abuse have been reported as happening to greenhouse workers. [Protests on college campuses](#) picked up in 2019 as college students, who represent a target demographic for Wendy's, became aware of the work of the CIW. Needless to say, the dearth of college students on campus in 2020 meant no campus activity. In late 2019 hundreds of [farmworkers](#) marched to the Manhattan offices of Triun Partners, one of the largest shareholders of Wendy's. The farmworkers demanded Wendy's sign onto the FFP. Wendy's is the [only major fast food corporation](#) that has elected not to join FFP. McDonald's, Burger King, Yum! Brands and Subway are already participating. Wendy's switch to sourcing its tomatoes from greenhouses must be monitored for human rights violations. As Lutherans we are "[e]mpowered by hope in the God who raised the crucified Jesus from the dead as a sign of God's ultimate victory, this church is freed to acknowledge failures and take up responsibility as individuals and in corporate witness... The ELCA will support domestic and international human rights institutions, foster deliberation, and engage in sustained action that seek rights for any neighbors – especially the vulnerable – who are not being treated with the dignity that is God's gift." *As of March 2020, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers suspended in-person action due to COVID-19.*
 - **Cruelty to Animals:** [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals \(PETA\)](#) sponsors many boycotts and shopping campaigns as well as a searchable database to find companies that don't test products on animals. See <http://features.peta.org/cruelty-free-company-search/index.aspx>. Some of these campaigns relate to personal, environmental and health issues which could be embraced at an individual level via our *Caring for Creation* social statement. PETA continues to work to encourage clothing companies not to use cruelly treated animals in clothing: Canada Goose, Urban Outfitters/Anthropologie, and Forever 21 are currently targeted for boycott. PETA also conducts demonstrations outside of SeaWorld to object to their practices. Conditions for workers in slaughterhouses in the COVID-19 epidemic lead PETA to join with Iowa LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) to call for a meat [boycott](#).
- Animal Testing:** [Naturewatch Foundation](#) launched a [boycott](#) call against cruelty-free brands Ecover and Method in April 2018, after they were purchased by SC Johnson, which tests products on animals.
- **Breast Milk Substitute and Water Extraction:** Especially on the European continent folks are still calling for a boycott of Nestlé through a campaign called Baby Milk Action

www.babymilkaction.org/nestlefree. This was the only boycott that made its way through a few levels of the ELCA boycott process in the early years of the ELCA. The current claim is that the company is not following the World Health Organization's 1981 [International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes](#). Nestlé continues to address this concern through reporting and working with the WHO (www.nestle.com/ask-nestle/health-nutrition/answers/who-code). In the past few years there has been concern raised within the US around breast milk substitute companies and marketing practices. Mead Johnson and Abbott are the primary foci of this work.

- The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) community still engages Nestlé on a variety of other topics including nutrition, climate change and water. The water discussion not only focuses on water use in their plants, but also the extraction of water and the impact of that extraction on indigenous peoples particularly in [Canada](#). The [Council of Canadians](#) (Council) has called for a boycott of Nestlé, though there does not appear to be an organized effort. The Council is working on closing loopholes in community consent and asking for a [moratorium](#) on bottled water permits.

- **Gun Violence**

Gun manufacturers: This campaign started as a group boycotting Starbucks for its policy of allowing guns into their stores. A few years ago the CEO of Starbucks sent an [open letter](#) asking that customers no longer bring firearms into its stores or outdoor seating areas even in open carry states. This campaign moved to gun owners boycotting Starbucks based on the letter. The pro-gun group has several lists of boycotts including www.2acheck.com/the-boycott-list/ and www.ccrkba.org/antigunbusinesses. This year shareholders through ICCR have been filing resolutions at Visa and Olin Corporation, as well as American Outdoor Brands (Sturm Ruger). Discussions with Dick's Sporting Goods resulted in the company no longer selling assault rifles and moving away from selling guns at all. Some organizations have [divested](#) of gun manufacturers. [Pressure continues to mount on pension funds and asset managers to divest.](#)

NRA: See <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethicalcampaigns/boycotts>. A boycott of the NRA was called after the organization called for teachers to be armed in schools following the deaths of 17 pupils at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018. The organization also received criticism over its social media responses to the shooting. It posted "Stand and High for our Kids' Safety by Joining NRA" on its Facebook page on the day of widespread protests for gun control and aired a video on its NRATV YouTube Channel titled "A March for Their Lies," addressing Parkland student campaigners about their involvement in the gun control marches. In March 2018, [it launched a lawsuit](#) challenging Florida's newly enacted law which bans the purchase of firearms by anyone under 21. The boycott call covers companies that do business with the NRA, and companies from United Airlines to Hertz rental cars have participated. Amazon and Apple were pressured not to allow streaming of NRATV, and after a social media campaign the channel ceased production. FedEx eventually eliminated its discount for NRA Business Alliance members.

[Guns Down America](#)—formed in 2016 after Pulse shooting to demand policies that move the country toward a future with fewer guns. It runs campaigns to take down the NRA, shames lawmakers for accepting donations from the gun lobby, and inserts its bold message into the media narrative.

- In 2019, ICCR expanded its work beyond firearms manufacturers and retailers to address open carry policies and advance directives regarding firearms. Credit card companies, payment systems, and

financial institutions also experienced pressure as shareholders asked them not to lend to gun manufacturers who don't endorse the Sandy Hook Principles and not to allow their payment systems to be used for the purchase of guns. Insurance companies were requested to cease liability coverage of owners of assault weapons, and financial institutions are asked to cease financing gun shows and/or NRA sponsored events. The 2020 round of resolutions from the ICCR addressed gun and ammunition safety, the role of credit cards in enabling gun purchasing, and lobbying expenditures by Sturm, Ruger.

- **Other boycotts or similar actions**

Airlines boycott deportation of asylum seekers. The [Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility \(ACCR\)](#) is pursuing a shareholder proposal with Qantas, an Australian-based airline. [Qantas](#) and Virgin are facing pressure from unions, advocacy groups and the public to refuse to participate in the forced removal of asylum seekers from Australia, as airlines around the world boycott deportations. US airlines have also refused to fly children separated from their parents.

Products of Israeli settlements. From [universities](#) to [food products](#) grown in settlements, Israel is under pressure. Palestinian soccer players have called for a [boycott](#) of Puma until it ends its sponsorship of the Israel Football Association (IFA). The IFA includes clubs in the Israeli settlements built on what the Palestinians see as stolen land. More than 200 Palestinian sports clubs have sent a letter urging Puma to end the sponsorship deal. See [bdsmovement.net/boycott-puma](#). Some churches are hearing of a campaign from Sabeel for a [Hewlett-Packard-free Congregation](#).

Facial Recognition Software: IBM has stopped selling facial recognition software, and Amazon paused the development of the technology after pressure from civil liberties advocates. The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility filed shareholder resolutions pressing Amazon on this topic in 2020.

Divestment

- **Fossil Fuels:** According to [gofossilfree.org/divestment/commitments/](#), over 14 trillion dollars worth of assets have been divested from fossil fuels. The diversity of the entities committing to go fossil free includes: faith based organizations FBO (34%); philanthropic organizations (15%); government (13%); educational (15%); pension (12%); NGO (4%); for profit (5%); and healthcare institutions (1%). The “Global Fossil Fuel Divestment and Clean Energy Investment Movement” [report](#) compiled by Arabella Advisors, cites close to 1000 institutional investors with \$6.24 trillion in assets who have committed to divest from fossil fuels, up from \$52 billion just four years ago. The Faith Based Organizations that have voted to divest from fossil fuels include the [Lutheran World Federation](#) and the [World Council of Churches](#). Other groups working toward and supporting campaigns to move away from fossil fuels toward a more sustainable society include [350.org](#) and [GreenFaith](#). Within the ELCA, the 2016 Churchwide Assembly called for [action](#) on this issue. At the November 2017 Church Council meeting, a revised [Environmental Social Criteria Investment Screen](#) was approved. In response to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly request for a plan to promote educational resources on Carbon Fee and

Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy, ELCA Advocacy produced the [Carbon Basics Pricing](#) resource. The [Episcopal Church, USA](#) General Convention in 2018 passed a number of resolutions that included supporting carbon taxes and offsets. Other entities that are moving away from fossil fuels are listed below.

- [Xcel Energy of Minnesota](#) announced its intent to go to [zero carbon emissions](#) throughout its eight-state territory by 2050.
- USA State action: Many governors have vowed to put plans into place to have their states go 100% renewable energy. These include the states of Michigan, Maine, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, and Kansas. Colorado's governor plans to develop a 100% renewable energy plan; and Oregon's governor will continue the plan to incorporate more renewable energy. Washington state's governor has committed to 100% clean energy by 2045; and New York's governor committed to 100% carbon-free electricity production by 2040. A [report](#) published by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) shows that as the price of renewable energy falls, closure of coal fired plants is increasing. "States with imminent sizeable coal-plant closures include Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin."
- [Denmark's Maersk](#) (the world's largest container shipper) aims to have carbon neutral vessels commercially viable by 2030 by using energy sources such as biofuels and would cut its net carbon emissions to zero by 2050.
- **Other actions moving away from fossil fuels include:**
 - The [Stop the Money Pipeline](#) campaign was organized by a coalition of climate, youth, and indigenous groups. This campaign targets entities that support fossil fuel investments specifically banks, insurers and large investors. The initial focus is on the largest player in each of these groups: JP Morgan Chase, Liberty Mutual Insurance, and BlackRock. In early 2020, BlackRock Financial [announced](#) that it would start moving away from fossil fuels.
 - US Airline Jet Blue announced in early January 2020 its intention for all its domestic flights to become [carbon neutral](#).
 - In January 2021, General Motors announced it plans to sell only zero-emission vehicles by 2035.
- **Israel/ Palestine concerns:** For several years we have seen campaigns around boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) as it relates to Israel and its occupation of the Palestinian Territories. The ELCA has taken its position in the past around options for selective purchasing in relation to this issue but there are still boycott campaigns circulating. Several lists concerning the BDS movement continue to be available on sites such as: <https://bdsmovement.net/get-involved/what-to-boycott>.

Would-be ELCA supporters should take care that a campaign falls within the ELCA concern of decreasing hostilities and impacts on the settlements and is not a campaign to endorse boycotting the State of Israel behind the 1967 Green Line. Legislators have also pushed back against the BDS movement. The Foundation for Middle East Peace maintains lists of [state](#) and [federal](#) legislation that punishes businesses

which engage in BDS. Anti-BDS legislation has been passed in 41 states. Most disallow companies engaging in BDS from getting government contracts.

The constitutionality of these laws is being called into question, with a Texas case initiating the lawsuit where “a speech pathologist lost her job at an elementary school for refusing to sign a pro-Israel pledge mandated by state law—a case that has cast a spotlight on efforts to neutralize the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which opposes Israel's oppression and slaughter of Palestinians.

Private Prisons/Immigrant Detention: This movement goes beyond divestment in private prisons by addressing their financing and service providers. In 2020, the ICCR filed resolutions to ask for human rights expertise in directors of CoreCivic, human rights policies in industry lender First Horizon, and lobbying disclosures on the part of Geo Group. American Friends Service Committee keeps a [list](#) of companies related to private prisons from which they recommend divesting that includes service suppliers such as Aramark. Some have called these actions boycotts, but most groups have put these in the divestment category. [Enlace](#) is a group working “to stop the lobbying power of the private prison industry as a step towards abolishing cages in criminal and immigration policy.” The [Corrections Accountability Project](#), reorganized as Worth Rises, is working to eliminate the influence of commercial interests on our criminal legal system and to end the exploitation of those it touches. The boycott portion of the effort has moved to focus mainly on banks that are underwriting loans to the private prison system. At the same time a group called [Not One Dime](#) addresses corporations benefiting from the entire prison industry. The [Prison Industry Divestment Movement](#) is a coalition of several parties seeking to redirect funding from private prisons to citizens. The [National Prison Divestment Campaign](#) targets the investors of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA, now CoreCivic) and GEO Group (GEO), the two largest private prison companies in the United States. The Biden administration has promised to end federal contracts with private prison companies but they still will be used to detain immigrants, and the companies have branched out into other forms of monitoring.

ICCR members and the [Families Belong Together Coalition](#) began engaging US banks in 2017 to highlight the human rights risks of lending to private prisons. ICCR members are engaging a total of thirteen banks on their potential contributions to inmate deaths, poor medical care, allegations of detainee physical and sexual abuse, and violence as a result of their financing of private prisons. All of the existing banking partners of private prison leader GEO Group -- including JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, SunTrust, BNP Paribas, Fifth Third Bancorp, Barclays, and PNC -- have now officially committed to ending ties with the private prison and immigrant detention industry. (See <https://www.iccr.org/banks-end-private-prison-financing>)

**CORPORATE
 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**



	SOCIAL SCREEN/ CRITERIA FOR INVESTMENT SCREENING ACTIVITIES	ISSUE PAPERS WITH BOUNDARIES FOR VOTING PROXIES AND FILING RESOLUTIONS ¹	SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTIONS	DIALOGUES	BOYCOTTS
CSR STAFF ¹	Develop in consultation with ELCA expert staff and Portico Benefit Services input	Develop in consultation with ELCA expert staff and Portico Benefit Services input	Identify and develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council	Develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council	Develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council
CSR REVIEW TEAM ²	Recommend	Recommend	Receive report annually	Prioritize and develop work	Convenes inter-unit review group research and recommend .
S&J EXEC DIRECTOR ³	Authorize for consideration	Authorize for consideration	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Receive ELCA-initiated report annually and authorize any potential boycott for consideration
CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS	Advise	Advise	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Receive ELCA-initiated report annually and advise
CHURCH COUNCIL	Approve	Approve	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Receive ELCA-initiated report annually and approve any boycott
ELCA - RELATED ORGANIZATION ⁴	Receive and/ or implement within fiduciary responsibility	Receive and/ or implement within fiduciary responsibility	File within fiduciary responsibility	Participate within fiduciary responsibility	Implement within fiduciary responsibility
REVIEW FREQUENCY	One screen per year	Three issue papers per year	Annual	Annual	Annual

Corporate Social Responsibility in the ELCA uses the tools of screening of investments, shareholder advocacy and community investing to work with corporations, calling them to ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity and to create sustainable communities.
 More at ELCA.org/CSR.

NOTES:

¹ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program staff are the Program Director for Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility and the CSR Consultant.

² CSR Review Team is led and convened by CSR staff. Permanent team members are the Service and Justice Executive Director, the director for Witnessing in Society, director of the Lutheran Office for World Community, director for Theological Ethics, ELCA Treasurer, ELCA Secretary, Executive Vice President of the ELCA Foundation, three members of the Conference of Bishops and staff of Portico Benefit Services. Staff of Portico Benefit Services will participate in review team meetings to review screens and issue papers but not make recommendations for these ELCA churchwide responsibilities.

³ The Service and Justice (S&J) Executive Director will consult with the ELCA Administrative Team when indicated in policy documents.

⁴ ELCA-related organizations include, but are not limited to, separately incorporated ministries (Portico Benefit Services, the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, 1517 Media, Women of the ELCA, the ELCA Foundation), and other related organizations and agencies (e.g., ELCA seminaries, ELCA colleges and universities, Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service).

⁵ New papers require Conference of Bishops and/or Administrative Team review and Church Council approval. Church Council committees, the Conference of Bishops or the Administrative Team may ask Church Council for the creation of a new issue paper.

⁶ Corporate Social Responsibility Review Team with addition of expert staff from issue areas of concern.

ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines

Introduction

With overwhelming support, the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a memorial to become a sanctuary church body (CA19.03.07; see the action at www.elca.org/sanctuarychurch). The memorial was amended on the floor of the assembly to refer to the ELCA Church Council the question of what it means to be a sanctuary church body in practice.

In 2019, the ELCA had five synods and at least 60 congregations that had declared themselves “sanctuary,” and there was also broad participation from ELCA members in the New Sanctuary Movement in the United States.¹ That same year, the ELCA had seven congregations actually hosting people in sanctuary.

At its November 2019 meeting, the Church Council affirmed (CC11.19.47t) a timeline that included the following consultation process: 1) AMMPARO staff, as well as others in the churchwide organization, reached out to other denominations that have supported sanctuary congregations, requesting any materials or resolutions they had produced. 2) A Sanctuary Memorial Advisory Team, composed of a small number of churchwide staff, was appointed to assist the AMMPARO Sanctuary Team (referred to hereafter as “Team”) in this process. 3) In January 2020, the Team convened the five sanctuary synods and selected sanctuary hosting congregations to receive their guidance and suggestions. Representatives from the ELCA Church Council and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and staff from the churchwide organization were also present at that meeting. 4) The Team solicited suggestions and advice at the March 2020 joint meeting of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops. 5) The Team initiated an online survey at elca.org so that ELCA members could offer suggestions. The response was limited, possibly due to the pandemic. 6) The Team presented a draft of the suggested ELCA Church Council Sanctuary Guidance to the spring 2021 Conference of Bishops meeting for feedback. 7) This document is the Team’s final report to the Church Council on sanctuary guidance, for consideration at its spring 2021 meeting.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to congregations, synods and the churchwide organization on the invitation to action from the Sanctuary Memorial, recognizing that our understanding of sanctuary will evolve amid changing contexts.

Sanctuary in General: Opening Comments

Sanctuary has a rich history and an important connection to faith traditions. The practice predates the Middle Ages, when churches provided temporary places of safety. Lutheran churches have practiced sanctuary in many forms and for many generations. Despite the historic and religious roots of sanctuary, it has no legal nor universally accepted definition. A broad understanding of sanctuary has allowed churches and organizations to live into the definition of sanctuary in many ways, all rooted in the principle of providing refuge, safety and hospitality.

U.S. law has never defined nor recognized sanctuary, but the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action itself includes a “sanctuary is” framing that draws from the experience of communities already doing this work.

¹ The “New Sanctuary Movement” is not a formal organization per se but a term that has come to describe individuals and groups engaged in similar sanctuary activities in solidarity with one another. Thus “sanctuary” is a movement, not an issue.

This framing is helpful because it provides some broad examples that are widely accepted to be sanctuary in practice today. They go beyond the practice of hosting people in congregations and are grounded in the Christian definition of refuge. For the purposes of this document, sanctuary can be generally defined as walking alongside, or accompanying, immigrants and refugees. There may be common activities across different communities, congregations and synods, as well as the churchwide organization, but each must discern what sanctuary means based on the immigrant and refugee communities around it. Many of our Lutheran communities have been living their call to provide sanctuary for decades, and as a denomination, we have many theological documents that root our faith in the practice of sanctuary, even if we have not used this definition until now. This document explores what it may mean for the ELCA to continue this ministry, seeking to be a safe and welcoming place for all who leave their communities.

As people who live solely by faith and fear of God, Lutherans hold this vulnerability and tension in the theology of the cross. When we view the world through the light of God's redeeming presence and work, we see that no place or person is forsaken. God's invocation to love the neighbor calls this church to public witness and solidarity with the oppressed, marginalized and downtrodden. Sanctuary is another opportunity for people of faith to be present as faithful disciples of Christ's example in public life. It can and has led people to ELCA congregations looking for community and ways to serve. Many people see this assembly action as an invitation and encouragement to discernment — how might Lutherans be called to respond to the needs of the neighbor? This church is, in large part, an immigrant church with roots all over the world, and it has faithfully welcomed and supported refugee resettlement for over 80 years. The ELCA's strong global commitment has gifted its members with church relationships in countries from which immigrants are coming to the United States. This helps ELCA members understand why people flee their homes and undertake the perilous journey — to save their own lives.

The ELCA is an interdependent church represented through congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. Each interdependent entity is trusted to respond and listen to the movement of the spirit. As an interdependent church, we need to hold all members, congregations and synods, as well as the churchwide organization, in prayer around this issue, especially at moments of tension. Though synods and entire church bodies can declare sanctuary, to date the most extensive lived experience of sanctuary has been in congregations. Therefore, we need to lift up and spread the stories of those congregations that have direct experience with sanctuary.

Each of the five sanctuary synods and dozens of congregations that have declared sanctuary have their own unique definitions of it and the resulting work. Respecting the wisdom and autonomy of each, the Team recommends that the Church Council refrain from mandating one specific definition of sanctuary for all. This guidance, together with ELCA social policy, is provided to all with the hope and expectation that it will assist in their discernment.

Although the ELCA is the first church body to declare sanctuary, most major interreligious faith traditions in the United States have local expressions of sanctuary, which often work together ecumenically and on an interfaith basis, with the encouragement of their national staff. Thus, the ELCA's approach to sanctuary can be seen as a way to live into this church's ecumenical and interreligious relationships as well. Each congregation, synod and ministry of the ELCA is uniquely positioned to participate in the movement-building of sanctuary.

Relationships and stories are the most important, powerful and transformative means by which this whole church can better understand sanctuary.

The following is guidance suggested by the ELCA Church Council for ways the congregations, synods and churchwide organization can accompany and support the ministry of sanctuary.

Sanctuary Guidance for Congregations

Many people describe sanctuary as hosting an immigrant community member in a congregation, but the New Sanctuary Movement defines sanctuary expansively. Far from being confined to one activity, it goes beyond hosting someone and often involves accompanying individuals or migrant communities with advocacy and both tangible and intangible resources.

The ELCA's sanctuary work is a public witness that leads people to ELCA congregations looking for community and ways to get involved. In this light, congregations are invited and encouraged to SERVE, CARE, SUPPORT AND EDUCATE, always through the lens of accompaniment, in the following ways:

- 1) Build authentic and mutual relationships with immigrants in their communities, and listen to and amplify immigrant voices the congregation hears, whether the context is geographical (urban, suburban, exurban, rural) or intergenerational (college-age, retired or a mix of these). Building relationships will provide opportunities for congregations to reflect on what welcome and hospitality mean for each community. Not all churches have the same call, so consider teaming up with other faith communities that are living into sanctuary.
- 2) Grow in a firm foundation of the practice of accompaniment by sharing and reflecting on the decades-long story of Lutherans accompanying immigrants, and by reading the ELCA social message "Immigration" (1998) as well as the social policy resolution "Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Immigration Reform" (CA09.11.71). Review materials such as "Know Your Rights" information to better understand current U.S. immigration law and its complexities. Hear testimony from other congregations engaged in sanctuary discernment and/or action. Visit www.elca.org/ammparo and www.lirs.org.
- 3) Deepen relationships with individuals and congregations that are already in relationship with immigrant communities. Faith communities should be multiplying and amplifying rather than duplicating the work already happening. Congregations are especially encouraged to build relationships with existing sanctuary groups in their communities.
- 4) Understand that sanctuary is broadly defined and encourage a healthy and helpful process for discernment, grounded in testimony/learnings from the discernment processes of other congregations, so that each congregation has the space to define what sanctuary can be in its own context.
- 5) Look to their synods to confirm whether there are resources available for sanctuary, recognizing that these will vary from synod to synod. In any case, congregations can look to the churchwide organization for help in identifying networks of trusted messengers to assist them as well as coaches/people to guide them.
- 6) Host a presentation on sanctuary and pursue public dialogue led by people who have deep relationships with immigrant communities. Then, as a community, discern where the congregation is called to minister. Each congregation is invited to connect with other faith communities that are in relationship with immigrants. This will prepare the congregation to provide information to someone requesting sanctuary.

Guidance for Synods

As with sanctuary congregations, there is no one definition of a sanctuary synod; each has its own context. Whether or not a synod has declared itself a sanctuary or has any sanctuary congregations, all synods can recognize the mission moment of this work and can:

- 1) Gather and amplify the stories of their congregations founded by immigrants, sharing them throughout the synod, along with an invitation to study and discern sanctuary. Synods can find a platform on which to share these stories by contacting the Team (infoammparo@elca.org).
- 2) Examine the makeup of their communities to see where there are immigrants, and encourage their congregations to connect with immigrant community organizations. Synods are encouraged to find ways to support the dignity and worth of immigrant neighbors without creating negative perceptions.
- 3) Provide resources to congregations that will encourage them to offer hospitality to their immigrant neighbors. Other training and education on racial justice and intersectionality will be helpful for both rostered and lay leaders as well as congregations. Provide resources and support to congregations interested in exploring sanctuary. This can include forming a network of coaches to help congregations learn about sanctuary and whose leaders could use seasoned assistance to locate the right path of service with local immigrant communities.
- 4) Facilitate the creation of a sanctuary congregation network and provide guidance for building local teams to support and accompany sanctuary congregations. These local teams can provide table fellowship dinners and support circles. Ideally these teams would include members of local immigrant communities and other trusted messengers to build meaningful relationships with each other.
- 5) Encourage the use of underutilized synod or congregation buildings to house newly arrived immigrants as they transition to life in the United States. Consider offering family-support grants for sanctuary hosting congregations.
- 6) Encourage the creation of a support community among congregations to form immigrant welcoming centers.

Continued support and accompaniment, especially of sanctuary hosting congregations, are critical if congregations are to build authentic mutual relationships with immigrant communities.

Guidance for the Churchwide Organization

Recognizing that the ELCA is the first sanctuary church body in the Americas, the Team hopes that these recommendations will provide guidance in response to the assembly action. The outdated and complex U.S. immigration system can be difficult to address. The ELCA rejects the common misconception that people in sanctuary are criminals; at the same time, it has no intention of shielding anyone from the consequences of criminal activity.

In response to the assembly action on sanctuary, the ELCA Church Council directs the churchwide organization to provide resources that will help ELCA members understand sanctuary, and to look for ways to financially support sanctuary work. The council asks the churchwide organization to:

- 1) Provide and review current educational resources on sanctuary, which may focus on preaching, Bible study, accessible immigration messages or our Lutheran history of welcome and hospitality. These should amplify the stories of congregations that live out sanctuary as well as other stories that explore our

experiences and vulnerabilities and identify places of and opportunities for growth. Fact sheets that define “immigrant,” “refugee” and “asylum-seeker” could be helpful, as could legal information, especially for congregations that are considering hosting. Understanding why people immigrate can help some to better understand sanctuary. Resources should feature immigrant Lutherans leading the conversation and explain the accompaniment values of the ELCA. Resources can draw connections among ELCA governing documents, assembly and/or council actions, and social teaching documents. Attention should be drawn to the relevant portions of the ELCA social statement *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*² and the ELCA social policy resolution “Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Immigration Reform” (CA09.11.71). These resources will show how congregations and synods can advocate for immigrants and refugees, regardless of the term used.

- 2) Provide synod bishops, churchwide staff and the Church Council with immigration and sanctuary training, which may include immersion experiences.
- 3) Encourage seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries and other organizations to provide learning opportunities about accompaniment and sanctuary through Bible studies or “lunch-and-learn” events where interested people can gather on a regular basis for exploration and discernment.
- 4) Highlight connections between Future Church and sanctuary.
- 5) Find ways to support congregations and synods in providing immigrant welcome centers.
- 6) Advocate for just immigration policy and for justice in specific sanctuary cases. Find new ways to engage more ELCA members in advocacy for justice grounded in faith.
- 7) Choreograph opportunities for faith communities to connect with new immigrant populations in rural areas and to witness accompaniment ministry with people who are trusted in immigrant communities. The churchwide organization can assist by helping rural congregations without these tools connect with other rural congregations in the same region that already have tools and trusted messengers.
- 8) Enable synod-to-synod sharing to define and develop best practices.

What one ELCA synod or community defines as sanctuary does not redefine what sanctuary means for another community, yet one can broaden the definition to the point of diluting its meaning. Respecting the work of our immigrant, ecumenical and interfaith partners, the ELCA will encourage conversation with international companions, with other faith groups and with ethnic-specific ministries.

God’s people have been on the move since biblical times, yet the world faces a historic moment in which more people are migrating than ever before. The confluence of climate change, war, violence, corruption and poverty creates situations of vulnerability, compelling people to leave their homes and take often-perilous journeys to save their own lives. God calls people of faith to value the dignity of each human made in God’s image. This guidance on being a sanctuary church body is one way for the whole church to fully live out God’s call.

2

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Criminal_JusticeSS.pdf?_ga=2.180828644.291030847.1611873721-1911349169.1590679087 and (Spanish)
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/La_Iglesia_Y_La_Justicia_Penal_Escuchemos_Los_La_mentos.pdf?_ga=2.155023739.291030847.1611873721-1911349169.1590679087.

Update on Social Teaching Documents

Assessing the Need for and Feasibility of Initiating Social Message Processes

In Spring 2020, the Church Council postponed the question of whether and when to develop social messages on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Spring 2021 [CC19.11.47x; CC19.11.47z; CC20.11.33i]

It is necessary again to defer until the Fall of 2021 because it has not been possible to do the groundwork and assessment necessary. There are two reasons another delay is necessary. 1) The continuing effects of the pandemic and churchwide organization restructure on staff work capacity; and 2) the director for theological ethics had to take an extended health leave because of major surgery. These obstacles are largely resolved, and process of assessment and recommendation should be possible for the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

A delay on the editorial reconsideration of the social message on Suicide Prevention

In November 2020, the Church Council authorized an editorial reconsidering of the social message on Suicide Prevention (1999). [CC20.11.32] This action was requested and recommended by the director for theological ethics in consultation with several individuals who are actively engaged in ELCA ministry related to suicide prevention. Those consulted included the staff person, at that time, for Disability Ministry, whose responsibilities included attention to suicide prevention. Editorial reconsideration does not affect theological or substantive content but focuses on updates related to contemporary wording and statistics. This editorial revision was to be completed for Church Council consideration in Spring 2021.

Two factors have occasioned a delay. 1) The staff person who was to assist with this work was terminated as part of the Future Church design; and 2) the director for theological ethics was required to take an extended health leave due to major surgery. This work will be taken up in the months ahead and brought to the Church Council at the Fall 2021 meeting.

Annual Report on Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity

The Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity Advisory Team [“Advisory Team”] met virtually in the early months of 2020. Many of the Team’s members served on the task force that developed the ELCA Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity [“Strategy”] adopted by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly [CA19.05.21]. The initial in-person meeting scheduled for March 2020 was upended by COVID-19. Since then, all meetings have been held electronically.

The primary goal of the March session was to: 1) to clarify the work of the Advisory Team; 2) to determine the frequency of meetings; 3) to prioritize areas of the Authentic Diversity Report and Recommendations for engagement considering current events, challenges, and opportunities; and 4) to create visibility and implementation of the Strategy within work happening at synods.

The Rev. Albert Starr, co-convenor of the Advisory Team, met with the Conference of Bishops in Fall 2020 to engage them in raising visibility of the Strategy document and to contextualize the Strategy within their respective synods; to champion this work; and to intentionally create synod support to sustain the efforts through transitions in leadership. The intent is to continue meeting regularly with the Conference of Bishops. Members of the Advisory Team will build a one-on-one relational role with bishops, acting as a resource for implementing action items in their synods.

Members of the Advisory Team have been working individually to insure the movement of this document within their own realms of influence. This includes the development of resources (e.g., Bible study, videos, Facebook events, etc.), communicating with seminaries, and facilitating trainings.

The team recognizes the need for this strategy document to live above and beyond the capacity of the team and continues to lift this up as the work of the entire church. The team is working with ELCA churchwide strategic communications team to create a resource tool kit to: 1) share the purpose of the document; and 2) provide guidance and tools to best engage the Strategy document.

Accomplishments

- Northwest Intermountain Synod hosted a preaching series on authentic diversity.
- Region 1 webinar with California Lutheran University on the culture of whiteness and its deconstruction.
- Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity presented to Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary faculty to work on diversity in the classroom.
- Video was created to help engage conversation.
- Facilitated the use of anti-racism resources.
- Developed a Bible study to accompany the strategy for training purposes.
- Introduced the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity to the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE) programmatic leaders.
- Shared with United Lutheran Seminary for discussion and implementation.

Priorities

- Anti-racism training within synods for rostered leaders.
- Synod planning/goals toward authentic diversity.
- Creating structure for the longevity of this work, especially considering bishop turnover.
- Encouraging synods to utilize existing resources.
- Creating tool kit and/or video to increase awareness for the Strategy document.
- Encouraging synods to be aware of who bears the burden of this work. Trying to ensure the bulk of the work is not put on the shoulders of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BiPOC).

Strategic Authentic Diversity Implementation at the Churchwide Organization

In 2019, the Churchwide Assembly adopted “[How Strategic and Authentic is our Diversity? A Call for Confession, Reflection, and Healing Action.](#)” Lead staff across the churchwide organization are working to implement these actions in the areas of: Healing Action, Theological Education and Leadership Development, Structural Accountability, Theological Framing and Equipping, and Partnerships with Full Communion, Ecumenical and Interreligious Partners, and Related Organizations. The document was designed to align with church priorities and to compliment existing work of staff. Due to the Future Church new design planning, churchwide did not meet as often in 2020 and the beginning of 2021. Future activities will require more meeting frequency for collaboration and implementation of recommendations where possible. Reports and updates will be shared with the Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity Advisory Team.

Healing Action

The Director for Theological Diversity and Engagement has proposed the creation of online resources to explore the diversity of Lutheran theologies from ethnic, racial, socio-economic, gender identity, and sexual orientation from an intersectional perspective. To further support diverse voices, there is a need to create space for Lutheran theological reflection. A bibliography of Lutheran theological resources produced by the ethnic specific ministries will be developed for congregations, seminaries, colleges use.

In 2019, the Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution Condemning White Supremacy & Racist Rhetoric [CA19.04.18]. The Director for Theological Diversity and Engagement, in consultation with the Director for Racial Justice, has proposed a research project to collect witnesses of effective resistance against white supremacy in the history of U.S. American Lutheranism.

To further racial healing actions, there is a request to study reparations for the descendants of enslaved Africans. The study will include the actions of ecumenical and global partners that have addressed the issue of reparations. This work will include a truth telling process to share the stories of hurt and healing from racism and white supremacy within the church and society. This will include the creation of video messages, articles, and social media engagement.

Theological Education and Leadership Development

The churchwide organization is working to create a database of rostered and lay leaders of color to create an effective networking platform. Research, Analysis and Data (RAD) implemented a tool to collect information in June 2020. The survey will focus on interests, abilities, and qualifications. This information will be used for identifying Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) who can be resources for ELCA congregations, synods, agencies, institutions, social ministry organizations or with ecumenical, interfaith and Separately Incorporated Ministry (SIM) partners. The survey was shared among the ethnic specific ministries team to reach people of color/and or whose primary language is other than English to generate a resource database. There has been some participation and additional efforts are needed to reach more leaders.

ELCA seminaries have received the Strategy document and are in the process of incorporating it in their institutional strategies of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Seminary boards and advisory boards have been providing diversity trainings to its members and identifying and appointing new board members of ethnically diverse communities. Recent faculty searches have been intentional and successful in hiring candidates of ethnic-specific communities. Seminary leaders have refocused grants to support ethnic-specific programs and initiatives and are revisioning the 2022 Hein Fry Event with a strong diversity emphasis. The churchwide organization is also relaunching the Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta and developing the Latinx Lutheran Leadership Project. Both projects aim to provide spaces for

theological education that “addresses specifically the need of people of color in all their facets” and equip competent and faithful leaders for the church.

Structural Accountability

In Fall 2020, 63 of the 65 synods (97%) submitted diversity goal reports to the churchwide organization. The reporting tool developed by Racial Justice and RAD aligns with continuing resolutions 5.01.A16 of the ELCA Constitution for “each expression of this church shall annually assess its ethnic and racial diversity when compared to the demographic data of its community or territory” and 5.01.B19. “Each synod shall submit its goal and strategies to the appropriate churchwide unit or office and shall annually submit a report on progress toward its goals to such unit or office.” The collection and reporting of synod data trends suggest there is a growing commitment from synod leaders to form anti-racism teams, consult with churchwide racial justice staff, to focus on leadership development, host educational events and build relationships through community engagement.

As part of the Resourceful Servants initiative, RAD is working with synods and Lutheran Social Services recipients of Lilly Endowment grants focusing on the economic impact of student debt and financial relief programs and initiatives. In addition, there is an interest to survey BiPOC seminarians, recently ordained and long-term rostered ministers who may still be carrying large student debt. This work is happening alongside research projects focusing on the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women. RAD has conducted a survey of rostered ministers that included data regarding rostered ministers of color and student loan debt. The Church Council is expected to receive a full report in Fall 2021.

As an outcome of the Future Church design, the development of a position for Senior Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has been filled. In this new role, Judith Roberts, the former Director for Racial Justice, will assist in implementing and coordinating the recommendations of the *Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity* within the churchwide organization, synods, and Separately Incorporated Ministries. This work will happen in conjunction with existing churchwide actions.

Authentic Diversity Advisory Team Members

The Rev. Abraham D. Allende
Bishop Emeritus, Northeastern Ohio Synod

The Rev. Priscilla Austin
*Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church
Seattle, Wash.*

Ms. Cheryl Chatman
*Retired – Executive VP, Dean of Diversity
Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn.*

The Rev. Joseph Castañeda Carrera
*Assistant to the Bishop for Authentic Diversity and
Ethnic-Specific Ministries
Southwest California Synod*

Kelly Sherman Conroy, Ph. D.
*Secretary, American Indian/Alaska Native Lutheran
Association*

The Rev. Patricia Davenport
Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

Ms. Jennifer DeLeon
Director for Justice, Women of the ELCA

Ms. Grace El-Yateem
*The Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle
Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH)*

Mr. Elias Haroun
*The Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle
Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH)*

The Rev. Dr. Surekha Nelavala
*Pastor, Global Peace & Beloved Community
Adjunct Professor, Trinity Lutheran Seminary*

The Rev. Dr. Moses Penumaka
*Director of Theological Education For Emerging
Ministries (TEEM)*

The Rev. Lamont A. Wells
President, African Descent Lutheran Association



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Churchwide Organization 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

COVID-19 RESPONSE IN THE UNITED STATES



Teams from across the organization worked together to launch the COVID-19 Response Fund, which supports the ministries of this church that are most in need and best positioned to make an impact. To date, the fund has received more than \$1.8 million from generous ELCA members, which has been granted to 63 synods and has provided additional support for ELCA World Hunger's Daily Bread Grants.

- 452 vulnerable congregations considered best strategically positioned to respond in particular ministry contexts received grants.
- Priorities include pastors' salaries, children/youth ministry, virtual-technological skills and concern over the future of the local church.

As congregational feeding ministries faced increased and urgent need in their communities due to COVID-19 and its economic fallout, ELCA World Hunger responded with the launch of two emergency rounds of Daily Bread Matching Grants this past spring and fall. **Three hundred sixty grants equipped congregations across 60 synods and 41 states**, plus Puerto Rico and Washington, to fundraise online toward their ministries. Through these efforts, participating congregations **raised**

more than \$355,000 to add to the \$180,000 of support through Daily Bread Matching Grants, nearly tripling the impact of the grants and resulting in more than \$535,000 going directly toward local, congregation-led initiatives addressing urgent needs brought on by the pandemic. ELCA World Hunger also responded by releasing new and adapted resources, including [guides for finding community assistance resources by state](#) and an at-home adaptation for the “[On Earth As in Heaven](#)” vacation Bible school curriculum. Constituents connected with [ELCA Advocacy Alerts](#) for opportunities to raise their voices in support of COVID-19 relief legislation, aiming to ensure that efforts focus on the people and communities hit hardest by the crisis. The [ELCA World Hunger blog](#) also provides opportunities to learn about and act on the relationship between the pandemic and hunger in communities.

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) identifies those who have been affected by disaster as “disaster survivors.” With COVID-19, we are all survivors in some way. Domestically, LDR responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by **supporting 32 synods and three Lutheran social service agencies in 40 states with grants totaling over \$900,000**. The grants supported ministries in their efforts to reach out and serve their communities with food, daily necessities and other forms of assistance.



Churchwide Organization – Technology

- IT was able to transition staff to work from home over a single weekend at start of pandemic with minimal technical issues
- Launched COVID-19 chatbot on elca.org to assist with pandemic response information and prayer requests
- Digitized expense reporting in new Workday System launched during COVID-19
- Improved collaboration using Microsoft Teams during pandemic

GLOBAL PANDEMIC RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered worldwide turmoil and caused major setbacks in progress around food security, nutrition, health, education, gender justice and livelihood, especially in the most affected communities. LDR made a bold commitment internationally to support companion churches and ecumenical partners not only in providing immediate relief but also in continuing support for recovery, disaster preparedness, trauma counseling, implementing innovative programs to adapt to what could be the new normal, and focusing on populations pushed into vulnerable situations such as those affected by gender-based violence, people with disabilities, older adults, migrants and refugees. In 2020, LDR awarded over **\$4.79 million** in **125 grants** to **49 countries; 84 of the grants (\$2.45 million)** were in response to COVID-19, reaching nearly **800,000 people** around the world.

For example, we provided assistance to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania's Education for the Deaf schools in Mwanza where hearing impaired students learned through sign language, images and videos about COVID-19 in order to prevent the spread of the virus. In Lebanon, we contributed toward relief efforts led by the Contact and Resource Center for people with disabilities who are unable to leave home due to the government lockdown. Cash vouchers were provided to help pay for utilities, phone bills and drinking water. For migrants at the border of Mexico and the United States, we provided assistance to Casa del Migrante de Saltillo that provided food, hygiene kits and temporary shelter for people seeking asylum in the United States. In India, people living with HIV and AIDS



Syrian women learn how to stay safe from Covid-19 and receive education materials for their children. Photo: StARS

and transgender people are highly vulnerable to COVID-19. We supported the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India in providing food and hygiene kits, in addition to information about COVID-19 prevention, to members of these communities in Chennai. In Egypt, refugees are particularly susceptible to pervasive xenophobia and being intentionally excluded from necessary services. We supported St. Andrew's Refugee Services as it increased distribution of cash assistance, switched education programs from in-person to online, offered wellness and mental health checks, and provided COVID-19 information. And in Madagascar, we contributed to the work of the Malagasy Lutheran Health Department (SALFA) in helping patients with disabilities obtain treatment and pastoral care. Pastors, volunteers and doctors were provided sanitation supplies, masks and essential medicine for the patients. In their visits, pastors report sharing from Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

In March 2020, mission personnel were asked to return to the United States, including participants in the YAGM program. By the end of 2020, it was also decided to cancel YAGM for the upcoming 2021-22 year. A travel ban was also established for staff, who have continued engagement with companion churches and organizations online.

ECUMENICAL & INTER-RELIGIOUS & THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT

Bilateral Dialogue with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The ELCA and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) resumed bilateral dialogue on Wednesday, March 10. The ELCA dialogue team includes Bishop Bill Gafkjen, co-chair, Pastor Bridget Piggue (Southeastern Synod), Prof. Carl Hughes (Southwestern Texas Synod), and Prof. Kris Kvam (Central States Synod). Bishop Don Kreiss (chair, EIR Committee) and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will serve ex-officio. For details, click [here](#).

ELCA Pastoral Guidelines for Ministry in a Multi-Religious World

Thank you to all who participated in the survey related to the development of pastoral guidelines for ministry in a multi-religious world, as part of the implementation of “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment.” The survey was open from September 12-October 12, with over 2,600 responses collected – a remarkable response rate of 27%. The ad-hoc committee is actively working with the results. The first set of guidelines to be developed will focus on prayer services, as that was the primary area of need according to the survey.

THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

Quality of Call initiative

Two Justice for Women staff members are serving as director and team member on this multi-partner

initiative. The first phase focuses on responding to ways sexism affects women in calls to Word and Sacrament ministry. The strategic efforts this year are on relationships and policy.

Study Guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*

About a dozen ministry sites tested the draft study guide until the end of February. The guide will help readers to engage the social statement and to act on it through group and individual activities, videos, and links to resources. It will be available in 2021.

50/40/10 ordination anniversaries

The commemoration of the anniversaries of the ordination of women

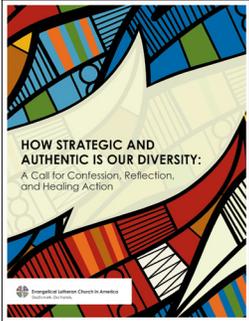
(50th and 40th) is concluding this year with a story collection featuring submissions from pastors who are women from across the ELCA. Resources from the anniversary year will remain up at [ELCA.org/50yearsofordainedwomen](https://elca.org/50yearsofordainedwomen).



Lutheran Women’s Works in Religion (LWWR)

This database is online at <https://learn.elca.org/lwvr/> and includes references to monographs, chapters, articles, and reviews; works from popular literature; sermons; Bible study guides; and more. It further connects Lutheran women in religion and serves to diversify and enrich Lutheran scholarship and teaching. Submission forms for entries are found on the website.

THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: RACIAL JUSTICE



Strategic Authentic Diversity Implementation

In 2019 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted “[How Strategic and Authentic is our Diversity?: A Call for Confession, Reflection, and Healing Action.](#)”

Lead staff across the churchwide

organization are working to implement these actions in the areas of: Theological Framing and Equipping, Healing Action, Structural Accountability, Theological Education and Leadership Development, and Partnerships with Full Communion, Ecumenical and Interreligious Partners, and Related Organizations.

Diversity Goal Reporting Tool for Synods

The churchwide organization continues to work with synods as they assist congregations in achieving those goals. The action requires annual reports to the Church Council and reports every three years to the Churchwide Assembly.

Anti-Racism and Condemning White Supremacy

The ELCA recognized June 17 as a day to commemorate the Mother Emanuel 9 and to repent of racism and white supremacy. Planning is underway for the second annual commemoration. Additional events focused on combatting white supremacy are under development.

THEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT

Theological Roundtable

The Theological Roundtable, a gathering of all of the official theological networks of the ELCA, met

in March, focusing on how Covid has affected our various communities and how the networks are responding. We will also have a conversation with the CWO executives about the role of theology in the Future Church redesign.

Freedom of a Christian

We are finishing the Spanish version of the Study Guide for the Freedom of a Christian, which will be available with the English one at www.elca500.org.

Combatting White Supremacy

We are conducting research on how to proceed to develop a theological Statement on Combatting White Supremacy and a process for racial healing across the ELCA.

THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Social Statement Task Force

In November 2020, the ELCA Task Force on Church, State, and Civic Participation began a series of intensive meetings during the listening and study phase of the social statement process. Meeting topics through March have included close attention to the social message “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy,” Lutheran theology and Confessions, as well as sessions with ELCA bishops and other ELCA staff whose work is closely tied to ELCA social teaching. Members of the task force are beginning to host listening events in order to garner input from across our church while ELCA staff are developing a network of process builders who are volunteers within synods trained to build awareness, conversation, and engagement with this process. Biographies of the 18-member task force, social statement timeline, and additional information are available [here](#).

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES & RELATIONSHIPS

2020 New Starts and Mission Developers



Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministry



Synod leaders started **30 new ministries in 2020** and **13 in 2021**, in diverse settings.

Unique partnership: Neighborhood Church, a new start in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, is training all leaders in the Milwaukee Area Synod on virtual church and partnering to train mission developer leaders across the country.

Online Congregational Vitality **training events** were held for more than **1,000 leaders**.

ELCA Children's Ministry updated elcafaithformation.org and created resources related to ministry during the pandemic and also addressing Black Lives Matter.

Growing Young: Over **250 leaders** from across the ELCA participated in online trainings through a two-day intensive course, monthly gatherings with the ELCA Coaching Network, and the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Book Club.

ELCA Youth Ministry pivoted leadership training virtually, with the Youth Core Leadership Team meeting monthly, creating "Candletime," a weekly online gathering and resource for youth. The ELCA Youth Leadership Summit was held virtually in November, and "Passage," a small group, was created for graduating seniors. The ELCA Youth Ministry Network annual training event, the Extravaganza, had **1,750 leaders participate**, the highest number ever.

Abide: More than **1,000 young adults** across the country gathered for the first time in over 100 small groups, with content entirely created by young people. Young leaders led groups, created liturgies, held online graduation parties for each other, and formed a nimble, innovative community — significantly bolstering their spiritual and mental health.

#NoPlasticsforLent 2020: This initiative on creation care and intersecting issues, **created by young people and reached more than 100,000 followers** and was featured in the New Yorker magazine.

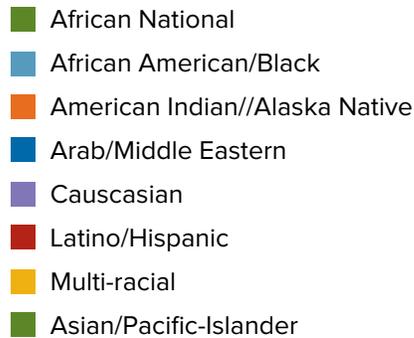
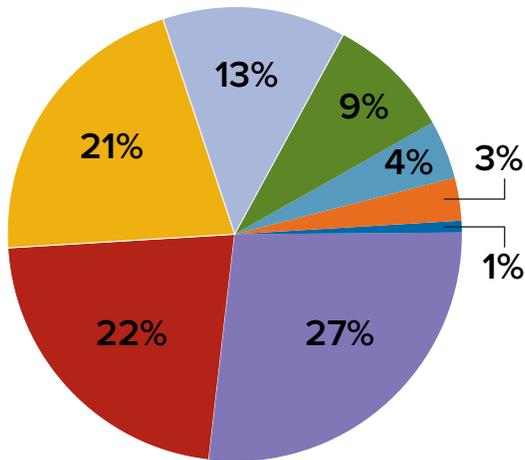
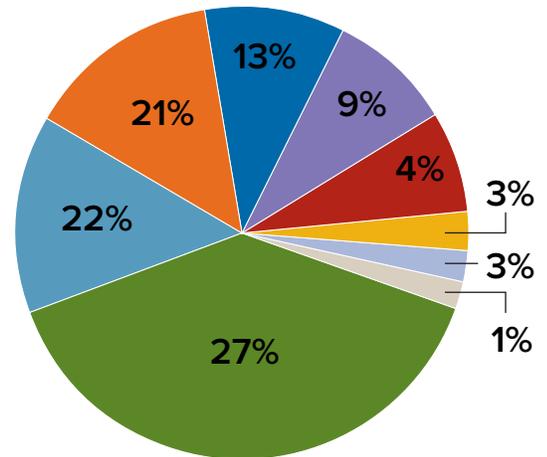
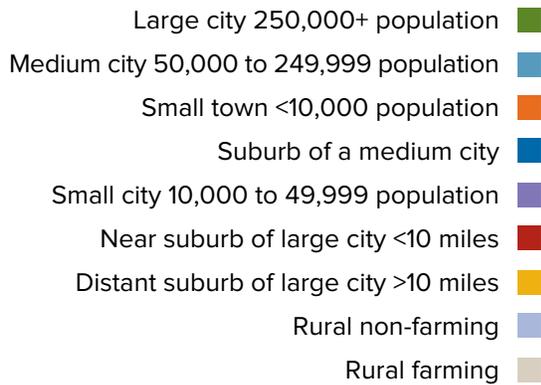
Holy Innovations



Thanks to the Campaign for the ELCA, the ELCA Congregational Vitality Team **partnered with synods** to continue **creating 21 collaborative Holy Innovation projects** that will share their learnings across the ELCA.

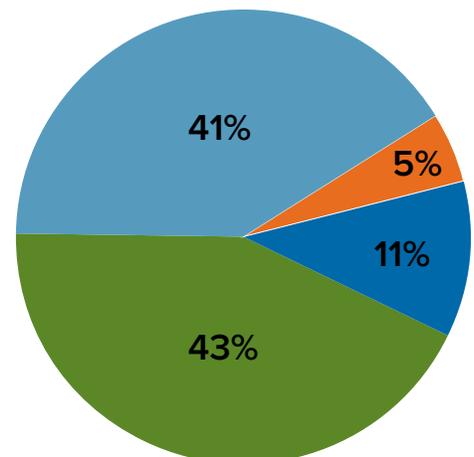
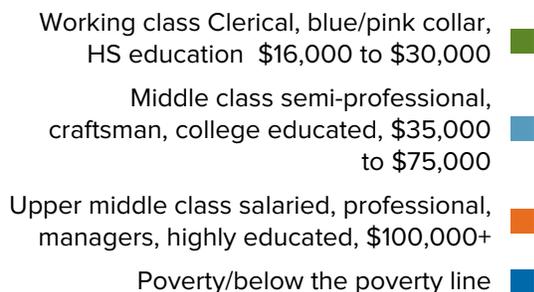
For one of these, “The Grief and Transitions Project”, ten leaders from around the country came together to share strategy and resources. This website is the culmination of the Holy Innovations project and offers a resource for all synods and leaders walking with congregations through significant change. <https://elcaresources.org/help/>

Geographic Setting of New Starts



Ethnicity of New Starts

New Starts by Economic Group Type



Latinx L3 Initiative



The Latinx Lutheran Leadership Initiative (L3) is a project to identify, equip and accompany Latinx leadership in the ELCA. The initiative has a goal to **create a network of 300 Latinx leaders** to feed the three expressions of our church within two years. It has three focus areas: leadership, formation and development. The preliminary launching date for this initiative is Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021.

Lutheran Theological Center of Atlanta (LTCA)



In order to help the ELCA reach a more diverse population, this ELCA-sponsored center will identify, support and guide lay leaders and candidates for rostered and congregational ministry, with an intentional focus on African descent leaders. It will give leaders an experience in historically black seminaries at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta.

Digital Resources for Congregations



An additional **650 congregations signed up for services** from our preferred partners who offer digital church management and giving options.

[ELCA.org/publichealth](https://elca.org/publichealth) was created in response to the pandemic as a resource hub for congregations and members. To date, we have **nearly 80,000 page views**.

Social Media Engagement



Over the last year, ELCA social media platforms collectively saw a **20% increase** in impressions and a 30% increase in engagements from the previous year.

Twitter engagements **increased by 90%** and **Instagram increased by 150%**.

ELCA social media platforms have seen continued growth in audience size. **Facebook** has **140,000 followers**, **Twitter** has **26,000 followers**, and **Instagram** has **17,000 followers**.

In 2020, **ELCA social media accounts** had more than **55 million impressions**.

2020 Media Coverage

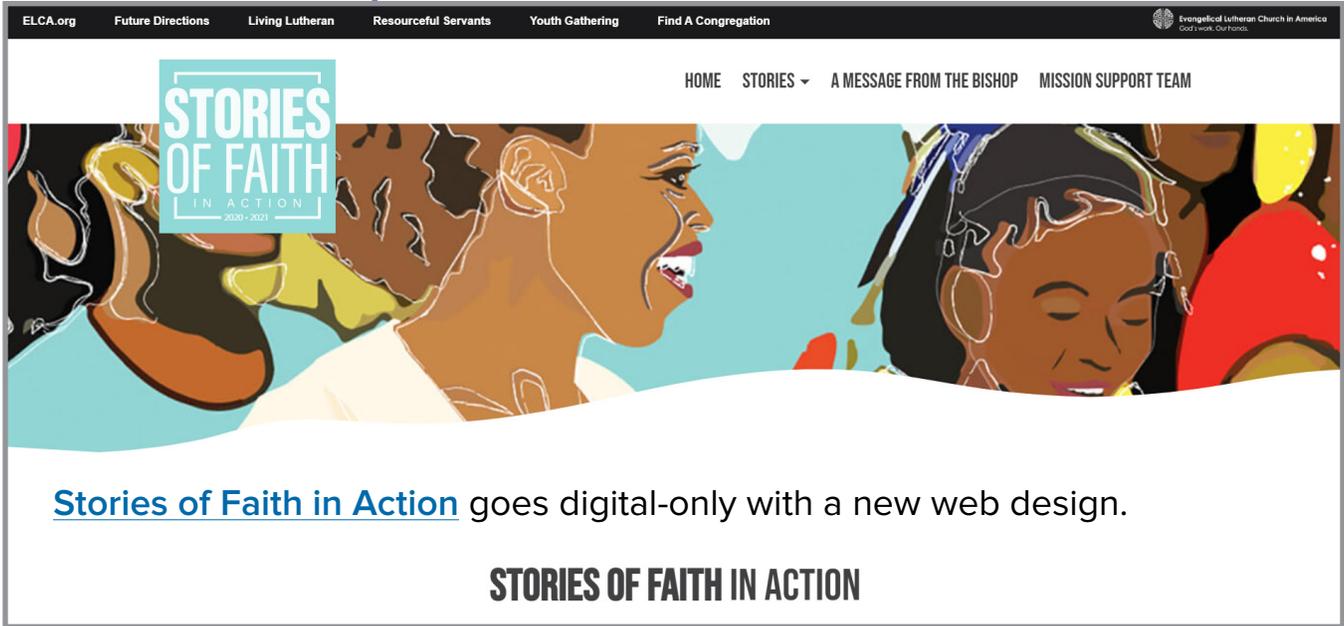


Bishop Eaton appeared on CNN to discuss navigating worship during the pandemic.

The ELCA was **mentioned in 6,570 articles**.

This is an **increase of 116%** compared to 2019 media coverage.

This media exposure resulted in **10.1 billion potential viewers** exposed to the ELCA.



Living Lutheran magazine got a fresh new look to start 2021, the year it turns five years old.



CANDIDACY AND FIRST CALL

There are currently **1,852 active candidates** in the candidacy process.

Of the nearly 300 candidates entranced into candidacy in 2020, 14% self-identified as non-white and 86% as white.

There are **107 active TEEM candidates**. They have self-identified as:



254 candidates were approved and assigned so they could begin interviewing for first calls. **232** of those candidates were candidates for **Ministry of Word** and Sacrament. **22** were candidates for **Ministry of Word and Service**.

The Candidacy Team partnered with COB and other assignment partners to redesign the Assignment Process. In Fall of 2020, the COB approved the proposed First Call Process. Following that decision, a new system of assignment was strategically implemented, the Roster Manual, Candidacy Manual and First Call documents were updated and training resources were provided to synods, seminaries and candidates to provide education about the new process.

The Horizon Apprenticeship Program, which provides summer internship opportunities for young people of color or whose primary language is that other than English, quickly pivoted to offer completely online education and community building and helped congregations identify remote internship opportunities. **14 congregations** and **29 apprentices were accepted** into the summer program in 2020; three of the participating congregations were new to the program.

Visions & Expectations

Visions & Expectations was repealed in 2020. Once Definitions and Guidelines is updated by Church Council, The Conference of Bishops will be asked again if a new document of any kind is needed and for what purpose. An update will be provided to the Church Council in the fall.





All Creation Sings is a new curated set of worship resources in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* family, developed as part of the ELCA's commitment to the ongoing renewal of worship by supporting congregations' mission in these changing times. This supplement was released at the end of 2020 by Augsburg Fortress / 1517 Media after a nearly three-year process of research, development, editing, and a broad liturgical and theological review. Over 50 people from throughout the ELCA had direct involvement in the development, not including the gifts of the many contributors of prayers, hymn texts, and music.

All Creation Sings includes a fully bilingual Spanish-English setting of Holy Communion, a setting of Holy communion especially appropriate for evening, a service of word and prayer adaptable for many occasions, and a section of topical prayers, thanksgivings, and laments. The supplement also includes 200 hymns and songs, offering

a fresh and diverse selection to enliven worship and the people's song in a new day. Learn more at augsburgfortress.org/AllCreationSings.

Each voting member of Church Council should have received a gift copy in early 2021. If you did not receive a copy, or if you have other questions about this resource, please contact John Weit, Executive for Worship at john.weit@elca.org or 773-380-2554.



GENEROSITY



Members of this church were incredibly generous in their support of ELCA ministries in 2020. Overall giving to fundraising priorities in 2020 finished the year at nearly 99% compared to 2019 totals. We saw an increase of nearly 25% in numbers of individual donors in 2020 (163,931 donors in 2019 vs. 188,735 donors in 2020). While some programs saw an understandable decrease in support due to programmatic disruption (Young Adults in Global Mission and International Women Leaders specifically), other programs saw increased support. Support for “Where Needed Most” saw an increase of nearly 23% compared to 2019 support (\$2.8 million in 2019 vs. \$3.4 million in 2020). ELCA World Hunger, due to an intentional focus mid-year as a feared decrease in support loomed, was able to not only keep pace but also surpass support levels seen in 2019. ELCA Fund

for Leaders also saw increased support compared to 2019 numbers, finishing the year with nearly \$3.7 million in donations to the program. The two most significant stories for 2020 have been the COVID-19 Response Fund and Mission Support. Despite fears that Mission Support would see a dramatic decrease due to congregations meeting virtually, the final numbers tell a different story. At year-end, total Mission Support hovers at 98% of the anticipated 2020 goal (a goal set prior to COVID-19 realities). Around \$41 million in Mission Support was shared with the churchwide organization to be used to support the ministries we do together as a church. This number is an incredible testament to the generosity of our members and the commitment we have to being church together. God is good, and our members are generous.

Development Events Go Virtual

Each year, we hold more than 10 donor events, including leadership tables and immersion trips, but in 2020, the pandemic caused us to pivot to create online events where donors could still interact with programs and other donors. Here are the stats from 2020:

7 Virtual Events and **4** Virtual Leadership Tables

Total Event Reach:

172,787
constituents

Total Event Participation:

4,800
constituents

Total Event Generosity:

\$673,810

Giving

The ELCA had its best single day of fundraising on Giving Tuesday (Dec. 1) in 2020, raising more than

\$600,000!

FUTURE CHURCH

Purpose

Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love.

Vision

A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

Priority 1

**A Welcoming Church:
Engaging new, young
and diverse people**

"Your young ... shall see visions, and your old ... shall dream dreams."

Acts 2:17

Priority 2

**A Thriving Church:
Rooted in tradition and
radically relevant**

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? ... You are the light of the world."

Matthew 5:13-14

Priority 3

**A Connected,
Sustainable Church:
Raising the bar
together**

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

Goal

Share the story of Jesus and the ELCA by engaging with one million new people as we grow the church together.

“Future Church” Update and Final Narrative

On Nov. 14, 2021, the ELCA Church Council took action to affirm the Future Church design (vision, purpose, priorities, and organizational structure), related ELCA constitutional amendments, and spending authorization. This narrative provides a summary of the approved design, as well as an update on the transition to implementation and life in the renewed organization.

Future Church Design At-A-Glance

Vision: a world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation

Purpose: activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love

Priorities:

1. A Welcoming Church: Engaging new, young and diverse people
2. A Thriving Church: Rooted in tradition and radically relevant
3. A Connected, Sustainable Church: Raising the bar – together

Organizational structure:

Three Leadership Teams:

1. Strategic Leadership Team: The Strategic Leadership team, convened by the presiding bishop, shall set, lead, and evaluate the strategic framework to achieve and support priority goals and initiatives of this church.
2. Operations Leadership Team: The Operations Leadership team, convened by the executive for administration, shall provide efficient and effective leadership, planning, oversight, management, and coordination of the daily operations of the churchwide organization, including infrastructure and resource management (human and financial) and governance-related matters.
3. Innovation Leadership Team: The Innovation Leadership team, convened by the executive director for innovation, shall assess, implement, and evaluate experimental ideas and initiatives to further this church’s shared mission.

Four Home Areas (Units):

1. *Christian Community and Leadership Home Area (Unit) – 16.12.A20.* The Christian Community and Leadership unit shall foster and facilitate the work of synods, congregations, the churchwide organization, and others in reaching and welcoming more people into the Christian faith. It energizes and engages the core membership and works with the whole of this church to recruit, develop, and deploy lay and rostered leadership to fulfill the Church’s purpose. It works across all expressions of this church to accomplish these goals domestically and internationally.
2. *Innovation Home Area (Unit) – 16.12.B20.* The Innovation unit shall promote, coordinate, and facilitate organizational collaboration, culture, and development, including innovation processes and leadership development for churchwide organization staff, members of this church, and others.

3. Operations Home Area (Unit) – 15.12.A20. and 16.12.C20.

The Operations unit shall comprise the following:

- a. the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
- b. the Office of the Secretary; and
- c. the Office of the Treasurer.

4. Service and Justice Home Area (Unit) – 16.12.D20.

The Service and Justice unit shall foster and facilitate this church's engagement in service and promote efforts to call and act for justice. It shall engage in mission, service, and justice in accompaniment with churches and organizations in other countries; serve as the means through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society; engage with communities, coalitions and networks, congregations, and synods in service and justice work within the territorial jurisdiction of this church; and provide guidance to members on matters of social justice.

Spending Authorization (Nov. 2020): 2021 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$65,847,000; and a 2021 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,500,000.

Transition Phase 1: Staff Reductions and New Assignments (Week of Nov. 16, 2020)

Following the Church Council affirmation, the transition period began in earnest. Phase one included informing staff of relevant separations and new assignments.

Staff Reductions: Though staff reductions were initially anticipated to be as much as 20 percent, 17 full time equivalent positions were eliminated for a total reduction of about 5 percent. Separated staff were informed November 16 and 17 and offered six-months of severance and benefits. Please see Appendices A, B, and C for full demographic reports. Staff were informed virtually through phone calls with unit directors and human resources. Additionally, some separated employees have been rehired in new roles.

New Assignments: Remaining staff were informed of new home area and team assignments as appropriate. These conversations were completed by the existing unit leads. The goal was for every staff person to have a personal conversation. Post-feedback indicates this was an unclear and very stressful time for staff.

First Home Area Meetings: On Wednesday, Nov.18, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton led the weekly chapel service as a time for prayer and reflection. All remaining staff met in their new home areas for the first time. The goal of these meetings was to gather for the group and be available for questions and concerns.

All-Staff Convocation: On Thursday, Nov. 19, all staff met for All-Staff Convocation where new organizational design was shared, as well as information about the eliminated positions (not including individual names for sake of privacy).

Transition Phase 2: Future Church Days (December 2020 – January 2021)

In order to balance the “here and not yet” element of the process, especially during year-end, a critical time of year for many teams, the Future Church Team organized four “Future Church Days” and planned to host a webinar with rostered ministers.

Future Church Days 1-4: The goal of these four days was to create intentional space for staff to step away from their existing work and begin to imagine the new organization. Each session included a thematic topic with new content, as well as a feature of one of the new four home areas.

Date	Theme Content and Home Area Feature	Additional Note	Staff Experience Rating
12/10/20	Intro to FC days and Innovation 101, including collective genius and ELCA re:Route data Feature: Innovation	Second half of this meeting was spent in home area groups	3.34/5 <i>63 responses</i>
12/15/20	Disruptive and sustaining innovation and the ambidextrous organization Feature: Operations	Second half of this meeting was spent in home area groups	3.47/5 <i>63 responses</i>
1/14/21	Psychological safety and trust (lead by presiding bishop) Feature: Christian Community and Leadership	Opening devotion with Christopher Otten (Federal Chaplaincies) No home area time	3.55/5 <i>59 responses</i>
1/21/21	What to expect going forward, staff engagement, and shared leadership team process Feature: Service and Justice	Opening devotion with Barbara Lund (Service and Justice)	3.45/5 <i>59 responses</i>

Rostered Ministers Update Webinar: Set for Jan. 19, 2021, the webinar was planned to be broadcast using Microsoft Teams, and the ELCA website went down for the first half-hour of the planned time. The decision was made to record the planned presentation and post. During this session, we learned there is no quick way to contact and update all rostered ministers of the ELCA with an update. Real-time feedback on social media was generally negative while about 20 positive messages were received to future@elca.org. To date, the video has 8,150 views on YouTube.

Transition Phase 3: First 100 Days

The new organization went “live” on Feb. 1, 2021 with new home areas in place. This phase was designed to get the organization up and running and included a focus on finalizing goals and priorities for the first 100 days, as well as a kick-off keynote with Dr. Linda Hill. The Future Church groups focused on the development of draft Objectives and Key Results (OKRS), including a working session on Jan. 15, 2021 led by Bishop Eric Gronberg. Formal OKR development is anticipated in quarter two of 2021.

First 100 Days Priorities: Feb. 18-19, 2021, the Future Church group worked together to plan for the first 100 days (led by Nicki Roth), resulting in the following three priorities:

Priority 1: Communication— Communication is an essential part of any change effort. The Future Church Team began exploring options for jumpstarting both internal and external communications. The

senior director for communications was brought into group meetings. A general information packet was produced for Church Council and Conference of Bishops use. A comprehensive strategy is still under development.

Priority 2: Shared Leadership Teams— The three shared leadership teams will work together to guide the work of the churchwide organization. The presiding bishop reserves the right to appoint members of all three new shared leadership teams. The teams include a mixture of role-specific seats and at-large positions, including opportunities to include non-churchwide organization staff. Staff were invited to apply for the at-large positions, and appointments have been made for Operations and Strategy. The first meeting of Operations is complete; Strategy is scheduled; and Innovation is planned to begin in April 2021.

Priority 3: Staff wellness and Home Area Basics— With the COVID-19 pandemic vaccine rollout beginning, staff wellness conversations took place and planning for a hybrid workforce is underway. The People Solutions (nee human resources) group is finalizing the position descriptions and new compensation study. The majority of staff do not yet have working position descriptions as of early April 2021.

Additional transitions: During this transition phase, the Rev. Louise Johnson began her work as the new executive for administration. Louise and incumbent the Rev. Dr. Wyvetta Bullock have overlapped their leadership for a time of transition.

Transition Phase 4: Walking the Walk

As of March 29, 2021, both Future Church working groups have sunset their work with the goal of full transition to the new organization, leadership structure, and design. The group spent the final meeting reflecting on learnings and final next steps:

- *Management vs. leadership:* As mentioned above, part of the new design calls for the alignment of decision making to the right level. The reassignment and ownership of leadership and management will be an important factor going forward. The three shared leadership teams must begin working together, while other cross-groups teams and initiatives also are still beginning.
- *Position descriptions and compensation:* Anticipated in early April, the organization will have updated position descriptions and compensation models. The organization will also be adding two new key roles to assist with Organizational and Leadership Development.
- *Communication strategy (internal and external):* The Strategic Communications area has transitioned to the Operations home area, and a comprehensive strategy is still in development under the leadership of the executive for administration.
- *Being the Boss training:* Beginning April 19, 2021, nearly 60 churchwide organization staff and 30 synod bishops will participate in the first round of training for innovation leadership. Based on Dr. Linda Hill's work, this is an app-based learning journey with mostly asynchronous content. There will be three group sessions and an accompanying devotional resource, which is being developed from an ELCA project team led by Deacon John Weit.
- *Lead-Off Project:* Two new agile projects are currently in the work (Open Doors grant and Project Hub development), and staff are just beginning to figure out how to resource and prioritize in these new ways.
 - *Project Hub:* As the churchwide organization transitions to the new Future Church design, a transparent project development process will help teams and individuals develop their own projects and move priority work forward. The ELCA Project Hub is a

space for churchwide organization staff to share important information about projects, invite feedback and access tools and resources to work effectively. To submit a project to the hub, staff are invited to share an overview of their project for review by a team in their home area. Once a project is posted to the hub then others are invited to get connected, work together and share updates and feedback.

- *Open Doors Grant:* As more and more people are vaccinated and the church gathers again in physical spaces, the churchwide organization is launching the Open Doors grant to learn from congregations. Any ELCA congregation can apply for grant funding with a specific and actionable idea for how their ministry might meet new people while re-gathering in community as COVID-19 considerations allow. All applications that meet the base criteria will be eligible for consideration then randomly selected for a set grant award amount. Because there is no widely known set of “best practices” for meeting new people following a global pandemic, any preconceived biases can be eliminated about what can and cannot work by selecting grant award recipients randomly. Those not selected will receive a small amount to honor their time for the application and commitment to learning together in the next three years.
 - The Open Doors grant application is scheduled to open Wednesday, April 21. More communication about the initiative will be shared widely the week of April 12 on the elca.org/opendoors landing page along with email and social media.
- *Coaching:* Beginning in April 2021, to better support the organization’s critical transition and strategy building efforts, from now through October, all ELCA officers and home area leads will engage in executive coaching with a special focus on organizational change and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The group is expected to complete the Intercultural Development Inventory and will participate in both group and individual sessions.

With Thanksgiving

The Future Church Team wishes to express deep gratitude and thanksgiving for the many collaborators along the way, especially to: core group members (Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Wyvetta Bullock, Lori Fedyk, Phil Hirsch, Rhondean Johnson, Mikka McCracken, Rafael Malpica Padilla, Kathy Summers and Savanna Sullivan); ELCA Vice President Bill Horne and the ELCA Church Council; current chair of the ELCA Conference of Bishops, Bishop Tracie Bartholomew, and the Conference of Bishops; and consulting colleagues from Paradox Strategies, Nicki Roth and Cheryl Whaley.

In closing, while the “Future Church” project work is formally ending, we know this world needs the Good News of community, justice, and love now more than ever. May we have the courage to continue to follow as the Holy Spirit leads and guides us out into this world and in service of our neighbors and this whole creation which God so loves.

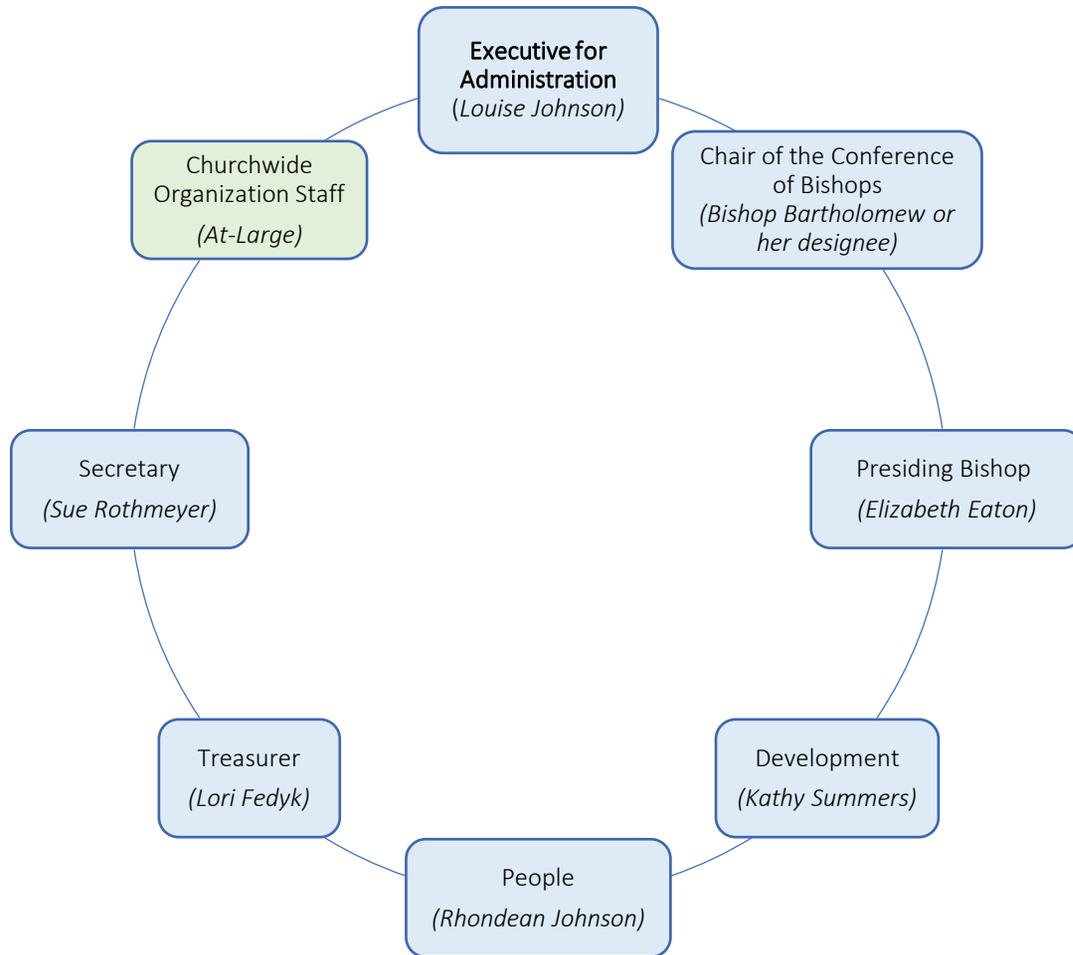
“Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will has not yet been revealed,” – I John 3:2a

APPENDIX A: ELCA Churchwide Organization Demographics (Future Church)

October 2020 Demographics (pre-eliminations)			2020 Demographics (post-eliminations)			March 2021 Demographics		
Ethnicity	Total	Percent	Ethnicity	Total	Percent	Ethnicity	Count	%
WHITE	223	64.6%	WHITE	214	65.2%	White / Caucasian	216	64.3%
BLACK	47	13.6%	BLACK	43	13.1%	Black / African American	46	13.7%
HISPANIC	36	10.4%	HISPANIC	35	10.7%	Hispanic / Latino	35	10.4%
ASIAN	29	8.4%	ASIAN	26	7.9%	Asian	26	7.7%
Two or More Races	8	2.3%	Two or More Races	8	2.4%	Two or more nationalities	8	2.4%
AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKAN NATIVE	1	0.3%	AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKAN NATIVE	1	0.3%	American Indian / Alaska Native	2	0.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.3%	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.3%	Other	2	0.6%
TOTAL	345	100.0%	TOTAL	328	100.0%	TOTAL	335	99.7%
Category	Count		Category	Count		Sex	Count	%
Female	215	62.3%	Female	203	61.9%	Female	208	61.9%
Male	130	37.7%	Male	125	38.1%	Male	128	38.1%
TOTAL	345	100.0%	TOTAL	328	100.0%	TOTAL	336	100.0%
Age			Age			Age	Count	%
20-29 years	34	9.9%	20-29 years	32	9.8%	18-24	13	3.9%
30-39 years	65	18.8%	30-39 years	62	18.9%	25-34	41	12.2%
40-49 years	75	21.7%	40-49 years	71	21.6%	35-44	85	25.3%
50-59 years	86	24.9%	50-59 years	85	25.9%	45-54	74	22.0%
60-69 years	77	22.3%	60-69 years	70	21.3%	55-64	82	24.4%
70-79 years	7	2.0%	70-79 years	7	2.1%	65-74	39	11.6%
80-89 years	1	0.3%	80-89 years	1	0.3%	75-84	2	0.6%
TOTAL	345	100.00%	TOTAL	328	100.00%	TOTAL	336	100.0%

APPENDIX B: Shared Leadership Team Charts

Operations Leadership Team



The Operations Leadership Team provides efficient and effective leadership, planning, oversight, management and coordination of the daily operations of the churchwide organization, including infrastructure and resource management, human and financial and governance related matters.

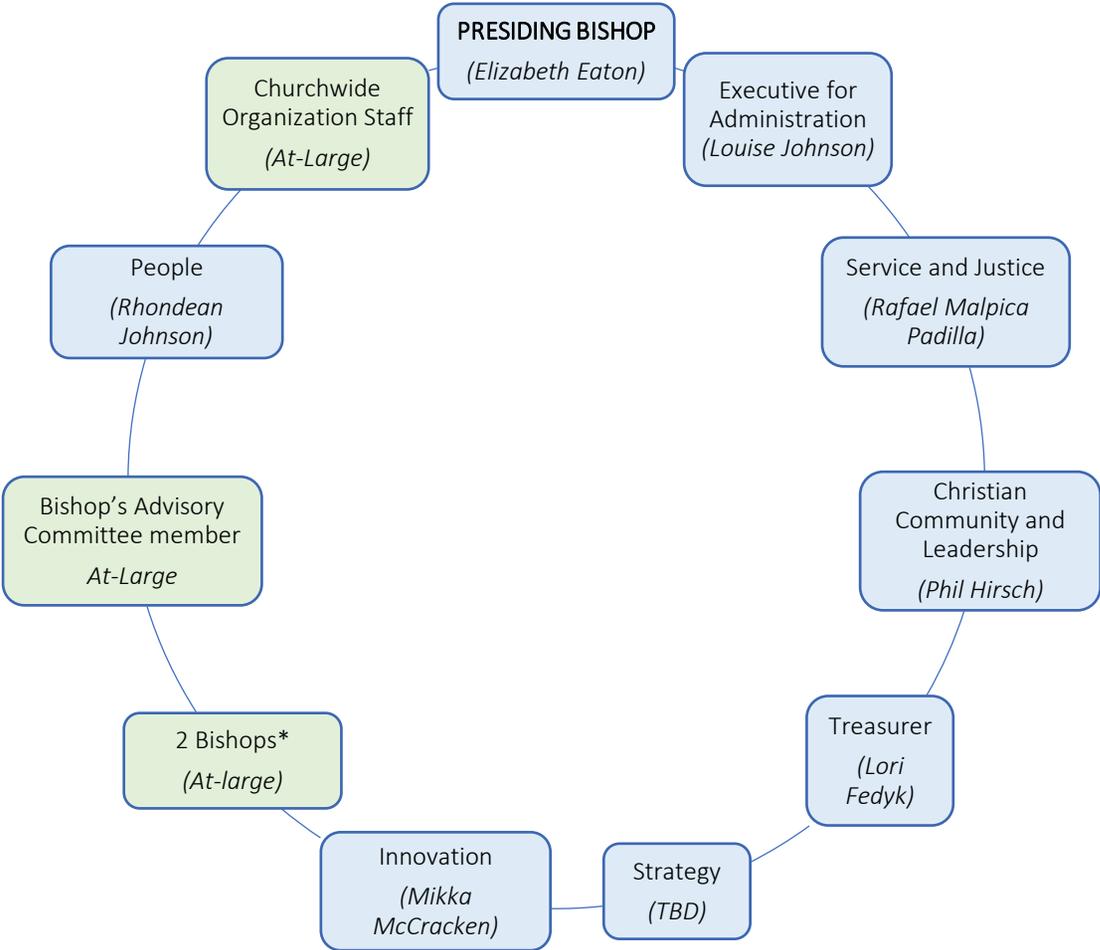
Anticipated schedule: monthly meeting, 3 hours

Bold: team convener

Green: at-large

Blue: position specific

Strategic Leadership Team

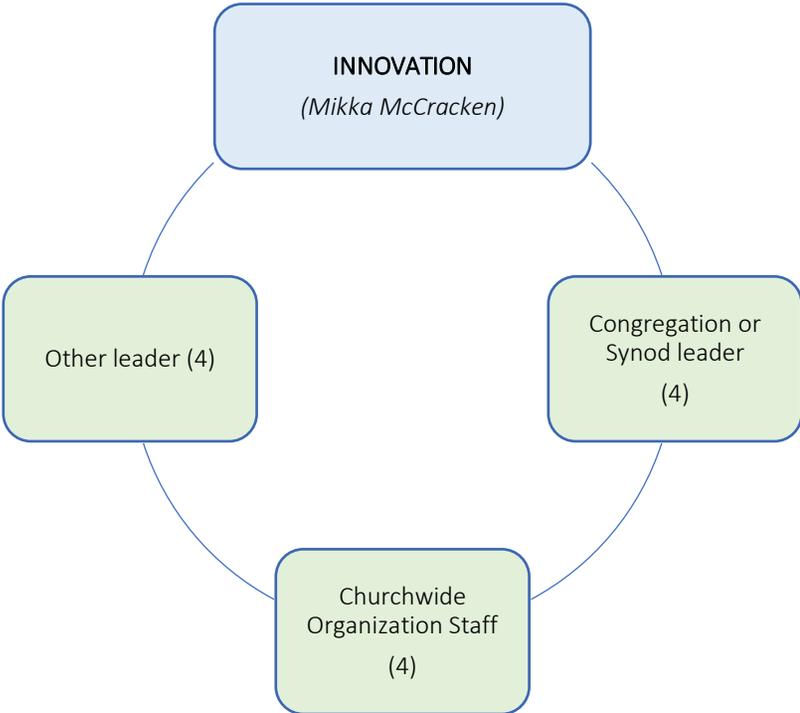


The Strategic Leadership Team sets, leads and evaluates the strategic framework to achieve and support priority goals and initiatives of this church.

Anticipated schedule: quarterly, full day

- Bold:** team convener
- Green: at-large
- Blue: position specific

Innovation Leadership Team



The Innovation Leadership Team assesses, implements and evaluates experimental ideas and initiatives to further this church’s shared mission.

Anticipated schedule: quarterly, half-day

Bold: team convener

Green: at-large

Blue: position specific

Recommended Synod Constitution Changes, Southwestern Texas Synod

~~S9.03. — There shall be a Nominating Committee composed of nine persons appointed by the Synod Council. One of the appointees shall be a youth or young adult who shall be appointed for a two-year term. Other members shall be appointed for six-year terms. The appointees shall reflect the male/female and lay/clergy representation guidelines for the Synod. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.~~

S9.03 Nominating Committee: There shall be a Nominating committee consisting of 5 members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.

**Chapter 10.
SYNOD COUNCIL**

- †S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
 - b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be ~~four~~ three years.

Add recommended provision on *Robert's Rules of Order*

S10.08. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

8B Southwestern Pennsylvania | 2020 Synod Assembly

Changes made to the constitution by †S18.13.

- †S8.51.c. The treasurer of this synod shall be ~~elected~~ appointed to a four-year term and may be re-elected or reappointed. The treasurer shall serve until his or her successor takes office.
- S8.55. Should the vice president or secretary ~~or treasurer~~ die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the Synod Assembly, shall be four years.
- S9.07. ~~The Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.~~

October 1988
Amended October 11, 1991
Name change effective July 1, 1994
Amended January 15, 2000
Amended May 15, 2004
Amended October 20, 2007
Amendments approved October 11, 2013
Approved By ELCA Church Council, except Article IV and V
Amendments approved February 8, 2014 and May 3, 2014
Approved by ELCA Church Council by action of its Executive Committee June 18, 2014
Approved by ELCA Church Council March 2017
Amended April 22, 2017
Amendments approved by Board of Directors on February 5, 2021

**RESTATED BYLAWS
OF
LUTHER SEMINARY**

**ARTICLE I
Name and Organization**

Section 1.

Name and location.

The name of this corporation is LUTHER SEMINARY (hereinafter “the Seminary). The principal office of the Seminary shall be at such place within the City of Saint Paul, Minnesota, as shall be designated from time to time by duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Directors. Until otherwise fixed by the Board of Directors, the principal office shall be at 2481 Como Avenue West, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55108.

Section 2.

History.

The Seminary is the legal and historic successor of Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary, a seminary of the Minnesota Synod and the Red River Valley Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, organized in 1920, and of Luther Theological Seminary, a seminary of The American Lutheran Church, organized in 1917, together with its antecedent institutions, as well as Augsburg Theological Seminary, also a seminary of The American Lutheran Church, organized in 1869. The merger of Luther Theological Seminary and Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary became effective on July 1, 1982. The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, together with The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, were

united in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (hereinafter, "ELCA") through a merger effective on January 1, 1988. The name of the school was changed to LUTHER SEMINARY, effective July 1, 1994.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities called and sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to salvation through Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

ARTICLE III

Corporate Member

The ELCA shall be the sole member of this corporation and this Seminary shall be governed by its policies.

ARTICLE IV

Confessional Basis

The faith and life of this Seminary shall be in harmony with the confessional commitments of the ELCA.

ARTICLE V

Membership of the Board of Directors

Section 1.

Membership and Terms.

- (a) This Seminary shall be governed by a Board of Directors comprised of up to thirty Directors. The Directors shall be elected as follows: (i) Each of the Seminary's supporting Synods of the ELCA may be asked by the Seminary to elect one Director; (ii) at least one-fifth of the Directors shall be nominated by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council, which one-fifth shall include the President of Luther Seminary and the Chair of the Luther Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees if they are also elected by the Church Council; (iii) the Bishops of Regions 1 and 3 shall elect two Bishops from among their number as Directors; and (iv) the remaining members elected by the supporting Synods, in consultation with the Seminary's Board of Directors, in numbers as set by the Board.
- (b) New Directors and incumbent members of the Board who are eligible and standing for reelection normally shall be elected in the spring so that Directors may begin their service on July 1 of the year in which they are elected or re-elected. The term of a Director shall be four years, renewable twice. Appointment or election to fill a vacancy of an un-expired term shall not be counted as a term.

- (c) The Board shall aspire to having a diverse membership, including persons of color, a balance of male and female members and a balance of clergy and lay members. Potential members are to be nominated through a process in compliance with subsection (a) above and in careful consultation with the President of the Seminary to ensure the needed competencies and proportions of the Board.
- (d) The Board of the Seminary shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by this Board.
- (e) A Director shall serve until a successor is elected and qualified. Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by the electing body after thorough consultation with the President and/or Chair of the Board concerning required competencies, representation and above provisions. A Director may be removed from office with or without cause by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Directors. If a Director is absent from two consecutive meetings without valid excuse, the office shall be declared vacant by the Board of Directors.

Section 2.

Advisory members.

The Executive Director for the appropriate unit of the ELCA or designee and the Trustees of the Foundation shall serve as advisory members of the Board of Directors with voice but without vote in Board meetings. The Board of Directors may designate other advisory members from the faculty, the administration, the student body, the Alumni Association, the Auxiliary and other groups as the Board determines, with voice but without vote.

ARTICLE VI

Responsibilities and Authorities of the Board of Directors

Subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the Board of Directors shall have and exercise all power and authority granted to nonprofit corporations under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 317A, these Bylaws and such other appropriate Board Policy Statements. These Bylaws and other Board Policy Statements shall, subject to the Articles of Incorporation, take precedence over all other institutional statements, documents and policies.

Subject to the policies of the ELCA, the Board shall have, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities and authorities:

- (a) Establish and periodically review the Purpose, Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan of

the Seminary, and in consultation with the President, support the Seminary in accomplishing them;

- (b) Oversee governance of the Seminary and establish effective governance processes;
- (c) Establish policies and criteria for Board membership; elect Board officers and authorize assessment of Board performance;
- (d) Oversee the selection and retention of Seminary personnel, including the appointment of the President as the chief executive officer of the Seminary; establish the President's conditions of employment; establish the President's performance evaluation criteria and provide input to the Committee of the Board assigned to oversee the President's performance;
- (e) Adopt policy statements, including policies and procedures within the *Faculty Handbook* relating to faculty personnel, for the internal operation of Seminary; assuring consultation and review by those groups primarily affected by such policy statements;
- (f) Elect other Seminary administrative officers upon the recommendation of the President;
- (g) Appoint, reappoint, grant tenure, promote, discipline, terminate, dismiss or suspend faculty according to the provisions of these Bylaws and the *Faculty Handbook*;
- (h) Receive and review reports of the President and Seminary leadership and provide reports to the ELCA as and when appropriate or required;
- (i) Oversee the education program and other programs of the Seminary including changes in program, and curriculum; and review and approve policies that assist the Seminary in achieving its purpose;
- (j) Grant such earned and honorary diplomas and degrees as are properly granted by this Seminary, upon recommendation of the faculty and the President;
- (k) Oversee the religious life of the Seminary and student life, admissions and financial aid policies and procedures;
- (l) Oversee the financial affairs of the Seminary, including but not limited to, adopting and amending, where necessary, the annual budget, managing the assets of the

Seminary, funding, fund-raising and gift-acceptance policies as recommended by the Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees;

- (m) Purchase, acquire, lease, sell and convey, mortgage, pledge and otherwise dispose of real estate and all other property of whatsoever nature; and borrow money; and manage all assets, real estate, endowment and other investable funds;
- (n) Receive gifts, legacies and devices, either in outright or in trust;
- (o) Establish tuition, fees and other charges for this Seminary;
- (p) Set salaries of faculty and administrative officers within salary ranges, if any, defined by the ELCA;
- (q) Authorize ongoing financial development according to the policies of the ELCA;
- (r) Conduct fund-raising in the congregations of any supporting synod only upon the approval of the appropriate synod; and
- (s) Oversee other programs, policies and procedures to support accountability, transparency and open communication with internal and external constituencies of the Seminary, as well as represent the broader interests of the ELCA, the church at large and the broader public interest in graduate religious education.

ARTICLE VII

Officers of the Board of Directors

Section 1.

Officers of the Seminary.

The officers of the Seminary shall consist of the Chair, the President, the Vice Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be named from time to time with the title of Executive Vice President or Vice President. The Dean of Academic Affairs and other officers such as Executive Vice Presidents or Vice Presidents shall serve at the pleasure of the President. The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and President shall be Directors, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Section 2.

Terms and Responsibilities of the Chair of the Board.

The Chair shall be elected in the spring of even-numbered years, upon nomination by the Governance Committee, and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on the first day of

July of the year in which the Chair is elected, or immediately if the Chair is filling a vacancy. A vacancy may be filled at any time by a vote of the Directors.

The Chair shall fulfill the responsibilities prescribed in these Bylaws, together with the following duties:

- (a) Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee;
- (b) Have the right to vote on all questions (other than those in which the Chair has an identified conflict of interest);
- (c) Serve as spokesperson for the Board of Directors;
- (d) Upon consultation with the Governance Committee and the President, appoint committee chairs, vice chairs and members;
- (e) Serve as an ex officio member of all committees of the Board;
- (f) Consult with the President and the Governance Committee in the preparation of the agendas for the meetings of the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee;
- (g) Consult with the President about such other matters deemed desirable by either the President or the Chair; and
- (h) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee from time to time.

Section 3.

Term and Responsibility of Vice Chair of the Board.

The Vice Chair shall be elected in the spring of even-numbered years, upon nomination by the Governance Committee, and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on the first day of July of the year in which the Vice Chair is elected, or immediately if the Vice Chair is filling a vacancy. A vacancy may be filled at any time by a vote of the Board of Directors.

The Vice Chair of the Board of Directors shall, in the absence or disability of the Chair, perform all duties of the Chair as described in Section 2 above, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair or the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

Section 4.

Term and Responsibilities of the Secretary of the Board.

The Secretary shall be elected in the spring of even-numbered years, upon nomination by the Governance Committee, and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on the first day of July of the year in which the Secretary is elected, or immediately if the Secretary is filling a vacancy. A vacancy may be filled at any time by a vote of the Directors.

The Secretary shall and perform the following duties:

- (a) Keep accurate minutes of the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee and assure that they are promptly distributed to the members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee appropriately;
- (b) Assure that all meeting notices are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws;
- (c) Assure that the Seal of the Seminary is affixed to all official documents that are required by law to bear it, the execution of which on behalf of this corporation is duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws, and assure all records of the Seminary are properly authenticated;
- (d) See that all reports of the President and Board committees are received and filed for record and other official documents of the Seminary are properly maintained;
- (e) Ensure that the Board is acting in accordance with the Restated and Amended Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws and adopted Policies of the Board of Directors;
- (f) See that a register of the post office address and other relevant contact information of each Director is kept; and
- (g) Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board Chair, the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee.

Section 5.

Term and Responsibilities of the Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer shall be elected in the spring of even-numbered years, upon nomination by the Governance Committee, and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on the first day of July of the year in which the Treasurer is elected, or immediately if the Treasurer is filling a vacancy. A vacancy may be filled at any time by a vote of the Directors.

The Treasurer shall perform the following duties:

- (a) Serve as a member of the Audit Committee and as a member of the Finance and

Administration Committee of the Board;

- (b) Serve as the Board's key leader on all financial management policy matters;
- (c) Ensure that the Board regularly receives appropriate financial statements from the Seminary's administration that include comparisons of revenue and expenditures with the approved annual budget;
- (d) Ensure that all other financial reports, including those regarding special or major Board approved expenditures, Seminary investments and debt, and annual or special audits, are provided to the Directors in a timely fashion;
- (e) Work closely with the Seminary's chief financial officer, independent auditors and any other financial oversight committee of the Board; and
- (f) Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board Chair, the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees of the Board of Directors

Section 1.

Committees

The Board of Directors shall establish such standing and ad hoc committees as it deems appropriate for the performance of the Board's responsibilities.

The chairs, vice chairs and members of the committees shall be appointed in the spring, or upon the establishment of an ad hoc committee, by the Chair of the Board, in accordance with Article 7.2(d) herein, and shall serve for one year, or until their successor has been appointed or the committee has fulfilled its charge. Each committee member's term shall begin on July 1 of the year in which they were appointed, or immediately if they are fulfilling a vacancy or being appointed to an ad hoc committee. All committee chairs and vice chairs shall be members of the Board of Directors, unless otherwise appointed by the Board.

Each Committee shall have a written statement of purpose, role, and responsibilities which shall be submitted to the Governance Committee for review, approval and recommendation to the Board for approval. Such statements shall be reviewed annually by each committee and changes shall be submitted as described above.

Each committee shall have designated a member of the Seminary Administration, as determined and appointed by the President in consultation with the Board Chair, to assist with the work of the committee. Each committee shall meet at least three times annually or more often if required by the Board, and regularly report on its work and recommendations to the

Board. All committees shall maintain written minutes of meetings, and, with the exception of the Executive and Governance Committees, shall distribute such minutes to the Directors. A majority of each committee's voting members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2.

Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, President and Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, together with the chairs of the regularly established committees as determined by the Board.

The purpose of the Executive Committee is to serve at the pleasure of the Board as its agent in addressing business between the Board's regular meetings. The Executive Committee shall oversee the work of the committees of the Board; oversee the Seminary's planning process and progress on planning goals; assure the Board's obligation to support the President; annually assess the performance of the President; and implement the process for determining the compensation and conditions of employment of the President, officers and key employees of the Seminary.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings, to the extent permitted by applicable law, but with the following exceptions: Presidential selection or termination; Director or Board officer selection or termination; changes in the Purpose, Vision, Mission or Strategic Plan of the Seminary; changes in the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws or Policies of the Seminary; incurring corporate indebtedness; sale of Seminary assets or tangible property; adoption of the annual budget; and conferral of degrees.

Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called either by the Chair of the Board of Directors or the President. The Executive Committee shall meet as often as necessary to conduct its business. All actions of the Executive Committee are subject to review by the Board of Directors.

Section 3.

Governance Committee.

The Governance Committee Chair shall be the Vice Chair of the Board. The Committee shall be comprised of the Board Chair, the Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the Vice Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the Executive Director of the Luther Seminary Foundation and the President of the Seminary,

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to ensure that the Board's membership complies with the requirements of the ELCA and consists of qualified and committed individuals; identify and nominate candidates for membership on the Foundation Board of Trustees for approval by the Board of Directors; ensure that appropriate and helpful programs of orientation and in-

service training are provided for Directors and Trustees; develop the appropriate agendas for Board meetings so that the Board functions effectively and efficiently; develop and implement processes for the regular assessment of performance of Directors, Trustees and officers of the Board of Directors and the Foundation Board of Trustees; and periodically review and appropriately propose amendments to the list of Director responsibilities in Article VI of these Bylaws.

Meetings of the Governance Committee shall be called by the Committee Chair. The Governance Committee shall meet as often as necessary to conduct its business.

ARTICLE IX

Meetings of the Board of Directors

Section 1.

Regular meetings.

Three regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held each year, one each in the fall, winter and spring, at such time and place as may be specified from time to time by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee. Unless otherwise specified by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, the Board of Directors shall meet at the principal office of the Seminary.

Section 2.

Special meetings.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the Board Chair, upon written request of any seven members of the Board of Directors, by the Board at either a regular or special meeting, or by either the President or the Board Chair upon written request of a majority of the members of the faculty. Such meetings shall be held at such time and place as stipulated by the President, the Chair or the Board, whoever is convening the meeting, including holding such meetings telephonically or by other generally accepted electronic means that are available to the members of the Board of Directors and that allow for discussion and voting to properly occur.

Section 3.

Notice of meetings.

Written notice of each regular meeting shall be sent to each Director by the President not less than fifteen and not more than thirty days prior to the date of the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. Written notice of each special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be sent to each Director by the President not less than two nor more than thirty days before the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. Written notice may be sent in a generally accepted electronic format to a Director's last known e-mail address, cell phone number, or by other electronic medium known to be regularly accessed by the Director.

The purpose of both regular and special meetings shall be set forth in the notice and the notice shall be accompanied by an agenda. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting other than the business specified in the notice of that meeting.

Any Director may make written waiver of notice before, at or after a meeting. The waiver shall be filed with the person who has been designated to act as secretary of the meeting, who shall enter it upon the records of the meeting. Appearance at a meeting is deemed a waiver unless it is solely for the purpose of asserting the illegality of the meeting.

Section 4.

Quorum and Telephonic Meetings.

A majority of the Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise stated in these Bylaws or the Restated and Amended Articles of Incorporation, a majority vote of those Directors present with a proper quorum shall be sufficient to transact any business.

Members of the Board of Directors, or any committee designated by the Board of Directors, may participate in a meeting of such Board or committee by means of conference telephone or similar communications by which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this Section shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

Section 5.

Action without a Formal Meeting.

Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors or any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if the action is taken by eighty percent or more of the members of the Board or committee. Such action must be evidenced by a written document that describes the action taken; containing the signatures of eighty percent or more of the Directors indicating their approval of such action; and such document is included in the minutes or other official records of the Seminary. Action taken in this manner shall be effective when the last necessary Director consents, unless the document specifies a prior or subsequent effective date.

Such document may be an electronic document in a generally accepted format, describing the proposed action, sent to the Director's last known e-mail address, cell phone number, or by other electronic medium known to be regularly accessed by the Director, clearly stating a deadline for response. A Director may approve or disapprove by responding to such written or electronic document with a clear statement of approval or disapproval. Failure to so respond by the stated deadline shall be deemed an abstention.

ARTICLE X

Officers of the Administration

Section 1.

Election of the President.

(a) **Eligibility.**

The President shall be a person publicly committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ as understood by the ELCA and its full communion partners, shall have demonstrated higher education experience, and shall be a leader with the qualifications, experience, character, and values to lead Luther Seminary.

(b) **Presidential Search Committee.**

The Presidential Search Committee shall consist of the following persons:

- 1) Four Directors, recommended by the Board Chair and approved by the Board of Directors, from whom the Board shall elect the Chair of the Search Committee;
- 2) Two Trustees of the Luther Seminary Foundation, recommended by the Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees and approved by the Foundation Board and the Board of Directors;
- 3) The Director for the appropriate unit of the ELCA or another person chosen by the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA;
- 4) Two members of the faculty, chosen by the faculty in a manner deemed appropriate by them;
- 5) One member of the administrative staff, recommended by the Board Chair and approved by the Board of Directors; and
- 6) One student enrolled at the Seminary, appointed by the governing structure of the student body.

(c) **Search Process.** The Search Committee shall adopt a comprehensive plan to solicit candidates for the office of President. The announcement shall include the schedule of the process to be followed. There shall be consultation with the ELCA Presiding Bishop, or designee, throughout the search process. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Search Committee shall generate a confidential ranking of the finalists and discuss such ranking and the merits of the finalists, together with its recommendation of the candidate who should be elected President, with the Board of Directors.

(d) **Election of the President.** The election of the President shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board. The President shall have the rank of Professor and shall serve as, or may appoint the Dean of Academic Affairs as, the Chair of the Faculty.

(e) Term of the President.

The President shall be elected for a term up to five years, indefinitely eligible for re-election by the Board, which election should be held one year in advance of the end of the term. Re-election shall be subject to a thorough performance review.

(f) Resignation, retirement and dismissal.

- 1) The President serves at the pleasure of the Board for such term and with such compensation, benefits and conditions of employment as the Board shall determine.
- 2) The President may resign by giving written notice to the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 3) The President may, on the President's own initiative, or at the request of the Board of Directors, elect retirement under the policy of the ELCA.
- 4) The President may be dismissed by the Board of Directors at any time and for any reason upon the vote of a majority of the Directors, provided that upon dismissal, the President's salary and fringe benefits shall be continued for at least three months.
- 5) In the event the President is incapacitated or otherwise unable to perform the President's duties, the Chair of the Board shall promptly appoint a short-term Acting President until the President is able to assume the President's duties or an Interim President is appointed.
- 6) In the event the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Executive Committee, determines that the President may not be able to perform the President's duties for an extended period, the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall appoint a successor to act as Interim President, until such time as the President is able to resume the duties of the office or is replaced.

Section 2.

Duties of the President

The President shall be the chief executive officer of Seminary, responsible to the Board of Directors for the administration, oversight and proper functioning of the Seminary. The President shall:

- (a) Perform all duties necessary to implement the policies and decisions of the Board of Directors;
- (b) Direct and supervise the work of the faculty, the administrative officers and other staff members, in accordance with these Bylaws and the *Faculty Handbook*;

- (c) Be responsible for the encouragement and direction of student activities and organizations;
- (d) Provide pastoral, academic and administrative leadership for Seminary;
- (e) Supervise the work of the Faculty and participate in the process for selection and retention of faculty according to the process specified in the *Faculty Handbook*, including submitting an independent recommendation for each faculty personnel recommendation brought to the Board;
- (f) Lead the faculty, administrative staff and students in the development of objectives and policies for the Seminary to be recommended to the Board of Directors;
- (g) Supervise and administer the work and programs of the Seminary according to the objectives and policies approved by the Board of Directors;
- (h) Establish such programs as are necessary to implement Board policy decisions;
- (i) Supervise and administer the educational program, including responsibility for oversight and supervision of the faculty in developing the educational policies and curricula of this seminary, the recruitment and admission of students and such other faculty and student programs developed for the Seminary;
- (j) Supervise and administer the business, fund-raising and public and church relations personnel and programs of the Seminary;
- (k) Lead and carry out fund-raising campaigns as approved and directed by the Board of Directors;
- (l) Develop an annual budget and approve expenditure of funds in accordance with, but not more than, the limit established by the adopted budget;
- (m) Sign and execute such documents and papers as authorized by the Board of Directors;
- (n) Keep the Board of Directors appropriately informed and consult with the Board in a timely manner on matters related to the Board's policy making and fiduciary responsibilities;
- (o) Act as an ex officio member of all Board committees;

- (p) Appropriately and helpfully represent the Seminary to its various constituencies and act as the Seminary's key spokesperson; and
- (q) Do such other things as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign.

Section 3.

The Vice President for Finance.

The Vice President for Finance shall be elected by the Board upon the recommendation of the President and shall serve at the President's pleasure. Under the direction and supervision of the President, the Vice President for Finance shall:

- (a) Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, the safekeeping of all funds and securities of the Seminary, in accordance with all applicable laws and the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Policies of the Seminary;
- (b) Give bond for faithful discharge of responsibilities in such sum and substance and with such surety as the Board of Directors shall determine, the cost of which shall be borne by the Seminary;
- (c) Receive and give a receipt for monies due and payable to this corporation from any source whatever;
- (d) Deposit monies in the name of this corporation at such bank or banks or other depositories as shall be approved by the Board of Directors;
- (e) Present to the Board of Directors at the end of each fiscal year, and otherwise when requested, a full statement of the financial condition of the Seminary;
- (f) Present to the Board of Directors an annual audit of the business transactions of this seminary prepared by a firm of certified public accountants approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 4.

Other officers.

Upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Directors may elect other officers of the Seminary to assist the President in the fulfillment of the administrative duties assigned the President. Such officers may include, but not be limited to: the Academic Dean, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Administration, the Vice President for Seminary Relations and Executive Director of the Foundation. Such officers shall serve for such term and with such

compensation, benefits and conditions of employment as the President shall determine in consultation with the Board of Directors. The President shall have the responsibility for appointing, evaluating, disciplining, terminating, dismissing, suspending or accepting the resignation of all such other officers as well as the Vice President for Finance and other support personnel of the Seminary.

ARTICLE XI

Financial matters

Section 1.

The Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of this corporation shall begin on July 1 and end on the following June 30.

Section 2.

Financial support.

Funds for capital expenditures may be provided by the ELCA and the supporting synods according to policies decided by each of them.

Major fund appeals for this seminary in the congregations of the ELCA shall be subject to authorization by the ELCA and shall be carried out in a manner decided by the ELCA.

These arrangements shall be reviewed every five years by the Board of Directors of the Seminary, the Vocation and Education, or its successor, unit and the supporting synods of Regions 1 and 3.

Section 3.

Signatures.

All checks shall be signed (either by hand or with facsimiles) by both the President and the Vice President for Finance of this seminary. Two other persons shall be designated by the Board of Directors to sign checks in the case of the death, resignation or the inability to function of either the President or the Vice President for Finance. All drafts, notes and other evidences of indebtedness of this corporation shall be signed by the President and a Director designated by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XII

The Faculty

Section 1.

Membership.

The faculty of the Seminary shall be comprised of those persons holding the academic rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor and instructor, including visiting faculty at any of those ranks, and such administrative personnel (e.g., the seminary pastor) as may not hold academic rank but are voted faculty status by the faculty and approved by the Board of Directors. The academic rank and status of faculty members shall be determined by the Board of Directors upon recommendation of the President and the faculty according to the process prescribed in these Bylaws and the *Faculty Handbook*.

Section 2.

General Duties.

Subject to the policies of the ELCA and the Board of Directors, the faculty shall develop the curriculum, adopt rules and regulations for the admission, promotion and graduation of students and shall be responsible for their instruction and guidance. The faculty shall develop, and amend from time to time as necessary and appropriate, a *Faculty Handbook*, all provisions and amendments of which shall be effective only upon approval by the Board of Directors. The *Faculty Handbook* shall govern all aspects of faculty selection, appointment, retention, promotion, and performance of duties by all members of the faculty.

ARTICLE XIII
The Students

Section 1.

Qualification.

The Seminary shall be open to such students as meet the established qualification for admission and agree to the regulations of the Seminary. The *Student Handbook* shall guide the student relationship with the Seminary.

Section 2.

Admission.

Students may be admitted by the Faculty or a standing committee thereof according to policies developed by them and approved by the Board.

Section 3.

Discipline.

Students may be suspended or dismissed by the Faculty according to policies developed by them and approved by the Board. Such policies shall include an appeals process.

ARTICLE XIV

Amendments

These Bylaws shall be reviewed periodically by the Governance Committee who shall recommend any necessary changes to the Board. Notice of proposed changes shall have been sent to each Director, together with a copy of the proposed changes, within the same time and in the same manner as notice of meetings are required to be given, in accordance with Article IX above. Upon approval by two-thirds of the Directors present and voting at any meeting, these Amendments shall be recommended to the ELCA Church Council for approval. Amendments shall become effective upon approval by the ELCA Church Council.

ARTICLE XV **Indemnification**

To the full extent permitted by any applicable law, the Seminary shall indemnify each person (and the heirs and personal representatives of such person) who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, wherever brought, whether, civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, including an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that such person exercised acts of judgment, discretion or omission in connection with the person's duties as

- (a) a Director, officer, employee or member of a committee of the Seminary; or
- (b) while a Director, officer or employee of this corporation, was serving as a Director, officer, partner, trustee or agent of another organization or employee benefit plan at the request of the Seminary or pursuant to his or her duties as a Director, officer, employee or agent of the Seminary;

against damages, expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, penalties, fines (including, without limitation, excise taxes assessed against the person with respect to an employee benefit plan) and amounts paid in settlement or pursuant to arbitration actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding.

Indemnification provided by this section shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Director, officer, employee or committee member, shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such person and shall apply whether or not the claim against such person arises out of matters occurring before the adoption of this section. Any indemnification realized other than under this section shall apply as a credit against any indemnification provided by this section.

Indemnification provided by this section shall not apply if the act or omission of the potentially

indemnified person constituted willful or wanton conduct. "Willful or wanton conduct" shall mean a course of action which shows an actual or deliberate intention to cause harm, or which, if not intentional, shows an utter indifference or conscious disregard for the safety of others or their property.

The Seminary shall, to the full extent permitted by applicable law from time to time in effect, purchase and maintain appropriate insurance coverage for the liability protection and indemnification purposes set forth in this Article.

ARTICLE XVI
Conflict of Interest

All Directors shall comply with Minnesota law concerning duties and a requirement relating to a Director's standard of care to the Seminary and the manner in which any conflict of interest must be addressed. Any conflict of interest shall be disclosed at the earliest possible time following when the Director becomes aware of such conflict or upon request by the Seminary.

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The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, together with The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, were united in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (hereinafter, "ELCA") through a merger effective on January 1, 1988. The name of the school was changed to LUTHER SEMINARY, effective July 1, 1994.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities called and sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to salvation through Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

ARTICLE III

Corporate Member

The ELCA shall be the sole member of this corporation and this Seminary shall be governed by its policies.

ARTICLE IV

Confessional Basis

The faith and life of this Seminary shall be in harmony with the confessional commitments of the ELCA.

ARTICLE V

Membership of the Board of Directors

Section 1.

Membership and Terms.

(a) This Seminary shall be governed by a Board of Directors comprised of up to thirty Directors. The Directors shall be elected as follows: (i) Each of the Seminary's supporting Synods of the ELCA may be asked by the Seminary to elect one Director; (ii) at least one-fifth of the Directors shall be nominated by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council, which one-fifth shall include the President of Luther Seminary and the Chair of the Luther Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees if they are also elected by the Church Council; (iii) the Bishops of Regions 1 and 3 shall elect two Bishops from among their number as Directors; and

(a) (iv) the remaining members elected by the supporting Synods, in consultation with the Seminary's Board of Directors, in numbers as set by the Board.

(a) New Directors and incumbent members of the Board who are eligible and standing

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for reelection normally shall be elected in the spring so that Directors may begin their service on July 1 of the year in which they are elected or re-elected. The term of a Director shall be four years, renewable twice. Appointment or election to fill a vacancy of an un-expired term shall not be counted as a term. ~~vacancy of an un-expired term shall not be counted as a term.~~

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(b) The Board shall aspire to having a diverse membership, including persons of color, a balance of male and female members and a balance of clergy and lay members. Potential members are to be nominated through a process in compliance with subsection (a) above and in careful consultation with the President of the Seminary to ensure the needed competencies and proportions of the Board.

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(c) The Board of the Seminary shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by this Board.

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~~(b)~~ A Director shall serve until a successor is elected and qualified. Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by the electing body after thorough consultation with the President and/or Chair of the Board concerning required competencies, representation and above provisions. A Director may be removed from office with or without cause by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Directors. If a Director is absent from two consecutive meetings without valid excuse, the office shall be declared vacant by the Board of Directors.

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Section 2.

Advisory members.

The Executive Director for the appropriate unit of the ELCA or designee, and the Trustees of the Foundation shall serve as advisory members of the Board of Directors with voice but without vote in Board meetings. The Board of Directors may designate other advisory members from the faculty, the administration, the student body, the Alumni Association, the Auxiliary and other groups as the Board determines, with voice but without vote.

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ARTICLE VI

Responsibilities and Authorities of the Board of Directors

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Subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the Board of Directors shall have and exercise all power and authority granted to nonprofit corporations under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 317.317A, these Bylaws and such other appropriate Board Policy Statements. These Bylaws and other Board Policy Statements shall, subject to the Articles of Incorporation, take precedence over all

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other institutional statements, documents and policies.

Subject to the policies of the ELCA, the Board shall have, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities and authorities:

- (a) Establish and periodically review the Purpose, Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan of the Seminary, and in consultation with the President, support the Seminary in accomplishing them;
- (b) Oversee governance of the Seminary and establish effective governance processes;
- (c) Establish Policiespolicies and criteria for Board membership; elect Board officers and authorize assessment of Board performance;
- (d) Oversee the selection and retention of Seminary personnel, including the appointment of the President as the chief executive officer of the Seminary; establish the President's conditions of employment; establish the President's performance evaluation criteria and provide input to the Committee of the Board assigned to oversee the President's performance;
- (e) Adopt policy statements, including policies and procedures within the Faculty Handbook relating to faculty personnel, for the internal operation of Seminary; assuring consultation and review by those groups primarily affected by such policy statements;
- (f) Elect other Seminary administrative officers upon the recommendation of the President;
- (g) Appoint, reappoint, grant tenure, promote, discipline, terminate, dismiss or suspend faculty according to the provisions of these Bylaws and the Faculty Handbook;
- (h) Receive and review reports of the President and Seminary leadership and provide reports to the ELCA as and when appropriate or required;
- (i) Oversee the education program and other programs of the Seminary including changes in program, and curriculum; and review and approve policies that assist the Seminary in achieving its purpose;

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- (j) Grant such earned and honorary diplomas and degrees as are properly granted by this Seminary, upon recommendation of the faculty and the President;
- (a) ~~Oversee the religious life of the Seminary and student life, admissions and financial aid policies and procedures;~~
- (k) ~~Oversee the financial affairs of the Seminary, including but not limited to, adopting and amending, where necessary, the annual budget, managing the assets of the Seminary, funding, fund-raising and gift-acceptance policies as recommended by the Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees;~~
- (l) ~~Purchase, acquire, lease, sell and convey, mortgage, pledge and otherwise dispose of real estate and all other property of whatsoever nature; and borrow money; and manage all assets, real estate, endowment and other investable funds;~~
- (m) ~~Receive gifts, legacies and devices, either in outright or in trust;~~
- (n) ~~Establish tuition, fees and other charges for this Seminary;~~
- (o) ~~Set salaries of faculty and administrative officers within salary ranges, if any, defined by the ELCA;~~
- (p) ~~Authorize ongoing financial development according to the policies of the ELCA;~~
- (q) ~~Conduct fund-raising in the congregations of any supporting synod only upon the approval of the appropriate synod; and~~
- (r) ~~Oversee other programs, policies and procedures to support accountability, transparency and open communication with internal and external constituencies of the Seminary, as well as represent the broader interests of the ELCA, the church at large and the broader public interest in graduate religious education.~~

ARTICLE VII
Officers of the Board of Directors

Section 1.
Officers of the Seminary.

The officers of the Seminary shall consist of the Chair, the President, the Vice Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be named from time to time with

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the title of Executive Vice President or Vice President. The Dean of Academic Affairs and other officers such as Executive Vice Presidents or Vice Presidents shall serve at the pleasure of the President. The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and President shall be Directors, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Section 2.

Terms and Responsibilities of the Chair of the Board.

The Chair shall be elected in the spring of even-numbered years, upon nomination by the Governance Committee, and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on the first day of July of the year in which the Chair is elected, or immediately if the Chair is filling a vacancy. A vacancy may be filled at any time by a vote of the Directors. Vacancies may be filled at any time by a vote of the Directors.

The Chair shall fulfill the responsibilities prescribed in these Bylaws together with the following duties:

- (a) Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee;
- (b) Have the right to vote on all questions (other than those in which the Chair has an identified conflict of interest);
- (c) Serve as spokesperson for the Board of Directors;
- (d) Upon consultation with the Governance Committee and the President, appoint committee chairs, vice chairs and members;
- (e) Serve as Chair of the Executive Committee, and as an ex officio member of all committees of the Board;
- (f) Consult with the President and the Governance Committee in the preparation of the agendas for the meetings of the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee;
- (g) Consult with the President about such other matters deemed desirable by either the President or the Chair; and
- (a) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee from time to time.

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~~of the Chair, shall appoint the committee members in the spring who shall serve for one year, or until their successor has been appointed or the committee has fulfilled its charge. Each committee member's term shall begin on July 1 of the year in which they were appointed, or immediately if they are fulfilling a vacancy or being appointed to an ad hoc committee.~~

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The chairs, vice chairs and members of the committees shall be appointed in the spring, or upon the establishment of an ad hoc committee, by the Chair of the Board, in accordance with Article 7.2(d) herein, and shall serve for one year, or until their successor has been appointed or

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~~the committee has fulfilled its charge. Each committee member's term shall begin on July 1 of the year in which they were appointed, or immediately if they are fulfilling a vacancy or being appointed to an ad hoc committee. All committee chairs and vice chairs shall be members of the Board of Directors, unless otherwise appointed by the Board.~~

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~~Each Committee shall have a written statement of purpose, role, and responsibilities which shall be submitted to the Governance Committee for review, approval and recommendation to the Board for approval. Such statements shall be reviewed annually by each committee and changes shall be submitted as described above.~~

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~~Each committee shall have designated a member of the Seminary Administration, as determined and appointed by the President in consultation with the Board Chair, to assist with the work of the committee. Each committee shall meet at least three times annually or more often if required by the Board, and regularly report on its work and recommendations to the Board. All committees shall maintain written minutes of meetings, and, with the exception of the Executive and Governance Committees, shall distribute such minutes to the Directors. A majority of each committee's voting members shall constitute a quorum.~~

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Section 2.

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Executive Committee.

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~~The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, President and Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, together with the chairs of the regularly established committees as determined by the Board.~~

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~~The purpose of the Executive Committee is to serve at the pleasure of the Board as its agent in addressing business between the Board's regular meetings. The Executive Committee shall oversee the work of the committees of the Board; oversee the Seminary's planning process and progress on planning goals; assure the Board's obligation to support the President; annually assess the performance of the President; and implement the process for determining the compensation and conditions of employment of the President, officers and key employees of the Seminary.~~

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~~The Executive Committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings, to the extent permitted by applicable law, but with the following exceptions: Presidential selection or termination; Director or Board officer selection or termination; changes in the Purpose, Vision, Mission or Strategic Plan of the Seminary; changes~~

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in the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws or Policies of the Seminary; incurring corporate indebtedness; sale of Seminary assets or tangible property; adoption of the annual budget; and conferral of degrees.

Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called either by the Chair of the Board of Directors or the President. The Executive Committee shall meet as often as necessary to conduct its business. All actions of the Executive Committee are subject to review by the Board of Directors.

Section 3.
Governance Committee.

The Governance Committee Chair shall be the Vice Chair of the Board. The Committee shall be comprised of the Board Chair, the Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the Vice Chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the Executive Director of the Luther Seminary Foundation and the President of the Seminary,

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to ensure that the Board's membership complies with the requirements of the ELCA and consists of qualified and committed individuals; identify and nominate candidates for membership on the Foundation Board of Trustees for approval by the Board of Directors; ensure that appropriate and helpful programs of orientation and in-service training are provided for Directors and Trustees; develop the appropriate agendas for Board meetings so that the Board functions effectively and efficiently; develop and implement processes for the regular assessment of performance of Directors, Trustees and officers of the Board of Directors and the Foundation Board of Trustees; and periodically review and appropriately propose amendments to the list of Director responsibilities in Article VI of these Bylaws.

Meetings of the Governance Committee shall be called by the Committee Chair. The Governance Committee shall meet as often as necessary to conduct its business.

ARTICLE IX
Meetings of the Board of Directors

Section 1.
Regular meetings.

Three regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held each year, one each in the fall, winter and spring, at such time and place as may be specified from time to time by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee. Unless otherwise specified by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, the Board of Directors shall meet at the principal office of the Seminary.

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Section 2.

Special meetings.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the Board Chair, upon written request of any seven (7) members of the Board of Directors, by the Board at either a regular or special meeting, or by either the President or the Board Chair upon written request of a majority of the members of the faculty. Such meetings shall be held at such time and place as stipulated by the President, the Chair or the Board, whoever is convening the meeting, including holding such meetings telephonically or by other generally accepted electronic means that are available to the members of the Board of Directors and that allow for discussion and voting to properly occur.

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Section 3.

Notice of meetings.

Written notice of each regular meeting shall be sent to each Director by the President not less than fifteen and not more than thirty days prior to the date of the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. Written notice of each special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be sent to each Director by the President not less than two nor more than thirty days before the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. Written notice may be sent in a generally accepted electronic format to a Director's last known e-mail address, cell phone number, or by other electronic medium known to be regularly accessed by the Director.

The purpose of both regular and special meetings shall be set forth in the notice and the notice shall be accompanied by an agenda. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting other than the business specified in the notice of that meeting.

Any Director may make written waiver of notice before, at or after a meeting. The waiver shall be filed with the person who has been designated to act as secretary of the meeting, who shall enter it upon the records of the meeting. Appearance at a meeting is deemed a waiver unless it is solely for the purpose of asserting the illegality of the meeting.

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Section 4.

Quorum and Telephonic Meetings.

A majority of the Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise stated in these Bylaws or the Restated and Amended Articles of Incorporation, a majority vote of those Directors present with a proper quorum shall be sufficient to transact any business.

Members of the Board of Directors, or any committee designated by the Board of Directors, may participate in a meeting of such Board or committee by means of conference telephone or similar communications by which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this Section shall constitute presence in person at such

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meeting.

Section 5.

Action without a Formal Meeting.

Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors or any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if the action is taken by eighty percent or more of the members of the Board or committee. Such action must be evidenced by a written document that describes the action taken; containing the signatures of eighty percent or more of the Directors indicating their approval of such action; and such document is included in the minutes or other official records of the Seminary. Action taken in this manner shall be effective when the last necessary Director consents, unless the document specifies a prior or subsequent effective date.

Such document may be an electronic document in a generally accepted format, describing the proposed action, sent to the Director's last known e-mail address, cell phone number, or by other electronic medium known to be regularly accessed by the Director, clearly stating a deadline for response. A Director may approve or disapprove by responding to such written or electronic document with a clear statement of approval or disapproval. Failure to so respond by the stated deadline shall be deemed an abstention.

ARTICLE X
Officers of the Administration

Section 1.

Election of the President.

(a) Eligibility.

~~The President shall be an ordained minister on a person publicly committed to the clergy roster gospel of, and a member of, Jesus Christ as understood by the ELCA, or, if not at the time of election and its full communion partners, shall fulfill both requirements before assuming office have demonstrated higher education experience, and shall be a leader with the qualifications, experience, character, and values to lead Luther Seminary.~~

(b) Presidential Search Committee.

The Presidential Search Committee shall consist of the following persons:

- 1) Four Directors, recommended by the Board Chair and approved by the Board of Directors, from whom the Board shall elect the Chair of the Search Committee;

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- 2) Two Trustees of the Luther Seminary Foundation, recommended by the Chair of the
- 2) Foundation Board of Trustees and approved by the Foundation Board and the Board of Directors;
- 3) The Director for the appropriate unit of the ELCA or another person chosen by the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA;
- 4) One member of the Administrative Cabinet, recommended by the Board Chair and approved by the Board of Directors;
- 5) Two tenured members of the faculty, chosen by the faculty in a manner deemed appropriate by them;
- 6) One member of the administrative staff, recommended by the Board Chair and approved by the Board of Directors; and
- 7) One full-time student enrolled at the Seminary, appointed by the governing structure of the student body.
- (e) Search Process. The Search Committee shall adopt a comprehensive plan to solicit names of candidates for the office of President from the members of the ELCA by announcement in appropriate church
- (c) wide publications. The announcement shall include the schedule of the process to be followed. There shall be consultation with the ELCA Presiding Bishop and the appropriate ELCA unit, or designee, throughout each step of the search process. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Search Committee shall generate a confidential ranking of the finalists and discuss such ranking and the merits of the finalists, together with its recommendation of the candidate who should be elected President, with the Board of Directors.
- (d) Election of the President. The election of the President shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board. The President shall have the rank of Professor and shall serve as, or may appoint the Dean of Academic Affairs as, the Chair of the Faculty.
- (e) Term of the President. The President shall be elected for a term up to five-year term years, indefinitely eligible for re-election by the Board, which election should be held one year in advance of the end of the term. Re-election shall be subject to a thorough performance review.
- (f) Resignation, retirement and dismissal.
- 1) The President serves at the pleasure of the Board for such term and with such compensation, benefits and conditions of employment as the Board shall determine.

- 2) The President may resign by giving written notice to the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 3) The President may, on ~~his or her~~ the President's own initiative, or at the request of the Board of Directors, elect retirement under the policy of the ELCA.
- 4) The President may be dismissed by the Board of Directors at any time and for any reason upon the vote of a majority of the Directors, provided that upon dismissal, the President's salary and fringe benefits shall be continued for at least three months.
- 5) In the event the President is incapacitated or otherwise unable to perform ~~his or her~~ the President's duties, the Chair of the Board shall promptly appoint a short-term Acting President until the President is able to assume the President's duties or an Interim President is appointed.
- 5)6) In the event the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Executive Committee, determines that the President may not be able to perform the President's duties for an extended period, the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall appoint a successor to act as Interim President, until such time as the President is able to resume the duties of the office or is replaced.

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Section 2. Duties of the President

The President shall be the chief executive officer of Seminary, responsible to the Board of Directors for the administration, oversight and proper functioning of the Seminary. The President shall:

- (a) Perform all duties necessary to implement the policies and decisions of the Board of Directors;
- (b) Direct and supervise the work of the faculty, the administrative officers and other staff members, in accordance with these Bylaws and the *Faculty Handbook*;
- (c) Be responsible for the encouragement and direction of student activities and organizations;
- (d) Provide pastoral, academic and administrative leadership for Seminary;
- (e) Supervise the work of the Faculty and participate in the process for selection and retention of faculty according to the process specified in the *Faculty Handbook*, including submitting an independent recommendation for each faculty personnel

recommendation brought to the Board;

(e)(f) Lead the faculty, administrative staff and students in the development of objectives and policies for the Seminary to be recommended to the Board of Directors;

(f)(g) Supervise and administer the work and programs of the Seminary according to the objectives and policies approved by the Board of Directors;

(e)(h) Establish such programs as are necessary to implement Board policy decisions;

(h)(i) Supervise and administer the educational program, including responsibility for oversight and supervision of the faculty in developing the educational policies and curricula of this seminary, the recruitment and admission of students and such other faculty and student programs developed for the Seminary;

(i)(j) Supervise and administer the business, fund-raising and public and church relations personnel and programs of the Seminary;

(j)(k) Lead and carry out fund-raising campaigns as approved and directed by the Board of Directors;

(k)(l) Develop an annual budget and approve expenditure of funds in accordance with, but not more than, the limit established by the adopted budget;

(m) Sign and execute such documents and papers as authorized by the Board of Directors;

(n) Keep the Board of Directors appropriately informed and consult with the Board in a timely manner on matters related to the Board's policy making and fiduciary responsibilities;

(o) Act as an ex officio member of all Board committees;

(p) Appropriately and helpfully represent the Seminary to its various constituencies and act as the Seminary's key spokesperson; and

(q) Do such other things as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign.

Section 3.

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The Vice President for Finance.

The Vice President for Finance shall be elected by the Board upon the recommendation of the President and shall serve at the President's pleasure. Under the direction and supervision of the President, the Vice President for Finance shall:

- (a) Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, the safekeeping of all funds and securities of the Seminary, in accordance with all applicable laws and the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Policies of the Seminary;
- (b) Give bond for faithful discharge of responsibilities in such sum and substance and with such surety as the Board of Directors shall determine, the cost of which shall be borne by the Seminary;
- (c) Receive and give a receipt for monies due and payable to this corporation from any source whatever;
- (d) Deposit monies in the name of this corporation at such bank or banks or other depositories as shall be approved by the Board of Directors;
- (e) Present to the Board of Directors at the end of each fiscal year, and otherwise when requested, a full statement of the financial condition of the Seminary;
- (f) Present to the Board of Directors an annual audit of the business transactions of this seminary prepared by a firm of certified public accountants approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 4.

Other officers.

Upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Directors may elect other officers of the Seminary to assist the President in the fulfillment of the administrative duties assigned the President. Such officers may include, but not be limited to: the Academic Dean, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Administration, the Vice President for Seminary Relations and Executive Director of the Foundation. Such officers shall serve for such term and with such compensation, benefits and conditions of employment as the President shall determine in consultation with the Board of Directors. The President shall have the responsibility for appointing, evaluating, disciplining, terminating, dismissing, suspending or accepting the resignation of all such other officers as well as the Vice President for Finance and other support personnel of the Seminary.

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sent to each Director, together with a copy of the proposed changes, within the same time and in the same manner as notice of meetings are required to be given, in accordance with Article IX above. Upon approval by two-thirds of the Directors present and voting at any meeting, these Amendments shall be recommended to the ELCA Church Council for approval.
Amendments shall become effective upon approval by the ELCA Church Council.

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ARTICLE XV
Indemnification

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To the full extent permitted by any applicable law, the Seminary shall indemnify each person (and the heirs and personal representatives of such person) who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, wherever brought, whether, civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, including an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that such person exercised acts of judgment, discretion or omission in connection with ~~his or her~~ the person's duties as

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(a) a Director, officer, employee or member of a committee of the Seminary; or

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(b) while a Director, officer or employee of this corporation, was serving as a Director, officer, partner, trustee or agent of another organization or employee benefit plan at the request of the Seminary or pursuant to his or her duties as a Director, officer, employee or agent of the Seminary;

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against damages, expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, penalties, fines (including, without limitation, excise taxes assessed against the person with respect to an employee benefit plan) and amounts paid in settlement or pursuant to arbitration actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding.

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Indemnification provided by this section shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Director, officer, employee or committee member, shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such person and shall apply whether or not the claim against such person arises out of matters occurring before the adoption of this section. Any indemnification realized other than under this section shall apply as a credit against any indemnification provided by this section.

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Indemnification provided by this section shall not apply if the act or omission of the potentially indemnified person constituted willful or wanton conduct. "Willful or wanton conduct" shall mean a course of action which shows an actual or deliberate intention to cause harm, or which, if not intentional, shows an utter indifference or conscious disregard for the safety of others or

their property.

The Seminary shall, to the full extent permitted by applicable law from time to time in effect, purchase and maintain appropriate insurance coverage for the liability protection and indemnification purposes set forth in this Article.

ARTICLE XVI
Conflict of Interest

All Directors shall comply with Minnesota law concerning duties and a requirement relating to a Director's standard of care to the Seminary and the manner in which any conflict of interest must be addressed. Any conflict of interest shall be disclosed at the earliest possible time following when the Director becomes aware of such conflict or upon request by the Seminary.

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BYLAWS of UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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Chapter 1 - Name, Seal, and Location

- 1.01 Name: The name of this corporation shall be United Lutheran Seminary
- 1.02 Seal: The official seal of this corporation, an insigne, will be determined by action of the Board of Trustees, and maintained by the President's Office.
- 1.03 Offices: The principal office of this corporation shall be located in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Offices may be maintained in such other locations as the Board of Trustees shall determine.

Chapter 2 - Confessional Basis

- 2.01 Confession: This Seminary stands upon the Confession of Faith set forth in the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). It therefore confesses:
- The triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
 - Jesus Christ as the eternal Word of God;
 - The proclamation of God's message as law and Gospel as God's living Word to us;
 - The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as God's written Word and norm for faith and life;
 - The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds: and
 - The Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, as true witnesses to the Gospel that is the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3 - Purpose

- 3.01. Purpose: The purpose of this Seminary is and shall be to educate and train faithful, capable and creative persons for public leadership in Christ's Church to enable the Church to fulfill its mission, including preparing persons for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, Word and Service and other forms of ministry in the ELCA and other Christian traditions. Our mission includes educating and training women and men to exercise leadership in the Church and world, offering lifelong learning opportunities, and equipping the whole people of God to live their faith in their various and many Christian callings in the world. The mission also includes offering broad public educational and inspirational events and offerings, through courses, concerts, and education displays offered through the Seminary Ridge Museum, archives, and other events on our campuses in Philadelphia and Gettysburg.

Chapter 4 - The Board of Trustees

- 4.01. Composition; Election; Terms: The Board of Trustees, ~~which shall function as a board of directors,~~ shall consist of not ~~less~~ fewer than fourteen (14) and not more than twenty-five (25) ~~Trustees~~ natural persons. At least one-fifth (20%) of the Trustees shall be nominated, in consultation with the Seminary, by the appropriate unit of the Churchwide

Organization of the ELCA, and shall be elected by the Church Council of the ELCA. Two (2) Trustees shall be elected by the synodical bishops of Regions 7 and 8 from among their own number. The remainder of the Trustees shall be elected by the Synod Councils of synods comprising Regions 7 and 8 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in consultation with the Seminary Distribution of Trustees among the synods shall be determined from time to time by the Board in consultation with the Synod Bishops. The President of the Seminary will serve with the Board as an ex officio non-voting participant.

~~Except for initial terms which may be one (1), two (2), or three (3) years, †~~The term of each Trustee shall be three (3) years. A Trustee may serve no more than three (3) consecutive full three-year terms, but shall again be eligible for election after having been off the Board for at least one full term. To the extent practicable, Trustees shall be divided into equal classes so that approximately one-third of Trustees terms expire in a given year. Trustee terms normally shall end on June 30. Trustee terms shall begin on July 1 with the exception of the term of any Trustee elected to fill an unexpired term vacancy; this term shall commence upon election.

~~In order to follow the guidelines set forth in the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Board of Trustees, acting through its Trustees Committee, shall designate categories to which Trustees shall be elected and shall assign categories to the synods and to the Church Council prior to any election, with the categories and criteria set forth in the Trustee Handbook.~~ The Board of Trustees ~~also~~ shall establish such other rules and procedures as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Bylaw (4.01) and any rules or guidelines provided established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- 4.02. Powers: The business and affairs of the Seminary shall be managed under the direction of the Board. The powers of the Seminary shall be exercised by, or under the authority of, the Board except as otherwise provided by statute, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws, ~~or a resolution adopted by the Board~~. Without limiting the foregoing, the Board shall provide for the governance of the Seminary in the following ways:
- a. By electing the President, evaluating his/her performance and, if necessary, removing the President from office in accordance with procedures adopted by the Board.
 - b. By appointing, upon recommendation of the President and the appropriate Standing Committee, persons to the Faculty, approving educational programs and major curricular modifications, ensuring that the academic standards of the Seminary and the continuing accreditation by the appropriate accrediting agencies are maintained, and seeking to provide and protect an atmosphere of free academic inquiry.
 - c. By granting to qualified students, upon recommendation of the Faculty, such degrees as shall be authorized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
 - d. By taking responsibility for the Seminary's financial welfare through providing for the acquisition and expenditure of necessary capital and operating funds, supervising the Seminary's investments and financial affairs, approving the annual appointment

of an auditor and receiving the audit report, exercising oversight of the Seminary's physical assets, and representing the needs of the Seminary to the supporting synods.

- e. By approving general policies essential to the Seminary's operation – including approval of the Faculty Handbook, Trustees Handbook, Student and Employee Handbooks, and such Policies and Procedures Handbook, and Student Handbook— and encouraging opportunity for Faculty, Staff, and Students voice in matters affecting their welfare as are deemed by the Board to be necessary and appropriate.

4.03. Meetings:

- a. Annual and Special Meetings. The Board shall meet at least three times each year, including one meeting on a date in the last quarter of the calendar year during the fall semester and one on a date not more than sixty days preceding the annual Seminary commencement. Meeting dates shall be designated by the Executive Committee in advance of each fiscal year. Special meetings of the Board shall be called by the Executive Committee, or upon the request of five Trustees.

The fall meeting shall be the annual meeting, and all officers, except the President, shall at that time be elected for a term of two years. In the context of the annual meeting, an annual assembly of the bishop and vice president or other synod council representative of all 15 supporting synods and a representative of the appropriate churchwide unit will shall be invited to meet with the trustees for mutual community-building and long-range planning. The board will continue to meet after this assembly.

- b. Notice. Notice of all meetings shall be communicated to all Trustees no less than ten (10) days prior to the appointed meeting date. Such communication shall be by regular first-class mail, electronic mail, personal delivery and/or such other means where confirmation of receipt is possible.
- c. Quorum. A majority of the Trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum.
- d. Procedure. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall establish the procedural rules for all meetings of this Board and its Committees, except where other procedures are explicitly specified by these Bylaws or the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The President shall at each regular meeting report to the Board any pertinent action taken by the Faculty, Staff, or Students, and shall, in turn, following each meeting of the Board, present to the Faculty, Staff, and Students a report of the pertinent actions of the Board. Telephonic participation in board and committee meetings by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other is authorized and unanimous written consent including by email communication is an authorized form of voting.
- e. Attendance of Advisory Members and Guests. The Board may invite such advisory members and guests as it determines are appropriate to attend meetings of the Board, including executive sessions.

4.04. Vacancies; Resignations; Removals:

- a. Vacancies. The entity which elected a Trustee who resigns, dies or is removed shall fill the vacant position for the remainder of the term as expeditiously as possible. Such service in an unexpired term will not be counted as a full term for the purpose of the three-term limit.
- b. Removal. Any Trustee may be removed from office for cause at any meeting of the Board by a majority vote of Trustees then in office. Additionally, any Trustee may be removed from office by the group appointing or electing the Trustee to office, with or without assigning any cause. If a Trustee is removed, the resulting vacancy shall be filled by the entity which elected the person who was removed.
- c. Resignation. Any Trustee may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Secretary and Chairperson of the Seminary. The resignation shall be effective upon receipt or at such subsequent time as may be specified in the notice of resignation.

Chapter 5 – Officers

- 5.01. Number: In addition to the President, the officers of the Seminary shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Except for the President, the officers shall serve for a term of two years. Officers not employed by the seminary shall serve no more than three terms. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be selected from among the elected Trustees. The Secretary and Treasurer need not be Trustees. In the event that either of the persons elected to serve as Secretary or Treasurer is not a Trustee, he/she shall be given the privilege of attending all meetings except executive sessions of the Board, with voice but without vote. There also may be an Assistant Secretary, an Assistant Treasurer, and such other officers, including vice-presidents, as the Board from time to time shall determine; and the foregoing provisions regarding the Secretary and the Treasurer also shall apply with respect to any such officer.
- 5.02. Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board and its Executive Committee, and shall have the authority to execute documents on behalf of the Seminary. The Chairperson, in consultation with the President, shall appoint the chairpersons of all Committees of the Board. Committee chairpersons shall be appointed to serve until the next annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, and may be reappointed, except that no one may serve as the chairperson of the same committee for a period longer than six consecutive years.
- 5.03. Vice Chairperson: The Vice chairperson shall have authority to act in place of the Chairperson, in the event of the death, resignation, disability, or unavailability of the Chairperson.
- 5.04. President: The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Seminary and shall have general supervision over the business and operations of the Seminary, subject to the control of the Board. The President shall execute in the name of the Corporation, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts and other instruments authorized by the Board, except in cases where the execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board to some other officer or agent of the Seminary. In general, the President shall perform all duties incident to the office of President, including those more particularly outlined in Chapter 7 of these Bylaws, and such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

- 5.05. Secretary: The Secretary shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Board, the Executive Committee, and all other Board committees, and shall furnish a copy of the minutes of each Board and Executive Committee meeting to each Trustee and to those designated by the Board to receive copies of the minutes. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal of the Seminary.
- 5.06. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible to the President and the Board for all monies, securities, deeds, and mortgages which are assets of the Seminary and which are to be maintained as such, either in perpetuity or for a period extending beyond the normal fiscal year of the Seminary. The Treasurer shall order the deposits and investments of the Seminary. The Treasurer shall make a report on the condition of the assets of the Seminary at each regular meeting of the Board, and his/her annual report shall be properly audited and the securities in his/her possession examined in such manner as the Board or the Executive Committee may from time to time require. He/she shall give security for the faithful performance of his/her duties as the Board may determine.

Chapter 6 – Committees

- 6.01. Executive Committee: There shall be an Executive Committee which shall consist of the officers together with the chairpersons of all Standing Committees, plus one of the Trustee Bishops (who shall be designated by the ~~Trustees~~ Governance Committee to serve on the Executive Committee for such term as the Trustees Committee shall determine). An officer who is not a Trustee shall have voice but no vote at Executive Committee meetings. Subject to the limitations of section 6.06 hereof, the Executive Committee shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Board between meetings of the Board, except that the Committee shall not have the power to revoke or rescind any prior action of the Board. The Executive Committee shall meet whenever necessary to carry on effectively its responsibilities. The Executive Committee may receive reports at its meetings from other Committees and may act upon any recommendations of such Committees. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings shall be distributed to Trustees. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to review by the Board.
- 6.02. Standing Committees: There shall be a ~~Standing~~ Governance Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, and Resource Development and Financial Management Committee, ~~on Trustees~~ and such other Committees as the Board may from time to time determine and describe in the Trustees Handbook.
- 6.03. Ex Officio Members: The Board Chairperson and President shall be ex officio members of all Committees of the Board.
- 6.04. Membership: ~~Each Board Committee, other than the Executive Committee, shall consist of at least three Trustees and also may include qualified non-Trustee members. Trustee members and the chairperson (who shall be a Trustee) of each Board Committee except the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson in consultation with the President. The non-Trustee members of a Committee, if any, shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson in consultation with the President and the chairperson of the Committee. The number of such members shall be determined by the Board Chairperson, the President, and the Committee Chairperson, and where appropriate~~

~~may include a member or members of the Faculty, the Staff, the Student Body, and the Alumni/ae Association. Committee appointments shall be announced to the Board of Trustees for its review and comment; but the tenure of each Committee member shall commence immediately upon appointment.~~

Each Committee of the Board, other than the Executive Committee, shall consist of at least three Trustees appointed by the chairperson of the Board in consultation with the President. Committees may include advisory members (e.g., Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, etc.) as deemed necessary to accomplish the charges of the committee. Advisory members shall be appointed by the Board chairperson in consultation with the President and the chairperson of the committee. Such advisory members will have voice only.

6.05. Terms of service: Committee appointments shall be announced to the Board of Trustees for its review and comment. The term of each committee member shall commence immediately upon appointment and will be co-terminus with their term as Trustee.

6.056. Quorum: A quorum for each Committee shall be a majority of its members, exclusive of the Board Chairperson and the President.

6.067. Limitation on Committees: No committee, including the Executive Committee, shall have any power or authority as to the following:

- a. The filling of vacancies on the Board;
- b. The adoption, amendment or repeal of the Bylaws;
- c. The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board; or
- d. Action on matters committed by the Bylaws or by resolution of the Board to another committee of the Board.

Chapter 7 - The President

7.01. Election; Chairperson of Faculty: The Board, after consultation with the Faculty, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, and the appropriate unit of the Churchwide Organization of the ELCA, shall elect a President. In addition to the duties noted in Section 5 with respect to the office of the President as the chief executive officer of the Seminary, the President shall be Chairperson of the Faculty.

7.02. Duties: It shall be the duty of the President to administer the policies established by the Board, to exercise general supervision over the academic, fiscal, and other affairs of the Seminary, to preside at all meetings of the Faculty, to secure the enforcement of such rules as the Board or the Faculty may adopt for the governance of the Seminary, to have general oversight of the internal management of the institution, and to represent the Seminary in its relations with the institutions of learning and with other interests beneficial to the life and growth of the Seminary. As he/she determines is appropriate ~~and the Board agrees~~, a portion of these duties may be delegated by the President to appropriate academic or administrative officers. The President shall not be required to teach but may do so when in the judgment of the Faculty and the President it is in the best interest of the Seminary so to do.

- 7.03. Committees: The President shall be an ex officio member (with voice and vote) of each committee of the Faculty except when the President shall designate an appropriate academic or administrative officer in his or her place. Such designee shall have voice without vote.
- 7.04. Other Staff: The President may from time to time appoint such other staff as he/she may deem necessary for the administration of the Seminary, and shall fix their duties.
- 7.05. Evaluation: The performance of the President shall be evaluated on an ongoing and regular basis, ~~with a complete compensation review and formal written evaluation conducted after the first year in office, then after every third year in office in accordance with a procedure adopted by the Board.~~

Chapter 8 - The Faculty

- 8.01. Composition: The Faculty of the Seminary shall consist of the President, the Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, and Instructors. The Faculty shall also include such other persons as the Board may determine. Duties and privileges of the Faculty shall be specified in the Faculty Handbook, which shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees in collaboration with the Faculty. The Faculty Handbook will take into consideration the role of Faculty in the shared governance of the Seminary.
- 8.02. Dean: The Board may elect a Dean who shall have been nominated by the President in consultation with the Faculty. ~~A member of the Faculty who is elected Dean of this Seminary shall be entitled to retain any chair held.~~

Chapter 9- Inclusiveness and Non-Discrimination

- 9.01. Policy Defined: It is the policy of United Lutheran Seminary to consider qualified candidates of any age, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, marital status, color, race, national or ethnic origin, physical challenge or any characteristics protected by law in the administration of its education policies, admissions policies, financial aid decisions and other seminary administered programs. As an equal opportunity employer, the seminary does not discriminate on the basis of the aforementioned categories in matters of employment. In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et. seq., and federal regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 106, sexual discrimination of any kind is prohibited by the seminary. ~~This includes sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.~~

Chapter 10 - Conflict of Interest

- 10.01. Policy Defined: A Trustee shall be considered to have a conflict of interest if:
- I. such Trustee has existing or potential financial or other interests which impair or might reasonably appear to impair such Trustee's independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of his or her responsibilities to the Seminary; or
 - II. such Trustee is aware that a member of his/her family (which for the purposes of this Chapter shall mean a spouse, parents, siblings, children and any other relative if the relative resides in the same household as the Trustee), or any organization in which such

Trustee (or a member of his/her family) is an officer, director, employee, member, partner, trustee or controlling director, has such existing or potential financial or other interest.

10.02. Disclosure: Each Trustee shall disclose to the Board of Trustees any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practical time. ~~No A~~ Trustee shall neither vote nor participate in any Board or committee discussion on any matter, under consideration at a Board or Committee meeting, in which such Trustee has a conflict of interest. The minutes of such meetings shall reflect that a disclosure was made and that the Trustee having a conflict of interest abstained from voting. Any Trustee who is uncertain whether a conflict of interest may exist in any matter may request the Board or Committee to resolve the question by a majority of those voting.

10.03. Policy: The Board shall adopt a policy and process for identifying and avoiding potential conflicts of interest between and among the Trustees, officers and non-Trustee members of committees and the business of the Seminary. At the request of the Chairperson, each Trustee, officer and non-Trustee committee member shall submit a written disclosure of any potential conflict of interest.

Chapter 11 - Indemnification

~~11.01. Limitation: To the full extent permitted by law, each person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding by or in the right of this Seminary, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Trustee, officer, employee, agent or member of any Board Committee shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, and reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees and costs, incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding. Such indemnification shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Trustee, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee and shall apply whether or not the claim against such person arises out of matters occurring before the adoption of this Bylaw. No indemnification may be made by the Seminary under this Chapter, however, to or on behalf of any person to the extent that:~~

- ~~a. The act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is determined by a court to have constituted self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness; or~~
- ~~b. The Board determines that under the circumstances indemnification would constitute an excess benefit transaction under section 4958 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.~~

~~11.02. Insurance: This Seminary shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a Trustee, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by the person in or arising from that capacity.~~

11.01. Scope of Indemnity: The Corporation shall indemnify any Trustee or Officer and may indemnify any employee or agent of the Seminary who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that such

person is or was a Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary, or while a Trustee or Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary, is or was serving at the request of the Seminary as a Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of another organization or another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise including an employee benefit plan or is or was an administrator, trustee or other fiduciary of one or more of such employee benefit plans of the Seminary or another organization as may or have been in effect, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding, whether or not the indemnified liability arises or arose from any threatened, pending or completed action by or in the right of the Seminary, to the extent that such person is not insured or otherwise indemnified and the power so to indemnify has been or continues to be granted by statute, and is not otherwise prohibited by applicable law.

11.02. Advance of Expenses: The Seminary may pay expenses incurred by an Officer or Trustee and may pay expenses incurred by any employee or agent of the Seminary in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary to repay such amount if it shall ultimately be determined that such person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Seminary.

11.03. Procedure for Determining Permissibility: To determine whether any indemnification or advance of expenses under this Chapter 11 is permissible, the Board by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of Trustees not parties to such action, suit or proceeding may, and on request of any person seeking indemnification or advance of expenses shall be required to determine in each case whether the applicable standards in any applicable statute have been met, or such determination shall be made by independent legal counsel if such quorum is not obtainable, or, even if obtainable, a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested Trustees so directs, provided that if there has been a change in control of the Seminary between (i) the time of the action or the failure to act given rise to the claim for indemnification or advance of expenses, and (ii) the time such claim is made, then at the option of the person seeking indemnification or advance of the expense, the permissibility of indemnification or advance of expenses shall be determined by independent legal counsel.

11.04. Contractual Obligation: The obligations of the Seminary to indemnify a Trustee or Officer under this Chapter 11, including the advancement of expenses when so determined, shall be considered a contract between the Seminary and such Trustee or Officer, and no modification or repeal of any provision of this Article X shall affect, to the detriment of the Trustee or Officer, such obligations of the Seminary in connection with a claim based on any act or failure to act occurring before such modification or repeal.

11.05. Indemnification Not Exclusive: The foregoing indemnification and advancement of expenses shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which one indemnified may be entitled, under any agreement, vote of Trustees or otherwise, both as to action in such person's official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office, and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of any such person.

11.06. Insurance, Security and Other Indemnification: The Board shall have the power to (a) authorize the Seminary to purchase and maintain, at the Seminary's expense, insurance on behalf of the Seminary and on behalf of others to the extent that power to do so has been or may be granted by statute, (b) create any fund of any nature, whether or not under the control of a trustee, or otherwise secure any of its indemnification obligations and (c) give other indemnification to the extent not prohibited by statute.

Chapter 12 – Amendments

12.01. Vote of Trustees; Approval of ELCA Church Council: Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the Trustees present at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that any such proposed amendments shall have been submitted in writing by the Executive Committee or five Trustees and transmitted in writing by the Secretary to all Trustees at least thirty (30) days previous to the date of such meeting, and the notice for that meeting shall include the announcement of the consideration of an amendment to these Bylaws. Amendments shall be forwarded to the appropriate unit of the Churchwide Organization, which shall submit together with the unit's recommendation, to the ELCA Church Council for the Council's approval.

Chapter 13- Dissolution Clause

13.01: In the event this corporation is dissolved and liquidated, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for payment of all the liabilities of this corporation, distribute the corporate property and assets in accord with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and as approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor. Recipients of the assets shall be such organization or organizations that have purposes most closely allied to those of this corporation; provided, however, that the transferee organization or organizations shall then be a qualified tax-exempt charitable organization within the meaning of §501(c)(3) and §170(b)(1)(A) other than in clauses (vii) and (viii) of the Internal Revenue code or their successor provisions, shall have been in existence and so described for a continuous period of at least sixty (60) calendar months, and shall also be an organization contributions to which are deductible under §§ 170, 2055 and 2522 of the Internal Revenue code or successor provisions. Any of the property or assets not so distributed shall be disposed of by the court having jurisdiction of the dissolution and liquidation of a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation exclusively to such charitable organization or organizations as are then qualified tax-exempt organizations as defined above.

Adopted 10/16 & Approved by ELCA Church Council 11/16
Amended (Chapter 11) 9/25/19 awaiting Church Council approval
Amended 9/29/20 awaiting Church Council approval

**BYLAWS
OF THE
ENDOWMENT FUND OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA**

ARTICLE 1

Principal Office

The principal office of this corporation, at which the general business of this corporation shall be transacted and where the records of this corporation shall be kept, shall be at such place as shall be fixed from time to time by duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Trustees. Until otherwise fixed by the Board of Trustees, the principal office shall be at 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.

ARTICLE 2

Board of Trustees

SECTION 2.1 Number and method of election. The Board of Trustees of this corporation shall consist of the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and at least nine persons but not more than fifteen persons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA. The Executive Committee of this corporation, or such committee as appointed by the Executive Committee, may make recommendations regarding a slate of candidates to the Nominating Committee of the ELCA.

SECTION 2.2 Terms. Individuals (other than the presiding bishop) shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to serve three-year terms as trustees of this corporation with the possibility of two consecutive re-elections. Members shall take office on January 1 after election. Members shall serve until a successor take office or until the member's prior death, resignation, or removal. A period of at least three years shall have elapsed between the expiration of a member's term of office and the commencement of the member's next term of office, if any. Any member of the Board of Trustees may be removed by the executive committee of the Board of Trustees upon two successive absences that have not be excused by the board. Any vacancy occurring because of the death, resignation, or removal of a member of the Board of Trustees shall be filled by the Church Council of the ELCA for the unexpired term of such member of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2.3 Advisory members. The following persons shall serve as advisory members of the Board of Trustees of this corporation, without vote:

- a. The Treasurer of the ELCA;
- b. A synod bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops of the ELCA;
and
- c. Such other persons as may be designated by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 3

Meetings of the Board of Trustees

SECTION 3.1 Annual meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees for the purpose of electing officers, hearing a report on the activities and financial condition of the corporation, and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting, as may be raised consistent with the notice of meeting requirements, shall take place at the time and place designated from time to time by the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees does not fix a different time or place, such meeting shall be held at 8:30 A.M., Central time, on the third Friday in September at the principal office of this corporation.

SECTION 3.2 Other meetings. Other meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held at such time and place as are announced at a previous meeting of the Board of Trustees. Meetings of the Board of Trustees may also be called at any time (a) by the Chairperson, (b) by the President, (c) by the Board of Trustees, or (d) upon the written request of four or more members of the Board of Trustees. Anyone entitled to call a meeting of the Board of Trustees may make a written request to the Secretary to call the meeting, and the Secretary shall give notice of the meeting, setting forth the time, place and purpose thereof, to be held between five and thirty days after receiving the request. If the Secretary fails to give notice of the meeting within seven days from the day on which the request was made, the person or persons who requested the meeting may fix the date, time and place of the meeting and give notice in the manner hereinafter provided.

SECTION 3.3 Notice of meetings. Notice of each meeting of the Board of Trustees for which notice is required, and of each annual meeting, stating the date, time, place and purpose thereof shall be given to all trustees by electronic communication or in person, including by telephone, at least two days before the meeting, or shall be mailed to each trustee at least five days before the meeting. A trustee may be given

notice by electronic communication only if the trustee has previously consented to receive notice in such form of electronic communication. All such notices not given in person shall be sent to the trustee at his or her postal or electronic address according to the latest available records of this corporation. Any member of the Board of Trustees may waive notice of a meeting before, at or after the meeting, orally, in writing, by electronic communication, or by attendance. Attendance at a meeting is deemed a waiver unless the member objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened, or objects before a vote on an item of business because the item may not lawfully be considered at that meeting and does not participate in the consideration of the item at that meeting.

SECTION 3.4 Quorum and voting. The presence of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the members present at any meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting from time to time. Advisory members shall not be taken into account in determining whether a quorum is present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees. At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, each member, other than advisory members, shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before the meeting. A majority vote of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Trustees, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient to transact any business, unless a greater number of votes is required by law or these Bylaws. A member shall not appoint a proxy for himself or herself or vote by proxy at a meeting of the Board of Trustees. A member who is present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees when an action is approved by the Board of Trustees is presumed to have assented to the action unless the member votes against the action or is prohibited from voting on the action.

SECTION 3.5 Adjourned meetings. When a meeting of the Board of Trustees is adjourned to another time or place, notice of the adjourned meeting need not be given other than by announcement at the meeting at which adjournment is taken.

SECTION 3.6 Written action. An action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the members may be taken without a meeting by written action signed, or consented to by authenticated electronic communication, by all of the members entitled to vote on that action. The written action is effective when it has been signed, or consented to by authenticated electronic communication, by all of those members, unless a different effective time is provided in the written action.

SECTION 3.7 Remote communication for meetings. Members of the Board of Trustees may participate in meetings via remote communication if notice requirements are met. Remote communication includes conference telephone or such other means of remote communication that may be authorized by the Board of Trustees, in each case through which each trustee so participating and all trustees physically

participating at the meeting may communicate with each other on a substantially simultaneous basis. Participation in a meeting by remote communication constitutes presence at the meeting.

SECTION 3.8 Conflicts of interest. This corporation shall not enter into any contract or transaction with (a) one or more of the members of its Board of Trustees, (b) a director of a related organization (within the meaning of Minnesota Statutes, section 317A.011, subd. 18), or (c) an organization in or of which a member of the Board of Trustees is a director, officer or legal representative or has a material financial interest (other than the ELCA, and its synods, congregations, institutions, and agencies); unless the material facts as to the contract or transaction and as to the member's interest are fully disclosed or known to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract or transaction in good faith by the affirmative vote (without counting the interested member) of a majority of the entire Board of Trustees, at a meeting at which there is a quorum without counting the interested member. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Section 3.8 shall not invalidate any contract or transaction to which this corporation is a party.

ARTICLE 4

Officers

SECTION 4.1 Tenure of office. The officers of this corporation shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other officers as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate. Officers other than the President shall be elected by the Board of Trustees to serve for terms of one year beginning on January 1 after being elected. Any officer other than the President may at any time be removed by the Board of Trustees with or without cause. The same person may hold more than one office at the same time, except the offices of (a) President and Chairperson and (b) President and Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall be members of the Board of Trustees, but other officers need not be members of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.2 Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, if one is appointed. He or she shall oversee all operations of the Board of Trustees and shall have such additional powers and duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.3 Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in case of the latter's absence or disability.

SECTION 4.4 President. The President shall be the chief executive officer

of this corporation. He or she shall be responsible for the general supervision, direction and management of the affairs of this corporation. He or she may execute on behalf of this corporation all contracts, deeds, conveyances and other instruments in writing which may be required or authorized by the Board of Trustees for the proper and necessary transaction of the business of this corporation. The President shall be elected to a four-year term by the Board of Trustees in consultation with, and with the approval of, the presiding bishop of the ELCA. The President shall be eligible for reelection. Each candidate for the office of President shall be nominated by the presiding bishop of the ELCA after consultation with the Executive Committee of this corporation. The President may be an employee of this corporation. The President's performance shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and the presiding bishop of the ELCA. The employment of the President may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of the ELCA and the Board of Trustees, following a recommendation of termination from the Executive Committee, if one is then in existence.

SECTION 4.5 Secretary. The Secretary shall provide for the keeping of accurate minutes of all meetings and shall be responsible for the custody of the records, documents and papers of this corporation. He or she shall provide for the keeping of proper records of all transactions of this corporation. He or she shall have and may exercise any and all other powers and duties pertaining by law, regulation or practice to the office of Secretary, or imposed by these Bylaws. He or she shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.6 Assistant Secretary. The Board of Trustees in its discretion may elect an Assistant Secretary, who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Secretary as above set forth under the general direction of the Secretary or the President.

SECTION 4.7 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall provide for the maintenance of accurate financial records for this corporation and safeguarding the assets of this corporation. He or she shall present a report of this corporation's financial transactions and status to the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting and shall from time to time make such other reports to the Board of Trustees as it may require. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.8 Assistant Treasurer. The Board of Trustees in its discretion may elect an Assistant Treasurer who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Treasurer as above set forth under the general direction of the Treasurer or the President.

SECTION 4.9 Additional powers. Any officer of this corporation, in

addition to the powers conferred upon him or her by these Bylaws, shall have such powers and perform such additional duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 5

Committees

SECTION 5.1 Authority. The Board of Trustees may act by and through such committees as may be specified in resolutions adopted by an affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the entire Board of Trustees. Each such committee shall have such duties and responsibilities as are granted to it from time to time by the Board of Trustees through written charters. Each such committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees. Committee members, other than members of the Executive Committee, need not be members of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5.2 Executive Committee. The Board of Trustees may designate an Executive Committee composed of at least three persons designated by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the Board of Trustees in the management of the business of this corporation in the interval between meetings of the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5.3 Meetings and voting. Meetings of each committee may be held at such time and place as are announced at a previous meeting of the committee. Meetings of any committee may also be called at any time by the chairperson of the committee or by the President. Notice of each committee meeting for which notice is required, stating the date, time and place thereof, shall be given to all committee members by electronic communication or in person, including by telephone, at least two days before the meeting, or shall be mailed to each committee member at least five days before the meeting. A committee member may be given notice by electronic communication only if the member has previously consented to receive notice in such form of electronic communication. All such notices not given in person shall be sent to the member at his or her postal or electronic address according to the latest available records of this corporation. Attendance at a meeting is deemed to be a waiver of notice unless the committee member objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened and the committee member does not participate in the meeting. At all meetings of a committee of this corporation each member thereof shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before such committee. The presence of a majority of the membership of any committee of this corporation shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the

members of a committee present at any such meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting from time to time. A majority vote of the members of a committee of this corporation present at any meeting thereof, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient for the transaction of the business of such committee. Any action that could be taken at a committee meeting may be taken by written action signed by all members of the committee. Members of a committee of this corporation may participate in meetings via remote communication if notice requirements are met.

ARTICLE 6

Indemnification

To the full extent permitted by any applicable law, this corporation shall indemnify each person made or threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding by or in the right of this corporation, by reason of the former or present capacity of the person as --

- (a) a member of the Board of Trustees, officer, employee or member of a committee of this corporation, or
- (b) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another organization, who while a member of the Board of Trustees, an officer or an employee of this corporation, is or was serving the other organization at the request of this corporation or whose duties as a member of the Board of Trustees, officer or employee of this corporation involve or involved such service to the other organization,

against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes and reasonable attorneys' fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding, provided, however, that no indemnification shall be made with respect to any claim, issue or matter as to which the person shall be adjudged by a court of law to be liable to this corporation. Indemnification includes reimbursement and advances of the above costs and expenses. Indemnification provided by this section shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a member of the Board of Trustees, officer, employee or committee member, shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such person and shall apply whether or not the claim against such person arises out of matters occurring before the adoption of this section. Any indemnification realized other than under this section shall apply as a credit against any indemnification provided by this section.

This corporation may, to the full extent permitted by applicable law from time to time in effect, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a member of the Board of Trustees, an officer, an employee or a member of a committee of this corporation against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by such person in any such capacity.

ARTICLE 7

Miscellaneous

SECTION 7.1 Calendar year. Unless otherwise fixed by the Board of Trustees, the fiscal year of this corporation shall be on a calendar year.

SECTION 7.2 Corporate seal. This corporation shall have no seal.

SECTION 7.3 Amendments. The Board of Trustees may amend these Bylaws by adopting a resolution setting forth the amendment; provided, however, that no such amendment shall take effect until it has been approved by the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA.

SECTION 7.4 Authority to borrow, encumber assets. No member of the Board of Trustees, officer, agent or employee of this corporation shall have any power or authority to borrow money on its behalf, to pledge its credit or to mortgage or pledge its real or personal property except within the scope and to the extent of the authority delegated by resolutions adopted from time to time by the Board of Trustees. Authority may be given by the Board of Trustees for any of the above purposes and may be general or limited to specific instances.

SECTION 7.5 Execution of instruments. All deeds, mortgages, bonds, checks, contracts and other instruments pertaining to the business and affairs of this corporation shall be signed on behalf of this corporation by the President or the Chairperson, or by such other person or persons as may be designated from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.6 Deposit of funds. All funds of this corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of this corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Trustees may approve or designate, and all such funds shall be withdrawn only in the manner or manners authorized by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

SECTION 7.7 Use of name in conduct of business. This corporation may conduct its business under such name as may be specified from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.8 Relationship with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This corporation shall be subject to certain actions and approvals of the ELCA as described in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this corporation, including, without limitation, those described in Article XII of the Articles of Incorporation of this corporation. This corporation shall also at all times be subject to any and all provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA that are intended by the ELCA to apply specifically to this corporation or generally to separately incorporated ministries of the ELCA.

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**BYLAWS
OF THE
ENDOWMENT FUND OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA**

ARTICLE 1

Principal Office

The principal office of this corporation, at which the general business of this corporation shall be transacted and where the records of this corporation shall be kept, shall be at such place as shall be fixed from time to time by duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Trustees. Until otherwise fixed by the Board of Trustees, the principal office shall be at 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.

ARTICLE 2

Board of Trustees

SECTION 2.1 Number and method of election. The Board of Trustees of this corporation shall consist of the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and at least nine persons but not more than fifteen persons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA. The Executive Committee of this corporation, or such committee as appointed by the Executive Committee, may make recommendations regarding a slate of candidates to the Nominating Committee of the ELCA.

SECTION 2.2 Terms. Individuals (other than the presiding bishop) shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to serve three-year terms as trustees of this corporation with the possibility of two consecutive re-elections. Members shall take office on January 1 after election. ~~The members of the Board of Trustees initially elected by the Churchwide Assembly in 2019 shall be divided into three classes as nearly equal in number as possible, so that one class shall be deemed to be elected to their first term and be eligible for election to two more terms, one class shall be deemed to be elected to a second term and be eligible for election to one more term; and one class shall be deemed to be elected to a third term and not be eligible for further election.~~ Members shall serve until a successor take office or until the member's prior death, resignation, or removal. A period of at least three years shall have elapsed between the expiration of a member's term of office and the commencement of the member's next term of office, if any. Any member of the Board of Trustees may be removed by the executive committee of the

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Board of Trustees upon two successive absences that have not be excused by the board. Any vacancy occurring because of the death, resignation, or removal of a member of the Board of Trustees shall be filled by the Church Council of the ELCA for the unexpired term of such member of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2.3 Advisory members. The following persons shall serve as advisory members of the Board of Trustees of this corporation, without vote:

- a. The Treasurer of the ELCA;
- b. A synod bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops of the ELCA; and
- c. Such other persons as may be designated by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 3

Meetings of the Board of Trustees

SECTION 3.1 Annual meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees for the purpose of electing officers, hearing a report on the activities and financial condition of the corporation, and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting, as may be raised consistent with the notice of meeting requirements, shall take place at the time and place designated from time to time by the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees does not fix a different time or place, such meeting shall be held at 8:30 A.M., Central time, on the third Friday in September at the principal office of this corporation.

SECTION 3.2 Other meetings. Other meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held at such time and place as are announced at a previous meeting of the Board of Trustees. Meetings of the Board of Trustees may also be called at any time (a) by the Chairperson, (b) by the President, (c) by the Board of Trustees, or (d) upon the written request of four or more members of the Board of Trustees. Anyone entitled to call a meeting of the Board of Trustees may make a written request to the Secretary to call the meeting, and the Secretary shall give notice of the meeting, setting forth the time, place and purpose thereof, to be held between five and thirty days after receiving the request. If the Secretary fails to give notice of the meeting within seven days from the day on which the request was made, the person or persons who requested the meeting may fix the date, time and place of the meeting and give notice in the manner hereinafter provided.

SECTION 3.3 Notice of meetings. Notice of each meeting of the Board of Trustees for which notice is required, and of each annual meeting, stating the date, time, place and purpose thereof shall be given to all trustees by electronic communication or in person, including by telephone, at least two days before the meeting, or shall be mailed to each trustee at least five days before the meeting. A trustee may be given notice by electronic communication only if the trustee has previously consented to receive notice in such form of electronic communication. All such notices not given in person shall be sent to the trustee at his or her postal or electronic address according to the latest available records of this corporation. Any member of the Board of Trustees may waive notice of a meeting before, at or after the meeting, orally, in writing, by electronic communication, or by attendance. Attendance at a meeting is deemed a waiver unless the member objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened, or objects before a vote on an item of business because the item may not lawfully be considered at that meeting and does not participate in the consideration of the item at that meeting.

SECTION 3.4 Quorum and voting. The presence of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the members present at any meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting from time to time. Advisory members shall not be taken into account in determining whether a quorum is present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees. At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, each member, other than advisory members, shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before the meeting. A majority vote of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Trustees, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient to transact any business, unless a greater number of votes is required by law or these Bylaws. A member shall not appoint a proxy for himself or herself or vote by proxy at a meeting of the Board of Trustees. A member who is present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees when an action is approved by the Board of Trustees is presumed to have assented to the action unless the member votes against the action or is prohibited from voting on the action.

SECTION 3.5 Adjourned meetings. When a meeting of the Board of Trustees is adjourned to another time or place, notice of the adjourned meeting need not be given other than by announcement at the meeting at which adjournment is taken.

SECTION 3.6 Written action. An action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the members may be taken without a meeting by written action signed, or consented to by authenticated electronic communication, by all of the members entitled to vote on that action. The written action is effective when it has been signed, or consented to by authenticated electronic communication, by all of those members, unless a different effective time is provided in the written action.

SECTION 3.7 Remote communication for meetings. Members of the Board of Trustees may participate in meetings via remote communication if notice requirements are met. Remote communication includes conference telephone or such other means of remote communication that may be authorized by the Board of Trustees, in each case through which each trustee so participating and all trustees physically participating at the meeting may communicate with each other on a substantially simultaneous basis. Participation in a meeting by remote communication constitutes presence at the meeting.

SECTION 3.8 Conflicts of interest. This corporation shall not enter into any contract or transaction with (a) one or more of the members of its Board of Trustees, (b) a director of a related organization (within the meaning of Minnesota Statutes, section 317A.011, subd. 18), or (c) an organization in or of which a member of the Board of Trustees is a director, officer or legal representative or has a material financial interest (other than the ELCA, and its synods, congregations, institutions, and agencies); unless the material facts as to the contract or transaction and as to the member's interest are fully disclosed or known to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract or transaction in good faith by the affirmative vote (without counting the interested member) of a majority of the entire Board of Trustees, at a meeting at which there is a quorum without counting the interested member. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Section 3.8 shall not invalidate any contract or transaction to which this corporation is a party.

ARTICLE 4

Officers

SECTION 4.1 Tenure of office. The officers of this corporation shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other officers as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate. Officers other than the President shall be elected by the Board of Trustees to serve for terms of one year ~~and until their respective successors are chosen and have qualified~~beginning on January 1 after being elected. Any officer other than the President may at any time be removed by the Board of Trustees with or without cause. The same person may hold more than one office at the same time, except the offices of (a) President and Chairperson and (b) President and Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall be members of the Board of Trustees, but other officers need not be members of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.2 Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, if one is appointed. He or she shall oversee all operations of the Board of Trustees and shall have such additional

powers and duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.3 Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in case of the latter's absence or disability.

SECTION 4.4 President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of this corporation. He or she shall be responsible for the general supervision, direction and management of the affairs of this corporation. He or she may execute on behalf of this corporation all contracts, deeds, conveyances and other instruments in writing which may be required or authorized by the Board of Trustees for the proper and necessary transaction of the business of this corporation. The President shall be elected to a four-year term by the Board of Trustees in consultation with, and with the approval of, the presiding bishop of the ELCA. The President shall be eligible for reelection. Each candidate for the office of President shall be nominated by the presiding bishop of the ELCA after consultation with the Executive Committee of this corporation. The President may be an employee of this corporation. The President's performance shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and the presiding bishop of the ELCA. The employment of the President may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of the ELCA and the Board of Trustees, following a recommendation of termination from the Executive Committee, if one is then in existence.

SECTION 4.5 Secretary. The Secretary shall provide for the keeping of accurate minutes of all meetings and shall be responsible for the custody of the records, documents and papers of this corporation. He or she shall provide for the keeping of proper records of all transactions of this corporation. He or she shall have and may exercise any and all other powers and duties pertaining by law, regulation or practice to the office of Secretary, or imposed by these Bylaws. He or she shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.6 Assistant Secretary. The Board of Trustees in its discretion may elect an Assistant Secretary, who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Secretary as above set forth under the general direction of the Secretary or the President.

SECTION 4.7 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall provide for the maintenance of accurate financial records for this corporation and safeguarding the assets of this corporation. He or she shall present a report of this corporation's financial transactions and status to the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting and shall from time to time make such other reports to the Board of Trustees as it may require. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 4.8 Assistant Treasurer. The Board of Trustees in its discretion may elect an Assistant Treasurer who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Treasurer as above set forth under the general direction of the Treasurer or the President.

SECTION 4.9 Additional powers. Any officer of this corporation, in addition to the powers conferred upon him or her by these Bylaws, shall have such powers and perform such additional duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 5

Committees

SECTION 5.1 Authority. The Board of Trustees may act by and through such committees as may be specified in resolutions adopted by an affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the entire Board of Trustees. Each such committee shall have such duties and responsibilities as are granted to it from time to time by the Board of Trustees through written charters. Each such committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees. Committee members, other than members of the Executive Committee, need not be members of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5.2 Executive Committee. The Board of Trustees may designate an Executive Committee composed of at least three persons designated by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the Board of Trustees in the management of the business of this corporation in the interval between meetings of the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5.3 Meetings and voting. Meetings of each committee may be held at such time and place as are announced at a previous meeting of the committee. Meetings of any committee may also be called at any time by the chairperson of the committee or by the President. Notice of each committee meeting for which notice is required, stating the date, time and place thereof, shall be given to all committee members by electronic communication or in person, including by telephone, at least two days before the meeting, or shall be mailed to each committee member at least five days before the meeting. A committee member may be given notice by electronic communication only if the member has previously consented to receive notice in such form of electronic communication. All such notices not given in person shall be sent to the member at his or her postal or electronic address according to the latest available

records of this corporation. Attendance at a meeting is deemed to be a waiver of notice unless the committee member objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened and the committee member does not participate in the meeting. At all meetings of a committee of this corporation each member thereof shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before such committee. The presence of a majority of the membership of any committee of this corporation shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the members of a committee present at any such meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting from time to time. A majority vote of the members of a committee of this corporation present at any meeting thereof, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient for the transaction of the business of such committee. Any action that could be taken at a committee meeting may be taken by written action signed by all members of the committee. Members of a committee of this corporation may participate in meetings via remote communication if notice requirements are met.

ARTICLE 6

Indemnification

To the full extent permitted by any applicable law, this corporation shall indemnify each person made or threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding by or in the right of this corporation, by reason of the former or present capacity of the person as --

- (a) a member of the Board of Trustees, officer, employee or member of a committee of this corporation, or
- (b) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another organization, who while a member of the Board of Trustees, an officer or an employee of this corporation, is or was serving the other organization at the request of this corporation or whose duties as a member of the Board of Trustees, officer or employee of this corporation involve or involved such service to the other organization,

against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes and reasonable attorneys' fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding, provided, however, that no indemnification shall be made with respect to any claim, issue or matter as to which the person shall be adjudged by a court of law to be liable to this corporation. Indemnification includes reimbursement and advances of the above costs and expenses. Indemnification provided by this section

shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a member of the Board of Trustees, officer, employee or committee member, shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such person and shall apply whether or not the claim against such person arises out of matters occurring before the adoption of this section. Any indemnification realized other than under this section shall apply as a credit against any indemnification provided by this section.

This corporation may, to the full extent permitted by applicable law from time to time in effect, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a member of the Board of Trustees, an officer, an employee or a member of a committee of this corporation against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by such person in any such capacity.

ARTICLE 7

Miscellaneous

SECTION 7.1 Calendar year. Unless otherwise fixed by the Board of Trustees, the fiscal year of this corporation shall be on a calendar year.

SECTION 7.2 Corporate seal. This corporation shall have no seal.

SECTION 7.3 Amendments. The Board of Trustees may amend these Bylaws by adopting a resolution setting forth the amendment; provided, however, that no such amendment shall take effect until it has been approved by the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA.

SECTION 7.4 Authority to borrow, encumber assets. No member of the Board of Trustees, officer, agent or employee of this corporation shall have any power or authority to borrow money on its behalf, to pledge its credit or to mortgage or pledge its real or personal property except within the scope and to the extent of the authority delegated by resolutions adopted from time to time by the Board of Trustees. Authority may be given by the Board of Trustees for any of the above purposes and may be general or limited to specific instances.

SECTION 7.5 Execution of instruments. All deeds, mortgages, bonds, checks, contracts and other instruments pertaining to the business and affairs of this corporation shall be signed on behalf of this corporation by the President or the Chairperson, or by such other person or persons as may be designated from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.6 Deposit of funds. All funds of this corporation shall be

deposited from time to time to the credit of this corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Trustees may approve or designate, and all such funds shall be withdrawn only in the manner or manners authorized by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

SECTION 7.7 Use of name in conduct of business. This corporation may conduct its business under such name as may be specified from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.8 Relationship with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This corporation shall be subject to certain actions and approvals of the ELCA as described in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this corporation, including, without limitation, those described in Article XII of the Articles of Incorporation of this corporation. This corporation shall also at all times be subject to any and all provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA that are intended by the ELCA to apply specifically to this corporation or generally to separately incorporated ministries of the ELCA.

[Remainder of page left intentionally blank.]

***Amendments to Section VI in Manual of Policies and Procedures for
Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America***

Background: While protocols for sending ELCA missionaries to serve with companion churches are well established, there has been no clear guidance concerning a process for receiving rostered ministers from Lutheran World Federation member churches who wish to be considered for service in the ELCA. The Service and Justice unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, requests that the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* be amended to insert the following protocols in Section VI. Cooperation with other church bodies in the exercise of Word and Sacrament Ministry, Part B. With church bodies outside the United States, Item 1. Churches of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The rest of that section would remain intact.

[INSERT ON P. 45 OF ROSTER MANUAL—REPLACE ITEM 1. First paragraph is intact from existing edition. Second paragraph has been edited for reference to Service and Justice unit. Remainder is new.]

1. Churches of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God’s mission in the world.

As a member of “The Lutheran World Federation, A Communion of Churches,” the ELCA is in “altar and pulpit fellowship” with all other LWF member churches. This communion relation provides that this church recognizes the ministry of Word and Sacrament in all members of the LWF.

Global partnerships and connections at synod, congregation, and churchwide levels of the ELCA have helped make visible the relationships of the worldwide Lutheran communion. Synods and others working with LWF member churches are encouraged to collaborate with the Service and Justice unit and other appropriate units of the churchwide organization.

When an ordained minister from a member church of the LWF wishes to be considered for missionary service in a congregation or synod of the ELCA, the following protocols are to be respected:

- a) Request for contact with companion church. At the point that the minister has an interview with an employing body in a synod of the ELCA, the synod bishop will contact the Service and Justice unit to formally request that the Service and Justice unit make official contact with the companion church. The request must come from the synod bishop and not from an individual congregation.
- b) Exchange of information. The assessments, authorizations, and reviews necessary for the exchange of ordained ministers between church bodies require the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of a minister who wishes to serve in the ELCA. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings and an assessment of the minister’s suitability for service in the ELCA. The Service and Justice unit will request this disclosure from the companion church judicatory. The synod bishop will be given full access to the information contained in such disclosure.
- c) Visas and work authorization. All issues concerning visas, work permits, and taxes are the sole responsibility of the congregation or other employing body and the synod. The churchwide organization will not be involved in this process. The congregation and synod are to consult with competent legal counsel that specializes in immigration law and must abide by all laws and regulations concerning religious workers. All costs are to be borne by the congregation or other employing body and/or the synod.
- d) Suitability. The minister will be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the “Confession of Faith” of the ELCA, and to live in a manner consistent with the expectations of this church. In assessing suitability, preference may be given to ministers who have completed three years of initial service in a congregation of the sending church.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 15-17, 2021

Roster Manual Section VI Amendments

Page 2 of 2

- e) Invitation to missionary service. Once the synod bishop has been assured of suitability and of the minister's legal right to serve, the bishop may issue to the minister a letter of invitation to missionary service.
- f) Contract. The minister is to serve under a contract with the employing body that specifies responsibilities, compensation, and the term of service. The term of service should be determined in consultation with legal counsel, as it depends on visa status. Compensation is to be commensurate with synod guidelines. Pension and health benefits are to be provided. Typically, such benefits should be provided through the system in which the minister already participates. Any questions concerning the possibility of Portico benefits are to be addressed directly to Portico.
- g) Memorandum of Understanding. Once an invitation to missionary service has been approved, the synod will, in consultation with the Service and Justice unit, draft a Memorandum of Understanding with the sending church that outlines the details of the missionary service, compensation, and accountabilities.
- h) Roster status. The minister is to remain on the roster or official list of ordained ministers of the sending companion church. An invitation to missionary service is not to serve as a means of transition to the rosters of the ELCA. Ministers are expected to return to their sending churches at the end of their term of service.
- i) Accountability. The minister will have multiple accountabilities: to the sending church, the synod bishop, and the congregation or other employing body.
- j) Entry rite. Upon authorization the minister enters missionary service through the entry rite, "Invitation to Extended Service," which acknowledges the service of the minister as pastor in a congregation or in another setting of ministry in this church. The Rite of Installation is NOT used, as that rite is for use only for a regularly called minister of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA.
- k) Synod assembly status. A minister who is approved for missionary service in the ELCA may be granted voice and vote in a synod assembly.
- l) Termination. At any time for the sake of the ongoing ministry, the synod bishop may withdraw authorization for service (or the congregation, employing body, or the minister may terminate a contract for missionary service) after consultation with the other parties to the contract and with the Service and Justice unit. At the end of the specified term, the invitation to missionary service will terminate. Any extensions are limited to those allowed by immigration status.

PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE
CONSTITUTIONS, BYLAWS AND
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS OF THE ELCA

Prepared by

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, President and CEO

April 2021



GOAL



- Receive feedback from ELCA Church Council Legal & Constitutional Review Committee
- Get alignment on plan to prepare proposed modifications at the Churchwide Assembly in August 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS



- **Nomination and Election Process**
 - Improve language governing the nomination and election of trustees to the board of Portico Benefit Services by providing that a trustee's nomination/election by the Churchwide Assembly occurs only at the inception of a trustee's term.
- **Clarify which provisions apply to Separately Incorporated Ministries**
 - Modify language to expressly reference Separately Incorporated Ministries in those provisions that govern Separately Incorporated Ministries.
- **Remove Barriers to Growth**
 - Clarify approval and oversight process for changes to plan documents by focusing on policy changes rather than plan language changes.
 - Define Portico's role with the church to serve the church and affiliated organizations using language that is consistent with the IRS definition of church plans.
 - Remove reference to colleges and universities in prohibition on VEBAs.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCESS



Improve language governing the nomination and election of trustees to the board of Portico Benefit Services by providing that a trustee's nomination/election by the Churchwide Assembly occurs only at the inception of a trustee's term. Subsequent terms are pursuant to mutual discernment. No changes are proposed to the nine-year term limit (three, three-year terms).

- Requested modifications include adding the highlighted language to section 17.20.01
 - The Board of Pensions shall have a board of trustees composed of 14–18 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly for three-year terms with the possibility of renewal by invitation from the Board of Trustees for up to two consecutive three-year terms. The terms of members of the board of trustees elected by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the commencement of the first board meeting following the assembly.
- *Note: A requested change to the nomination form is to require that any nominee satisfy the required trustee qualifications, both constitutional requirements and expertise requirements.*

CLARIFY WHICH PROVISIONS APPLY TO “SIMS”



Modify language to expressly reference Separately Incorporated Ministries in those provisions that govern Separately Incorporated Ministries.

- Requested modifications include:
 - adding a new paragraph, 8.23.02, to section 8.10 **RELATIONSHIP WITH INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES.**
 - **Separately incorporated ministries are independent organizations that are affiliated with this church, each having a specific purpose as defined in and solely governed by this Chapter 17. All references to a “board” outside of this Chapter 17 in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* are only applicable to Separately Incorporated Ministries if referenced as “board of a separately incorporated ministry” or “separately incorporated ministry.”**
 - Expressly referencing “separately incorporated ministry” or “board of a separately incorporated ministry,” as applicable, throughout document to clarify applicability of those provisions.

REMOVE BARRIERS TO GROWTH



Clarify approval and oversight process for changes to plan documents by focusing on policy changes rather than plan language changes.

Requested modifications include adding the highlighted language to section 17.21.

- The Churchwide Assembly shall:
 - approve amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~documents governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program~~ that have been referred by the Church Council; and
 - refer any amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~Pension and Other Benefits Program~~ initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of sponsored members in the ELCA Retirement Plan.

CONT.



- The Church Council shall:
 - review policy established by the board and take action on any policy that would change significantly the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~documents establishing and governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program~~.
 - approve any changes in the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~Pension and Other Benefits Program~~ when there is to be:
 - a significant increase in cost to ELCA employers or sponsored members; or
 - a significant decrease in benefits to sponsored members in the Pension and Other Benefits Program .
 - refer any amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~Pension and Other Benefits Program~~ initiated by the Church Council to the board for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of sponsored members in the ELCA Retirement Plan.
 - refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits ~~Pension and Other Benefits Program~~ to the Churchwide Assembly for final action.

REMOVE BARRIERS TO GROWTH



Define Portico's role with the church to serve the church and affiliated organizations using language that is consistent with the IRS definition of church plans.

- maintained by an organization which is “controlled by or associated with” a church or convention or association of churches in that it “shares religious bonds and convictions” with that church or convention or association of churches.

17.20.A19. Responsibilities of the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America —also known as Portico Benefit Services—shall:

manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations sharing religious bonds and convictions operated exclusively for religious purposes, and shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts.

provide retirement, health, and other benefits for the benefit of eligible members working within the structure of this church and other organizations sharing religious bonds and convictions operated exclusively for religious purposes

REMOVE BARRIERS TO GROWTH



Remove reference to colleges and universities in prohibition on VEBAs.

- *not be responsible, nor assume any liability for, health-insurance programs provided by ~~colleges and universities of~~ this church through voluntary employees' beneficiary associations or similar arrangements.*

QUESTIONS



Proposal A

Overview: This proposed Church Council committee structure is based on primary functions and activities overseen by the council. The structure is mapped into subject matter jurisdictions. This proposal does not change any role or responsibility for Board Development Committee, Audit Committee, or Resource Development Committee. The proposed committees would be served by Church Council members and resourced by churchwide staff and other consultants as appropriate.

Pros to Proposal A: It aligns and distributes the work of the Church Council more evenly among the four standing committees. At a high level, the proposed structure also provides for all committees to have similar evaluative responsibilities.

Cons to Proposal A: The current structure does not translate easily to this proposed structure and committee members will need to choose new committees. Churchwide staff in the home areas will likely relate to more than one council committee, which can make scheduling time for resource staff to report and update more challenging.

Diversity and Community Committee

- Review churchwide strategies to ensure this church is becoming an inclusive and diverse church (*previous examples of such strategies would be AMMPARO, Authentic Diversity, Peace Not Walls, ethnic ministry strategies*)
- Develop and implement policies and goals to meet diversity and inclusion objectives
- Consider churchwide policies and strategies to engage new, young and diverse people
- Monitor and assess innovative processes to discover community, justice and love
- Monitor implementation of resolutions/memorials that involve social justice issues

Faith and Leadership Committee

- Monitor the development and revision of social teaching documents
- Review policies and procedures to support ecumenical and interfaith relations
- Review policies and procedures to support theological education and to develop and equip rostered ministers
- Monitor and assess innovative processes for the faith formation of the baptized membership and invite more people into the Christian faith
- Review policies related to worship and sacramental practices
- Monitor implementation of resolutions/memorials that involve faith teaching matters

Constitutional and Legal Matters Committee

- Responsible for ongoing review of legal and constitutional matters
- Review all proposed amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions
- Review personnel policies for churchwide organization
- Review seminary articles of corporation and bylaws
- Review churchwide policies addressing standards for ministry and discipline

- Review policies and procedures that establish and implement relationships with Lutheran organizations, institutions or agencies
- Review churchwide policies for addressing corporate social concerns
- Approve criteria, policies and procedures for acknowledging authorized worshipping communities and developing ministries, preaching points or chapels

Budget and Finance Committee

- Prepare and present a comprehensive budget to Church Council for its consideration and presentation to the Churchwide Assembly
- Establish fiscal policies and authorize expenditures of the churchwide organization

Executive Committee

Added responsibilities:

- Responsible for the ongoing evaluation of the churchwide units and churchwide organization structure
- Review and provide support for the work of separately incorporated ministries

Proposal B

Overview

This proposed Church Council committee structure is designed to align the Church Council (CC) committees with the Future Church restructure. Like Proposal A, the Board Development Committee, Audit Committee and Resource Development Committee remain as is.

Standing Committees - Church Council members must serve on one

1. Christian Community and Leadership
2. Service and Justice
3. Operations- (Treasurer) Budget and Finance
4. Operations- (Secretary) Legal and Constitutional Review
5. Operations- (Presiding Bishop) - *what might we be missing that falls in this area? EIR? Organizational strategy? Portions of Innovation? Synod relations? Or does this area interstice with the work of the entire CC?*

Other Constitutionally permitted Committees

1. Executive Committee (*elected from CC*)
2. Audit (*2-year renewable terms; appointed by Budget and Finance, approved by CC*)
3. Resource Development (*3-year renewable term while on CC; appointed by EC*)
4. Board Development (*3-year renewable term; 2 CC members from each class; appointed by EC*)
5. Social Teachings/Statements (*new- likely comprised of elected CC members*)

Notes

- A. Innovation as a home area would not have a standing committee connected to it. Rather, the ideas and such coming out of Innovation would end up in the corresponding area of ministry as defined by the Home Area outlines.
- B. Having 5 standing committees allows for greater engagement of CC members as committee size will be smaller.
- C. The addition of a Social Teachings/Statements committee provides for a more even workload among standing committees and allows for those interested in the social statements a chance to use their gifts.

D. Aligning CC with the home areas allows for some flexibility as we live into the new organization of Future Church. As things “shake” out into home areas, the committees update their mandates.

Ultimately, the question we want to answer is: how can the council work with each home area to provide support, encouragement, and help to ensure that we are working towards our vision?

PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES

DISABILITY OFFSET – CHURCH COUNCIL REQUEST

For ELCA Church Council Executive Committee discussion

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

April 2021





AGENDA



Background

Disability Benefits – Comparison to Commercial
Market and Church Benefits Association

Social Security Offset & Example

ELCA Disability Trust Contribution Examples

Implications of Changing

Addressing Mischaracterizations

Portico's Board of Trustees Action

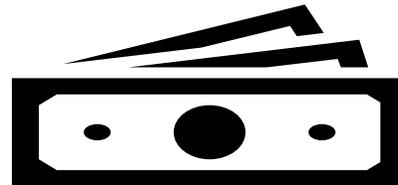
ELCA DISABILITY BENEFITS TRUST

The ELCA Disability Benefits Plan is self-insured. Contributions are paid by congregations and held in trust for disabled members.

Congregations contribute to the ELCA Disability Benefits Trust



Portico holds contributions in trust



Disabled members receive benefits from the trust



BACKGROUND

- Member requested eliminating dependent Social Security offset from monthly disability benefit
- Disability appeals upheld the decision to follow plan terms - Presidential & Board of Trustees (BOT) Appeals Committee
- East Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council passed member resolution calling on ELCA Church Council to review disability policy
- ELCA Church Council sent resolution to Portico with direction to review disability policy – November 2020 meeting
- Portico's Board of Trustees reviewed policy at February 2021 meeting
- ELCA Church Council will review at April 2021 meeting

- 17.20.02.** The Church Council shall:
- a. review policy established by the board and take action on any policy that would change significantly the documents establishing and governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program.
 - b. approve any changes in the Pension and Other Benefits Program when there is to be:
 - 1) a significant increase in cost to ELCA employers or sponsored members; or
 - 2) a significant decrease in benefits to sponsored members in the Pension and Other Benefits Program.
 - c. refer any amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Church Council to the board for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of sponsored members in the ELCA Retirement Plan.
 - d. refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program to the Churchwide Assembly for final action.



INDUSTRY VS. ELCA PRACTICES



	Commercial Market	ELCA Traditional Benefits
Offer Disability Income	72%*	100%
Income Replacement	60% is typical*	2/3
Benefit Period	2, 5 or 10 years or to retirement age	To retirement age (if totally disabled)
Health Insurance Premiums	None	100% paid: Member, spouse and dependents
Life Insurance Premiums	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic group life premiums • Supplemental and dependent life premiums purchased prior to disability
Retirement contributions	None	Contributions based on monthly disability benefit

* Source: 2018 Society for Human Resource Management annual survey

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSET

Plan Provision: The Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) monthly benefit amount awarded to the member **and** his/her family members by the Social Security Administration, due to the member's disability, are offset from the member's monthly income benefit

Context & Industry Practices:

- Social Security provides benefits to children of disabled members: “Those dollars help to provide the necessities of life for family members and help make it possible for those children to complete high school. Social Security benefits help stabilize a family's financial future.”
- Social Security disability benefits are a lifeline for individuals who don't have other disability benefits
- According to disability benefits administrator, Lincoln Financial Group, offsetting member and dependent SSDI is standard long-term disability insurance practice
- CBA partners -- Church Pension Group, Concordia and Wespath, offset both member and dependent SSDI
- Removing SSDI benefits dependent offset would result in the member receiving more than 2/3 of their prior benefit compensation

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSET EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE: SSDI offset for disabled member with children

Description	Monthly Amount
Defined compensation prior to disability	\$4,500
ELCA Disability Plan 2/3 benefit*	\$3,000
<i>Social Security Disability Income Offset **</i> <i>\$1,800 (member) and \$900 (child)</i>	(\$2,700)
	\$300
Total Income Including SSDI	\$3,000 (matches above)

* ELCA disability benefit may increase annually subject to the Plan's annual increase calculation based on rate of increase in average defined compensation for active sponsored clergy

** Social Security offset for the duration of disability is the amount established when Social Security is first awarded

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSET EXAMPLE

EXAMPLES: SSDI offset for 35-year old disabled member

Description	Monthly Amounts	
	Member with spouse, children	Member, no spouse, no children
Defined comp before disability*	\$4,500	\$4,500
ELCA Disability Plan 2/3 benefit*	\$3,000	\$3,000
Social Security Disability Income Offset **	(\$1,800) member (\$900) child	(\$1,800) member
Following SSDI Approval, ELCA Disability Plan Monthly Benefit	\$300	\$1,200
Total Income Including SSDI	\$3,000	\$3,000

* ELCA disability benefit may increase annually subject to the Plan's annual increase calculation based on rate of increase in average defined compensation for active sponsored clergy

** Social Security offset for the duration of disability is the amount established when Social Security is first awarded

ELCA DISABILITY TRUST PAYMENT

EXAMPLES: ELCA Disability payments for 35-year old disabled member

Description	Monthly Plan Paid Amounts	
	Member with spouse, children	Member, no spouse, no children
Disability Income Payment	\$300	\$1,200
ELCA Health Plan Contribution*	\$1,500	\$550
ELCA Retirement Plan Contribution**	\$300	\$300
ELCA Survivor Plan Contribution	\$30	\$30
Total Trust payments	\$2,130	\$2,080

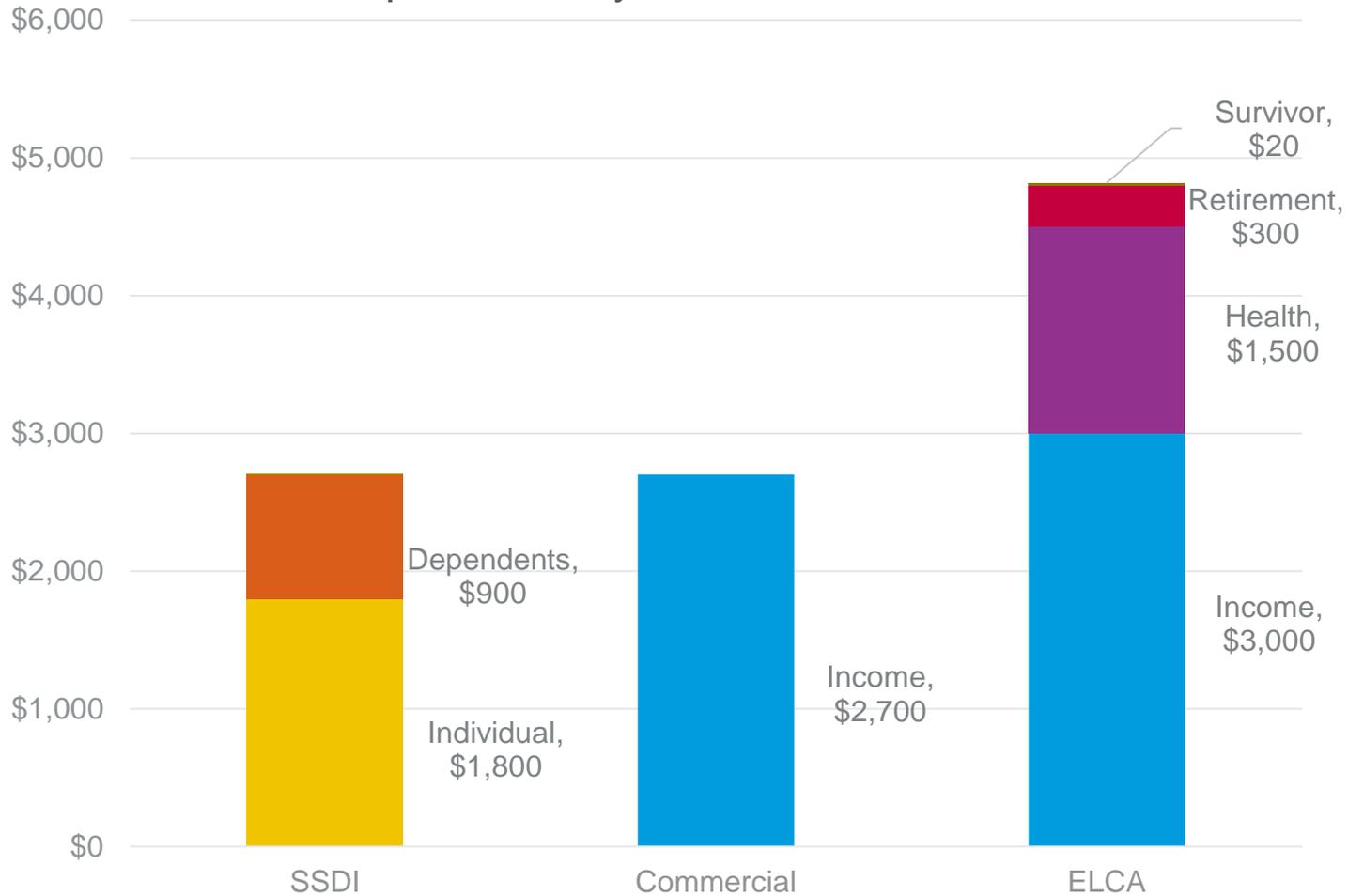
* ELCA Health plan contributions (premium) are based on age and compensation

** Clergy receive 10% of compensation contributions to ELCA Retirement plan

SSDI VS. COMMERCIAL VS. ELCA PLAN



Examples for 35-year old disabled member



IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVING OFFSET

1. In conflict with the intent of the plan
2. Outlier in the industry and CBA
3. Direct financial impact to sponsoring organizations

Financial impact for the plan based on currently disabled members:

- We estimate that removing the offset of Social Security dependent benefits could be up to **\$1M** more in long-term costs to the plan
- Further, by removing the dependent offset, it would be hard to justify keeping the disabled members' Social Security offset in place, which could have another estimated **\$10M+** long-term impact to the plan
- Removing both offset provisions could equal up to a **16%** increase in future liabilities, which would increase contribution rates for sponsoring organizations

These estimates relate to currently disabled members. Note that our regular liability and funded ratio calculations only include currently disabled members as well. However, if we did remove any of these offsets, we would also have **higher plan costs related to any new disabled members** over time, which would potentially be reflected in **higher contribution rates for sponsoring employers. Or, the extra cost could be made up by ending contributions for children/family members' health coverage.**

ADDRESSING MISCHARACTERIZATIONS



- “Children of disabled members are unjustifiably disadvantaged. Parents are discriminated against. Portico provides no additional benefits to dependents of the insured”
 - Reality: Disability trust provides health care benefits for the whole family and continues to pay for supplemental life insurance for dependents. Disability trust pays more for families.
- “Puts additional stress on family”
 - Reality: Disabled members get 2/3 of pre-disability income whether family or single, plus other benefits.
- “Even though Portico does NOT provide benefits to disabled members’ children, it claims entitlement to their SSDI funds, and deducts these from its obligation to the member”
 - Reality: Not taking anything, monthly benefit makes the member whole with 2/3 income. Portico does provide benefits to children of disabled members.

PORTICO BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION

Citing the plan intent, industry practices and financial implications –
Portico's Board of Trustees believes strongly that the current plan provisions in place are empathetic, generous and appropriate and **acted to not change disability policy.**

Report of Committee on Appeals
Concerning Proposed Amendments to
Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline

The Committee on Appeals

The committee's primary responsibilities:

- To establish “definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline of officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.”¹
- To consider appeals from:
 - Disciplinary proceedings involving ministers of Word and Sacrament.²
 - Disciplinary proceedings involving ministers of Word and Service.³
 - Limited disciplinary proceedings involving rostered ministers.⁴
 - Disciplinary proceedings involving congregations.⁵
- To act as a hearing panel to consider a petition against a church officer.⁶
- To develop rules of procedure “for the performance of its duties.”⁷
- To resolve disputes between synods and the churchwide organization.⁸
- To consider petitions for the removal of synod officers.⁹

The current committee members are: *(asterisks indicate members of writing team)*

- Mr. Emanuel Alves, Southeastern PA (7F)
- The Rev. Paul J. Blom*, Southwestern TX (4E)
- Ms. Lana Obie, Northwest WA (1B)
- The Rev. Fritz E. Fowler, Southeastern PA (7F) – *Vice Chair*
- Dr. Phyllis Chang, Southeastern IA (5D)
- The Rev. Cheryl Meinschein Hausman*, Northeastern PA (7E) – *Secretary*
- The Rev. Linda M. Pedersen, Southwestern MN (3F) – *Assistant Secretary*
- Deacon Erin A. Power*, Rocky Mountain (2E)
- Mr. George Rahdert, Florida-Bahamas (9E)
- Mr. Murray G. Sagsveen*, Western ND (3A) – *Chair*
- The Rev. Chrysanne Timm, North/West Lower MI (6B)
- The Rev. Paul A. Wollner*, NC (9B)

¹ *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (CBCR) at 20.21.

² CBCR at 20.22., 20.22.01.–20.22.24., 20.61., 20.62., 20.62.01.–20.62.02., and 20.63.

³ *Id.* at 20.23., 20.23.01.–20.23.07., 20.61., 20.62., 20.62.01.–20.62.02., and 20.63.

⁴ *Id.* at 20.24., 20.24.01.–20.24.09., and 20.61., 20.62., 20.62.01.–20.62.02., and 20.63.

⁵ *Id.* at 20.31., 20.31.01.–20.31.05., and 20.61., 20.62., 20.62.01.–20.62.02., and 20.63.

⁶ *Id.* at 20.51., 20.51.01.–20.51.03., and 20.51.A19.

⁷ *Id.* at 20.21., 20.22.14., 20.24.04., and 20.61.A13.

⁸ *Id.* at 20.74.

⁹ *Constitution for Synods* at †S8.57.

The Committee on Appeals had been inactive for several years (i.e., no appeals), so none of the committee members had ever met for committee business prior to January 2020.

The current Committee on Appeals first met in January 2020 and elected its officers the following month.

The Church Council's Request

In March, the [Church Council adopted a motion](#) that included these provisions:

To repeal the document, Vision and Expectations, effective immediately and which should no longer be used in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for any purpose;

*To affirm that Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline remains the document which describes the grounds for which officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations may be subject to discipline according to the practice of this church; * * **

To request that the Domestic Mission unit and the Committee on Appeals engage in conversation with the Conference of Bishops to seek further information and guidance regarding the needs of bishops to apply discipline as described in Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline, reporting that information to the Executive Committee of the Church Council at its October 2020 meeting.

The Committee's Listening Sessions and Surveys

The committee responded to the Church Council's request by:

- Reviewing ELCA social statements and messages
- Conducting listening sessions
 - Town Hall sessions – 4 sessions in June
 - Sessions with bishops – 9 regions/9 sessions during May and June
 - Sessions with various constituencies of this church who sought conversation (e.g., ethnic ministry associations, LGBTQIA+ community)
- Conducting a survey – [final report](#) dated August 2020
- Reporting progress to the Church Council's Executive Committee:
 - October 15, 2020
 - November 13, 2020
 - February 23, 2021
- Reporting progress to and soliciting responses from the Conference of Bishops:
 - October 2, 2020
 - March 4, 2021

The committee also established a [webpage](#) for *Definitions and Guides for Discipline*.

The Committee's Work

The Committee on Appeals usually met twice each month from March 2020 through March 2021, and the writing team met at least once between committee meetings.

All committee members normally attended every committee meeting. In addition, Secretary Sue Rothmeyer, General Counsel Thomas Cunniff, and the Rev. Keith Fry, executive for OS administration, attended every committee meeting.

The committee is proposing a significant revision of the *Definitions and Guidelines* document. Issues that surfaced during the listening sessions include:

- Confidential communications (B.1.)¹⁰
 - Applicability to all rostered ministers
- Professional attention to duties (B.3.)
 - Challenges of a shared-time minister
 - Ministers with additional employment to balance personal budget
- Relationship to family (B.4.)
 - What is a modern family?
 - Potential discipline for failing “to uphold this church’s ideals of marriage”
 - Role of the bishop concerning a rostered minister’s separation or divorce
- Sexual matters (B.5.)
 - Objections to certain terms (e.g., “chaste and decent life,” “chastity and abstinence are required outside of marriage,” and “chastity and fidelity are required within marriage”)
 - Fear of discipline for cohabitation or certain living arrangements
- Addiction and substance abuse (B.6.)
 - Current *Definitions and Guidelines* does not reflect current understanding of addiction and treatment
- Fiscal responsibilities (B.7.)
 - Additional attention suggested concerning use of ministerial office for personal financial advantage
- Membership in certain organizations (B.8.)
 - Recommendations to expand to include white supremacist, racist, sexist, homophobic, and other organizations
- Conviction of a felony (B.9.)
 - Recognition that certain misdemeanors are also egregious
 - Concern that convictions “in a prior life” should not be held against minister
- Speech (*new*)
 - Hate speech should not be tolerated from the pulpit, in text, in social media, or in public
- Social media (*new*)
 - When (if ever) are a rostered minister’s comments on social media private personal opinions?
 - Harassment of persons or harassing or inappropriate behavior on social media

¹⁰ Reference is to paragraph in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

- Intellectual property (*new*)
 - Minister's plagiarism of other's work
 - Willful music and other copyright infringement
- Willful disregard of the constitution or bylaws of this church (D.)
 - Recommendation that it should include the Lutheran Confessions
 - Does it address a minister's refusal to submit timely annual reports?
- Willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ
 - Hate speech by members should not be tolerated in text, social media, or public
 - Sexual harassment of rostered ministers or members of a congregation should not be tolerated
 - Congregation members who harass or attack a rostered minister
 - Inappropriate conduct by retired or former rostered ministers of a congregation
- Finally, continuing confusion about aspirational documents (e.g., former *Vision and Expectations*, draft *Trustworthy Servants*) and *Definitions and Guidelines* (a juridical document)

The committee's key issues for an updated document include:

- Confidentiality – add ministers of Word and Service
- Addiction – address new evidence about addiction
- Family – revise concept of “family” as society's understanding has evolved
- Sexuality – consider negative reactions during listening sessions to discipline for serious, intimate relations and cohabitation outside of marriage
- Bullying and harassment, including speech and social media – add provisions on these issues
- Discrimination – address racism and other discriminatory “-isms”

The committee submitted a next-to-final draft to the Conference of Bishops, and the three committee officers (Sagsveen, Fowler, and Meinschein) met with the bishops on March 4. The bishops offered very helpful comments concerning several sections of the draft document.

Section B.5. triggered significant discussion because it did not include prior language (e.g., “chaste” and “chastity”) and did not specifically prohibit intimate sexual relations outside of marriage. The committee officers responded that the new B.5. text is nearly identical to the section regarding rostered ministers (“Sexuality and Public Ministry”) in the social statement approved by the Churchwide Assembly in 2009, [“A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust.”](#)

After a robust discussion of the draft document, the Conference of Bishops expressed its support in two separate votes:

- The Conference of Bishops voted 57–8 to approve the draft document except for section B.5.
- The Conference of Bishops voted 33–32 to approve section B.5. of the draft document.

Following the March 4 meeting with the Conference of Bishops, the Committee on Appeals again met to consider the bishops' comments and to “fine-tune” the final document. The final draft is now submitted for the Church Council's consideration and potential approval.

Also submitted is a document that compares the current *Definitions and Guidelines* with the proposed version.

Respectfully submitted,
Murray Sagsveen, Chair

1 **Note: This document compares the current version of *Definitions and Guidelines***
2 **for *Discipline* (last approved by the Church Council in March 2020) with the**
3 **amendments proposed by the Committee on Appeals. Deletions are indicated by**
4 **strikethrough and new text is indicated by underlining.**
5

7 **DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF ROSTERED MINISTERS**

8

9 ~~As an expression of its life in the gospel of Jesus Christ, this church embraces~~
10 ~~disciplinary processes of counseling, admonition, and correction, with the objective of~~
11 ~~forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.~~

12 ~~Simultaneously, out of deep concern for effective extension of the gospel, this church~~
13 ~~remains alert to the high calling of discipleship in Jesus Christ. The rostered ministers of~~
14 ~~this church, as persons charged with special responsibility for the proclamation of the~~
15 ~~gospel, are to seek to reflect the new life in Christ, avoiding that which would make them~~
16 ~~stumbling blocks to others. To that end, this church recognizes that there is behavior~~
17 ~~that is deemed to be incompatible with ordained ministry and that calls for disciplinary~~
18 ~~action.~~

19 ~~The following definitions and guidelines do not set forth the high expectations this~~
20 ~~church has of its rostered ministers. Other documents and guides have been and will be~~
21 ~~developed for that purpose. The normative expectations of this church for its rostered~~
22 ~~ministers focus upon faithful and effective exercise of ministerial leadership. In all~~
23 ~~matters of morality and personal ethics, this church expects its rostered ministers to be~~
24 ~~exemplary in conduct.~~

25 ~~These definitions and guidelines describe the grounds for which rostered ministers~~
26 ~~may be subject to discipline according to the practice of this church. Their purpose is~~
27 ~~juridical: to assist in the processes of consultation, discipline, and appeals.~~

28 **Grounding Values**

30 Rooted in God's grace and steadfast love, we are called as followers of Jesus to live a
31 life "of bold trust in God and joyful, generous service to everyone we know and meet in
32 daily life."¹ Affirming God's gracious covenant made with us in baptism, we commit to live
33 in right relationship with God and our neighbors.

34 When the gift of relationship with God and our neighbors is violated or used
35 inappropriately, there is a need for accountability and just action. It is in this context that
36 we, as a church body, establish guidelines for our conduct, actions, and ways in which
37 we communicate with one another. These guidelines are necessary so we can "continue

¹ <https://elca.org/Faith>

38 in the covenant God made with us”² in our baptism to ensure that God’s people and the
 39 church are protected from harmful or inappropriate actions, speech, communications, or
 40 other misconduct. As a church, we must abide in a context that holds ourselves, and one
 41 another, to account for the sake and care of the whole church.

42 The following definitions and guidelines for discipline are set forth with the understanding
 43 that the desired outcome is the restoration of right relationships: relationship with God
 44 and relationship with one another. This church embraces disciplinary processes which
 45 may include elements of counseling, admonition, and correction with the objective of
 46 healing and reconciliation. This church also acknowledges certain circumstances where
 47 reconciliation and restoration to the community may not be possible or may cause further
 48 harm. Particularly egregious conduct may result in suspension or removal from the roster
 49 or from membership.

50

51 **Grounding Context**

52

53 The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* (CBCR) outlines the
 54 grounds for discipline, the discipline that may be imposed, and who may bring charges:

- 55 • for ministers of Word and Sacrament at 20.22.01. through 20.22.03.;
- 56 • for ministers of Word and Service at 20.23.01. through 20.23.03.;
- 57 • for congregations at 20.31.01. through 20.31.03.; and
- 58 • for members of congregations at 20.41.01. and 20.41.02.

59 The constitution also outlines the processes for discipline. The disciplinary process for
 60 ministers of Word and Sacrament is set forth at 20.22.04. through 20.22.24. These same
 61 processes also apply to ministers of Word and Service by operation of 20.23.04. and
 62 20.23.05. and to congregations by operation of 20.31.04. and 20.31.05. The detailed
 63 operations of these processes are set forth in the rules governing disciplinary
 64 proceedings, a separate document also created by the Committee on Appeals and
 65 approved by the Church Council (20.22.14.). The disciplinary process for members of
 66 congregations is set forth in 20.41.03. through 20.41.11. and also in *C15.01. through
 67 *C15.07. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

² In the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 236), the presiding minister asks:

“You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made
with you in holy baptism:

to live among God’s faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?”

68 The CBCR assigns primary responsibility for the discipline process to synods
 69 (20.11.). Accordingly, it provides synod bishops with substantial discretion in the
 70 investigation of misconduct (20.22.04. through 20.22.06.).

71 Provision 20.21. of this church’s constitution specifically calls for the Committee on
 72 Appeals “to establish **definitions and guidelines**, subject to approval by the Church
 73 Council, to enable clear and uniform application of **the grounds for discipline** of officers,
 74 rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.” The purpose of this
 75 document is to elaborate on the grounds for discipline and to guide rostered ministers,
 76 congregations, and members in our lives together. Additionally, it is intended to help
 77 bishops, synod staff, hearing officers, discipline committee members, and consultation
 78 committee members in their work and to clarify what conduct is not acceptable in this
 79 church.

80 This document is written in accordance with the decisions of churchwide assemblies. It is
 81 grounded in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources, which help to shape this
 82 church’s social teachings. No language in this document may be construed to contradict
 83 or override a current authorized social teaching of this church.

84
85

DEFINITIONS

87

88 Unless the context indicates otherwise, for the purpose of this document:

- 89 1. “Adultery” means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and
 90 someone other than that person’s current spouse.
- 91 2. “Constitution” means the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the*
 92 *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- 93 3. “Church” or “this church” means the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 94 4. “Family” means not only persons related by genetics or marriage³ but may also
 95 include “a variety of forms, more akin to the older term of ‘household,’ exclusively
 96 employed by Luther to include immediate family members, relatives, and others.”⁴

³ In 2009, the ELCA adopted “A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” as a social statement of this church. In its section on marriage (pages 15–21), “Gift and Trust” described a range of views existing within this church. Included among these views was both a recognition of an understanding of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman and a commitment to the support of couples in lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships. In the intervening decade, the action of the United States Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), guaranteed access to legal marriage to LGBTQIA+ couples in all fifty states.

⁴ See “A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” p. 21. See also pp. 15ff. and 25ff.

- 97 5. “Harass” means to persistently annoy another or to create an unpleasant or hostile
 98 situation by uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct. Mere criticism or
 99 disagreement is not harassment.⁵
- 100 6. “Hate speech” means the expression of animosity or disparagement of an
 101 individual or group on account of a group characteristic such as race, sexual
 102 orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language,
 103 socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status.
- 104 7. “Infidelity” means the act or fact of having a romantic or sexual relationship with
 105 someone other than one’s spouse or partner.
- 106 8. “Intellectual property” means property that derives from the work of the mind or
 107 intellect and can be registered and protected under state or federal copyright,
 108 trademark, or patent laws.
- 109 9. “Libel” means a written defamatory statement or representation that conveys an
 110 unjustly unfavorable impression.
- 111 10. “Plagiarism” means wrongly representing the works of others as one’s own, in oral
 112 or written form.
- 113 11. “Retaliation” or “retaliatory action” means the discharge, suspension, demotion, or
 114 other punitive action taken against an individual. Appropriately defending oneself
 115 against false accusations is not considered retaliation.
- 116 12. “Rostered minister” includes ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word
 117 and Service, and, in this context, candidates for rostered ministry.⁶
- 118 13. “Slander” means a false and defamatory oral statement about a person.
- 119 14. “Serious crime” means a crime that could be punishable by imprisonment for more
 120 than six months.
- 121 15. “Sexual abuse” means rape; sexual assault; sexual harassment; sexual relations
 122 with a minor child or a person otherwise not capable of consent; sexual relations
 123 resulting from threats, intimidation, coercion, blackmail, extortion, or manipulation;
 124 and sexual relations (outside of marriage) between a rostered minister and a
 125 person with whom the rostered minister has a pastoral or supervisory relationship,

⁵ See the social message, “Gender-Based Violence.”

⁶ See paragraph 3, “Report of Actions of the Church Council (March 6–8, 2020).” The Church Council voted to include the following language in the candidate statement on the Entrance Information form provided in the ELCA Candidacy Manual:

“As a candidate for rostered ministry in this church, I understand I will be held accountable to the synod’s candidacy committee regarding this church’s expectations for my speech and conduct as set forward in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Rostered Ministers*. I understand that my candidacy for rostered ministry brings increased attention to my life. I am responsible for informing my bishop regarding any circumstance that might subject me to discipline according to *Definitions and Guidelines* were I a rostered minister. I understand that the candidacy committee may modify my candidacy status in response to my speech and conduct.”

126 including, but not limited to, an employee, volunteer, student, or counselee, or a
127 person in the congregation or other ministry served by the rostered minister.

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129

130

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF ROSTERED MINISTERS

131

132 The normative expectations of this church for its rostered ministers focus on faithful and
133 effective exercise of ministerial leadership. In all matters of morality and personal ethics
134 this church expects its rostered ministers to be exemplary in conduct.

135 **Grounds for discipline of rostered ministers are as follows:**

136

137 **A. Preaching or teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church is**
138 **grounds for discipline of rostered ministers. A summary of the faith confessed by this**
139 **church is found in Chapter 2 of this church's constitution.**

140 **B. Conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office is grounds for**
141 **discipline of rostered ministers. These guidelines define and describe kinds of**
142 **behavior which are incompatible with the character of the ministerial office and may**
143 **be grounds for discipline.**

144 ~~**1. Confidential Communications (Word and Sacrament only):** Ministers of Word and~~
145 ~~Sacrament must respect privileged and confidential communication and may not disclose~~
146 ~~such communication, except with the express permission of the person who has~~
147 ~~confided it or if the person is perceived to intend great harm to self or others.~~
148 **Confidentiality:** Ministers of Word and Sacrament must comply with 7.45.⁷ of this
149 church's constitution and not disclose information protected by that provision unless
150 expressly permitted by that provision. All rostered ministers must respect and protect
151 other confidential information and not disclose it absent good cause. Good cause
152 includes, but is not limited to, permission of those who shared the confidence, disclosure
153 required by law, or disclosure necessary to prevent great harm.⁸

154

155 **2. Integrity:** Rostered ministers must be honest and forthright in their dealings with others
156 ~~while protecting privileged and confidential communications. Dishonesty, deception,~~

⁷ "In keeping with the historic discipline and practice of the Lutheran church and to be true to a sacred trust inherent in the nature of the pastoral office, no minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure received in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, nor testify concerning conduct observed by the minister of Word and Sacrament while working in a pastoral capacity, except with the express permission of the person who has given confidential information to the minister of Word and Sacrament or who was observed by the minister of Word and Sacrament, or if the person intends great harm to self or others." (CBCR 7.45.)

⁸ Communication in the nature of confession may be privileged by law. Other confidential information does not fall under this privilege. The question of which communications between a rostered minister and member are "privileged," such that their disclosure may not be compelled by law, varies from state to state. Questions regarding this issue should be directed to local legal counsel.

157 duplicity, or the manipulation of others for personal benefit or gain is conduct incompatible
158 with the character of the ministerial office.

159 **3. Professional attention to duties:** A rostered minister of this church has made
160 commitments through ordination and through acceptance of a letter of call or
161 appointment. Continued neglect of or indifference toward such duties commitments
162 constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

163 ~~**4. Relationship to Family:** This church is committed to the sanctity of marriage and the~~
164 ~~enhancement of family life. Rostered ministers of this church are expected to uphold this~~
165 ~~church's ideals of marriage, family, and relationship in their public ministry as well as in~~
166 ~~private life. Spouse and children, if any, are to be regarded with love, respect, and~~
167 ~~commitment. Departure from this standard may be considered conduct incompatible with~~
168 ~~the character of the ministerial office. Such departure might include any of the following:~~

169 **Care of family:** For rostered ministers in a family, the following conduct is considered
170 incompatible with the character of the ministerial office:

- 171 a. ~~Separation or divorce that occurs without consultation with the synod bishop's~~
172 ~~office and appropriate implementation of such consultation; Desertion or~~
173 ~~abandonment of spouse or children~~ a family member;
174 b. ~~Abuse of spouse or children~~ a family member; or
175 c. ~~Repeated failure to meet legally determined family support obligations~~ support
176 obligations of a family member.

177 **5. Sexual Matters:** ~~The expectation of this church is that a rostered minister is to lead~~
178 ~~a chaste and decent life in word and deed. In keeping with this expectation, chastity and~~
179 ~~abstinence are required outside of marriage, and chastity and fidelity are required within~~
180 ~~marriage. Adultery, infidelity, casual sexual relationships, promiscuity, the sexual abuse~~
181 ~~of another or the misuse of the ministerial relationship for sexual activity constitute~~
182 ~~conduct that is incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.~~ **Sexuality and**
183 **public ministry:**⁹ This church does not tolerate the abuse of the ministerial office for
184 personal sexual gratification or exertion of authority over others. This church's
185 understanding of human sexuality is stated in its authorized social teachings.

186
187 Rostered ministers who abuse the trust placed in them by engaging in infidelity, adultery,
188 promiscuity, or sexual abuse of another are engaging in conduct incompatible with the
189 character of the ministerial office.¹⁰ Such violations severely damage the credibility of the

⁹ See "A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and the social message, "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions."

¹⁰ In 2009, this church expressly addressed the question of sexuality and public ministry in "A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," which states (p. 35):

This church does not tolerate the abuse of the ministerial office for personal sexual gratification. This church holds high expectations for those individuals called to serve as rostered leaders. Pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who abuse the trust placed in them by engaging in promiscuity, infidelity, adultery, or forms of sexual abuse violate those high standards. Such

190 public ministry and how others hear the Gospel to which this church and its leaders are
 191 called.

192 ~~**6. Addiction and Substance Abuse:** Any addictive behavior that impairs the ability of~~
 193 ~~a rostered minister to perform effectively the duties of the office or the misuse of alcohol,~~
 194 ~~drugs, medications, sex, gambling, or pornography is incompatible with the office of~~
 195 ~~ministry. The approach of this church to such a problem may be to insist upon effective~~
 196 ~~treatment or to initiate immediate discipline. Refusal to accept treatment or failure to~~
 197 ~~abide by the terms of such treatment is conduct incompatible with the character of the~~
 198 ~~ministerial office. **Addiction and substance misuse:**¹¹ Any misuse of alcohol, drugs, or~~
 199 ~~medications or inappropriate behavior involving gambling, sex, pornography, or~~
 200 ~~compulsions that impairs the ministerial function of a rostered minister or adversely~~
 201 ~~impacts self or others is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.~~
 202 ~~The approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on~~
 203 ~~evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should~~
 204 ~~addiction be indicated. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse will result in referral~~
 205 ~~to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery~~
 206 ~~maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are~~
 207 ~~restored. Continued high-risk behavior or refusal to be compliant with treatment also~~
 208 ~~constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.~~

209
 210 ~~**7. Fiscal responsibilities:**¹² Rostered ministers of this church are expected to conduct~~
 211 ~~their fiscal affairs in accordance with ethical and legal requirements. Among those fiscal~~
 212 ~~activities that may be considered conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial~~
 213 ~~office are:~~The following fiscal misconduct is considered conduct incompatible with the
 214 character of the ministerial office:

- 215 a. Indifference to or avoidance of legitimate and neglected personal debts;
- 216 b. Embezzlement of money or improper appropriation of the property of others;
- 217 c. Using the ministerial office improperly for personal benefit or financial
 218 advantage gain;
- 219 d. Soliciting members or others to directly or indirectly acquire gifts, bequests, or
 220 similar benefits for personal gain.

violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry to which this church and its leaders are
called.

Provision B.5. is substantially based on this teaching of this church. This provision does not change the
aspirational teaching of this church, set forth in its social statements, that all members of this church should
abstain from sexual intercourse until married. See "A Social Statement on Abortion" (p. 4) and "A Social
Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" (p. 31).

¹¹ See the social message, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation."

¹² See "A Social Statement on: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All."

221 **8. Membership in certain organizations:** This church has specifically declared in
 222 7.31.11.¹³ and 7.61.05.¹⁴ that discipline may be administered to any of its rostered
 223 ministers who belong to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess
 224 in its teaching and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church.

225 Conduct considered incompatible with the character of the ministerial office includes
 226 membership in, or taking actions in concert with, organizations that encourage or promote
 227 hatred or bigotry on the basis of race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity,
 228 culture, religion, disability, language, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or
 229 immigration status.

230 **9. Conviction of a Felony:** ~~The society in which this church ministers has placed a high~~
 231 ~~premium upon the role of law in regulating the rights and duties of individuals to promote~~
 232 ~~the common good. This includes laws which define certain conduct as felonies. Pleading~~
 233 ~~guilty to, or being convicted of, a felony is grounds for discipline as conduct incompatible~~
 234 ~~with the character of the ministerial office but may not be grounds for discipline in those~~
 235 ~~instances where the violation of law was to protest or to test a perceived unjust law or as~~
 236 ~~an expression of civil disobedience.~~ **Commission of a serious crime:**¹⁵ A rostered
 237 minister who commits a serious crime is subject to discipline for engaging in conduct
 238 incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. If the violation of law is
 239 purposefully and exclusively done as a principled act of civil disobedience to protest or
 240 to test a law which is reasonably perceived as unjust or contrary to Christian beliefs, it
 241 may not be grounds for discipline. Rostered ministers charged with a crime shall
 242 promptly notify the bishop's office in their synod of roster.

244 **10. Hateful speech or actions:**¹⁶ A rostered minister's use of harassing, abusive,
 245 discriminatory, libelous, slanderous or hateful speech or actions, at any time, whether in
 246 person or on any form of social media, is conduct incompatible with the character of the
 247 ministerial office.

¹³ "No person who belongs to any organization such as a lodge or fraternal order which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins or is discovered to be a member of such an organization. (CBCR 7.31.11.)"

¹⁴ "No person who belongs to any organization such as a lodge or fraternal order which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins or is discovered to be a member of such an organization. (CBCR 7.61.05.)"

¹⁵ See "A Social Statement on: The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries," Section 2D.

¹⁶ See "A Social Statement on: Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture," "A Social Statement on: Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action," and the social policy resolution, "Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric."

248 **11. Abusive activity:** A rostered minister's physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual abuse
 249 of staff, colleagues, congregation members, or others is conduct incompatible with the
 250 character of the ministerial office. Such abuse could include, but is not limited to, bullying
 251 or harassment in written or verbal form, either in person or by remote communication.

252 **12. Intellectual property:** Rostered ministers will remain committed to protecting and
 253 honoring all intellectual property. Rostered ministers must also work to ensure that they
 254 do not misuse the intellectual property of others without appropriate permission and/or
 255 citation. Plagiarism is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

256 **13. Retaliatory action:** A rostered minister may not take retaliatory action toward anyone
 257 who submits a complaint against the rostered minister to the leadership of a congregation;
 258 to the dean of a conference; to a synod bishop, synod council member, or synod staff
 259 member; to the presiding bishop or churchwide staff; or to any other person who holds
 260 the capacity to receive a complaint. Such retaliatory actions constitute conduct
 261 incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

262 **14. Relationship with prior congregation(s) or ministry:** Rostered ministers who have
 263 resigned or retired from or otherwise no longer officially serve a congregation or other
 264 ministry shall honor the integrity of the congregation or ministry. They shall respect and
 265 honor the current rostered minister(s) and mission of the congregation or ministry they no
 266 longer are called to serve.¹⁷ They shall decline invitations from members to perform
 267 pastoral acts and refrain from asking members to directly or indirectly seek permission to
 268 perform such acts from the currently serving rostered minister. They shall not participate
 269 or interfere, whether personally or through a proxy, in the life of the congregation or
 270 ministry in any way, unless invited to participate by the current rostered minister(s) in
 271 conjunction with the congregation council or governing board. Such interference
 272 constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office or retirement
 273 status.

274 **15. Adherence to covenantal relationships:** Rostered ministers who actively and
 275 affirmatively incite, initiate, or encourage a congregation to leave the ELCA are engaged
 276 in conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.¹⁸ This does not apply
 277 to exploring a cooperative relationship with a full-communion partner congregation.

278 **C. ~~Willfully disregarding or violating~~ Willful disregard or violation of the functions**
 279 **and standards established by this church for the rostered ministries of this**
 280 **church** ~~is grounds for discipline of rostered ministers. Such functions and standards~~

¹⁷ "Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council. (*Constitution for Synods*, †S14.19.)

¹⁸ "Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ... Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation ... encourage adherence to covenantal relationships with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*." (CABC 7.31.02.)

281 and responsibilities established by this church are found in Chapter 7 of this church's
282 *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions.*

283 **D. Willful disregard of the constitutions, bylaws, or continuing resolutions of this**
284 **church** is grounds for discipline of rostered ministers.

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GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF CONGREGATIONS

288
289 **A. Departing from the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of a
290 congregation of this church. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found
291 in Chapters 2 and 3 of this church's constitution.

292 **B. ~~Willfully disregarding or violating~~ Willful disregard or violation of any of the**
293 **criteria for recognition as congregations of this church** is grounds for discipline
294 of a congregation of this church. These criteria are set forth in 9.21. and 9.22. of this
295 church's constitution.

296 **C. ~~Willfully disregarding or violating~~ Willful disregard or violation of the**
297 **constitutions, bylaws, or continuing resolutions of this church** is grounds for
298 discipline of a congregation of this church.

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GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS

302 **A. Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith by a member of a congregation**
303 **of this church** is may be grounds for disciplinary action against the member. The
304 behavior must be seen to bring harm to the faith of others and detract from the mission
305 and ministry of the congregation. The Christian faith as confessed by this church is
306 expressed in Chapter 2 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. A congregation
307 member who persists in denial of this faith and seeks to convince others to do so may
308 be subject to discipline. In order to warrant discipline, such behavior must be more
309 than occasional expressions of doubt, private comments, or conduct contrary to the
310 Christian faith; ~~the behavior must be seen to bring harm to the faith of others and detract~~
311 ~~from the mission and ministry of the congregation.~~

312 **B. Willful and/or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming of a member of the Church**
313 **~~of Christ~~** is grounds for disciplinary action against a congregation member.
314 Commission of violent crimes including murder, attempted murder, manslaughter,
315 rape, attempted rape, sex crimes, hate crimes, child abuse, ~~spousal and~~ intimate
316 partner abuse, elder abuse, ~~public and profane obscenity and vulgarity,~~ and or any
317 similar ~~conduct~~ offense is seen as reprehensible to the Christian community and may
318 warrant discipline. ~~Persons deemed guilty who are found to have engaged or who are~~
319 currently engaging in such ~~behavior~~ actions remain in need of pastoral care and
320 compassion.

321 A member's use of harassing, abusive, discriminatory, libelous, slanderous, or hateful
322 speech or actions, at any time, whether in person or on any form of social media, may
323 be grounds for discipline.

324 Conduct which includes membership in, or taking actions in concert with,
325 organizations that encourage or promote hatred or bigotry on the basis of race, sexual
326 orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language,
327 socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status may be grounds
328 for discipline.

329 **C. Continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation** is
330 grounds for discipline of a member engaging in such behavior. A congregation
331 member who repeatedly interrupts the congregation's gatherings, worship services,
332 fellowship ~~and~~ or educational activities, congregational or council meetings, or
333 disparages the congregation or its ministry to others in ways that damage or destroy
334 the ability of other members to carry out the church's mission may be disciplined by
335 the church. In order to warrant discipline, such conduct must be more serious than a
336 member merely expressing disagreement, being impolite, or even exhibiting anger.
337 The member must have engaged in a course of conduct and communication so
338 persistent, inappropriate, and objectionable that the congregation's ability to perform
339 ministry is being impaired.

340
341 **D. ~~Willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the~~**
342 **~~congregation~~** ~~are grounds for discipline of a member. If the treatment of another by a~~
343 ~~member of the congregation repeatedly devolves into slanderous, vicious or~~
344 ~~intentionally hurtful communications, **Willful and repeated harassment, abuse,**~~
345 **bullying, libel, or slander of member(s) of the congregation** ~~are grounds for~~
346 ~~discipline of a member. If the treatment of another, including rostered ministers or~~
347 ~~staff, by a member of the congregation repeatedly devolves into slanderous, vicious,~~
348 ~~or intentionally hurtful communications, no matter the means of such communications,~~
349 the behavior is unacceptable and may warrant disciplinary action. Similarly, if any
350 members, rostered ministers, or staff are being constantly harassed by another
351 member for any reason, whether such harassment is based upon gender, race, sexual
352 orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language,
353 socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status or any other
354 reason, perceived or real, the behavior may warrant discipline without regard to the
355 nature of the harassment. The use of phone, email, text messages, social media or
356 other ~~means~~ of remote communication, and behaviors including anything from
357 shouting and gestures to actual stalking, may all be means of unacceptable
358 defamatory or harassing behavior between members.

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DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

Grounding Values

Rooted in God’s grace and steadfast love, we are called as followers of Jesus to live a life “of bold trust in God and joyful, generous service to everyone we know and meet in daily life.”¹ Affirming God’s gracious covenant made with us in baptism, we commit to live in right relationship with God and our neighbors.

When the gift of relationship with God and our neighbors is violated or used inappropriately, there is a need for accountability and just action. It is in this context that we, as a church body, establish guidelines for our conduct, actions, and ways in which we communicate with one another. These guidelines are necessary so we can “continue in the covenant God made with us”² in our baptism to ensure that God’s people and the church are protected from harmful or inappropriate actions, speech, communications, or other misconduct. As a church, we must abide in a context that holds ourselves, and one another, to account for the sake and care of the whole church.

The following definitions and guidelines for discipline are set forth with the understanding that the desired outcome is the restoration of right relationships: relationship with God and relationship with one another. This church embraces disciplinary processes which may include elements of counseling, admonition, and correction with the objective of healing and reconciliation. This church also acknowledges certain circumstances where reconciliation and restoration to the community may not be possible or may cause further harm. Particularly egregious conduct may result in suspension or removal from the roster or from membership.

¹ <https://elca.org/Faith>

² In the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 236), the presiding minister asks:
“You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?”

Grounding Context

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* (CBCR) outlines the grounds for discipline, the discipline that may be imposed, and who may bring charges:

- for ministers of Word and Sacrament at 20.22.01. through 20.22.03.;
- for ministers of Word and Service at 20.23.01. through 20.23.03.;
- for congregations at 20.31.01. through 20.31.03.; and
- for members of congregations at 20.41.01. and 20.41.02.

The constitution also outlines the processes for discipline. The disciplinary process for ministers of Word and Sacrament is set forth at 20.22.04. through 20.22.24. These same processes also apply to ministers of Word and Service by operation of 20.23.04. and 20.23.05. and to congregations by operation of 20.31.04. and 20.31.05. The detailed operations of these processes are set forth in the rules governing disciplinary proceedings, a separate document also created by the Committee on Appeals and approved by the Church Council (20.22.14.). The disciplinary process for members of congregations is set forth in 20.41.03. through 20.41.11. and also in *C15.01. through *C15.07. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

The CBCR assigns primary responsibility for the discipline process to synods (20.11.). Accordingly, it provides synod bishops with substantial discretion in the investigation of misconduct (20.22.04. through 20.22.06.).

Provision 20.21. of this church's constitution specifically calls for the Committee on Appeals "to establish **definitions and guidelines**, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of **the grounds for discipline** of officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations." The purpose of this document is to elaborate on the grounds for discipline and to guide rostered ministers, congregations, and members in our lives together. Additionally, it is intended to help bishops, synod staff, hearing officers, discipline committee members, and consultation committee members in their work and to clarify what conduct is not acceptable in this church.

This document is written in accordance with the decisions of churchwide assemblies. It is grounded in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources, which help to shape this church's social teachings. No language in this document may be construed to contradict or override a current authorized social teaching of this church.

DEFINITIONS

Unless the context indicates otherwise, for the purpose of this document:

1. “Adultery” means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than that person’s current spouse.
2. “Constitution” means the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
3. “Church” or “this church” means the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
4. “Family” means not only persons related by genetics or marriage³ but may also include “a variety of forms, more akin to the older term of ‘household,’ exclusively employed by Luther to include immediate family members, relatives, and others.”⁴
5. “Harass” means to persistently annoy another or to create an unpleasant or hostile situation by uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct. Mere criticism or disagreement is not harassment.⁵
6. “Hate speech” means the expression of animosity or disparagement of an individual or group on account of a group characteristic such as race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status.
7. “Infidelity” means the act or fact of having a romantic or sexual relationship with someone other than one’s spouse or partner.
8. “Intellectual property” means property that derives from the work of the mind or intellect and can be registered and protected under state or federal copyright, trademark, or patent laws.
9. “Libel” means a written defamatory statement or representation that conveys an unjustly unfavorable impression.
10. “Plagiarism” means wrongly representing the works of others as one’s own, in oral or written form.

³ In 2009, the ELCA adopted “A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” as a social statement of this church. In its section on marriage (pages 15–21), “Gift and Trust” described a range of views existing within this church. Included among these views was both a recognition of an understanding of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman and a commitment to the support of couples in lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships. In the intervening decade, the action of the United States Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), guaranteed access to legal marriage to LGBTQIA+ couples in all fifty states.

⁴ See “A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” p. 21. See also pp. 15ff. and 25ff.

⁵ See the social message, “Gender-Based Violence.”

11. “Retaliation” or “retaliatory action” means the discharge, suspension, demotion, or other punitive action taken against an individual. Appropriately defending oneself against false accusations is not considered retaliation.
12. “Rostered minister” includes ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service, and, in this context, candidates for rostered ministry.⁶
13. “Slander” means a false and defamatory oral statement about a person.
14. “Serious crime” means a crime that could be punishable by imprisonment for more than six months.
15. “Sexual abuse” means rape; sexual assault; sexual harassment; sexual relations with a minor child or a person otherwise not capable of consent; sexual relations resulting from threats, intimidation, coercion, blackmail, extortion, or manipulation; and sexual relations (outside of marriage) between a rostered minister and a person with whom the rostered minister has a pastoral or supervisory relationship, including, but not limited to, an employee, volunteer, student, or counselee, or a person in the congregation or other ministry served by the rostered minister.

⁶ See paragraph 3, “Report of Actions of the Church Council (March 6–8, 2020).” The Church Council voted to include the following language in the candidate statement on the Entrance Information form provided in the ELCA Candidacy Manual:

“As a candidate for rostered ministry in this church, I understand I will be held accountable to the synod’s candidacy committee regarding this church’s expectations for my speech and conduct as set forward in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Rostered Ministers*. I understand that my candidacy for rostered ministry brings increased attention to my life. I am responsible for informing my bishop regarding any circumstance that might subject me to discipline according to *Definitions and Guidelines* were I a rostered minister. I understand that the candidacy committee may modify my candidacy status in response to my speech and conduct.”

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF ROSTERED MINISTERS

The normative expectations of this church for its rostered ministers focus on faithful and effective exercise of ministerial leadership. In all matters of morality and personal ethics this church expects its rostered ministers to be exemplary in conduct.

Grounds for discipline of rostered ministers are as follows:

- A. Preaching or teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of rostered ministers. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found in Chapter 2 of this church's constitution.
- B. Conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office** is grounds for discipline of rostered ministers. These guidelines define and describe kinds of behavior which are incompatible with the character of the ministerial office and may be grounds for discipline.
- 1. Confidentiality:** Ministers of Word and Sacrament must comply with 7.45.⁷ of this church's constitution and not disclose information protected by that provision unless expressly permitted by that provision. All rostered ministers must respect and protect other confidential information and not disclose it absent good cause. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, permission of those who shared the confidence, disclosure required by law, or disclosure necessary to prevent great harm.⁸
 - 2. Integrity:** Rostered ministers must be honest and forthright in their dealings with others. Dishonesty, deception, duplicity, or the manipulation of others for personal benefit or gain is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
 - 3. Professional attention to duties:** A rostered minister of this church has made commitments through ordination and through acceptance of a letter of call or appointment. Continued neglect of or indifference toward such commitments constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

⁷ "In keeping with the historic discipline and practice of the Lutheran church and to be true to a sacred trust inherent in the nature of the pastoral office, no minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure received in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, nor testify concerning conduct observed by the minister of Word and Sacrament while working in a pastoral capacity, except with the express permission of the person who has given confidential information to the minister of Word and Sacrament or who was observed by the minister of Word and Sacrament, or if the person intends great harm to self or others." (CBCR 7.45.)

⁸ Communication in the nature of confession may be privileged by law. Other confidential information does not fall under this privilege. The question of which communications between a rostered minister and member are "privileged," such that their disclosure may not be compelled by law, varies from state to state. Questions regarding this issue should be directed to local legal counsel.

- 4. Care of family:** For rostered ministers in a family, the following conduct is considered incompatible with the character of the ministerial office:
- Desertion or abandonment of a family member;
 - Abuse of a family member; or
 - Repeated failure to meet legally determined support obligations of a family member.

- 5. Sexuality and public ministry:**⁹ This church does not tolerate the abuse of the ministerial office for personal sexual gratification or exertion of authority over others. This church's understanding of human sexuality is stated in its authorized social teachings.

Rostered ministers who abuse the trust placed in them by engaging in infidelity, adultery, promiscuity, or sexual abuse of another are engaging in conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.¹⁰ Such violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry and how others hear the Gospel to which this church and its leaders are called.

- 6. Addiction and substance misuse:**¹¹ Any misuse of alcohol, drugs, or medications or inappropriate behavior involving gambling, sex, pornography, or compulsions that impairs the ministerial function of a rostered minister or adversely impacts self or others is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. The approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should addiction be indicated. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse will result in referral to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are restored. Continued high-risk behavior or refusal to be compliant with treatment also constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.

⁹ See "A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and the social message, "Sexuality: Some Common Convictions."

¹⁰ In 2009, this church expressly addressed the question of sexuality and public ministry in "A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," which states (p. 35):

This church does not tolerate the abuse of the ministerial office for personal sexual gratification. This church holds high expectations for those individuals called to serve as rostered leaders. Pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who abuse the trust placed in them by engaging in promiscuity, infidelity, adultery, or forms of sexual abuse violate those high standards. Such violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry to which this church and its leaders are called.

Provision B.5. is substantially based on this teaching of this church. This provision does not change the aspirational teaching of this church, set forth in its social statements, that all members of this church should abstain from sexual intercourse until married. See "A Social Statement on Abortion" (p. 4) and "A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" (p. 31).

¹¹ See the social message, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation."

7. Fiscal responsibilities:¹² The following fiscal misconduct is considered conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office:

- a. Indifference to or avoidance of legitimate and neglected personal debts;
- b. Embezzlement of money or improper appropriation of the property of others;
- c. Using the ministerial office improperly for personal benefit or financial gain;
- d. Soliciting members or others to directly or indirectly acquire gifts, bequests, or similar benefits for personal gain.

8. Membership in certain organizations: This church has specifically declared in 7.31.11.¹³ and 7.61.05.¹⁴ that discipline may be administered to any of its rostered ministers who belong to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teaching and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church.

Conduct considered incompatible with the character of the ministerial office includes membership in, or taking actions in concert with, organizations that encourage or promote hatred or bigotry on the basis of race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status.

9. Commission of a serious crime:¹⁵ A rostered minister who commits a serious crime is subject to discipline for engaging in conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. If the violation of law is purposefully and exclusively done as a principled act of civil disobedience to protest or to test a law which is reasonably perceived as unjust or contrary to Christian beliefs, it may not be grounds for discipline. Rostered ministers charged with a crime shall promptly notify the bishop's office in their synod of roster.

¹² See "A Social Statement on: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All."

¹³ "No person who belongs to any organization such as a lodge or fraternal order which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins or is discovered to be a member of such an organization. (CBCR 7.31.11.)

¹⁴ "No person who belongs to any organization such as a lodge or fraternal order which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins or is discovered to be a member of such an organization. (CBCR 7.61.05.)

¹⁵ See "A Social Statement on: The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries," Section 2D.

- 10. Hateful speech or actions:**¹⁶ A rostered minister's use of harassing, abusive, discriminatory, libelous, slanderous or hateful speech or actions, at any time, whether in person or on any form of social media, is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
- 11. Abusive activity:** A rostered minister's physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual abuse of staff, colleagues, congregation members, or others is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. Such abuse could include, but is not limited to, bullying or harassment in written or verbal form, either in person or by remote communication.
- 12. Intellectual property:** Rostered ministers will remain committed to protecting and honoring all intellectual property. Rostered ministers must also work to ensure that they do not misuse the intellectual property of others without appropriate permission and/or citation. Plagiarism is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
- 13. Retaliatory action:** A rostered minister may not take retaliatory action toward anyone who submits a complaint against the rostered minister to the leadership of a congregation; to the dean of a conference; to a synod bishop, synod council member, or synod staff member; to the presiding bishop or churchwide staff; or to any other person who holds the capacity to receive a complaint. Such retaliatory actions constitute conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.
- 14. Relationship with prior congregation(s) or ministry:** Rostered ministers who have resigned or retired from or otherwise no longer officially serve a congregation or other ministry shall honor the integrity of the congregation or ministry. They shall respect and honor the current rostered minister(s) and mission of the congregation or ministry they no longer are called to serve.¹⁷ They shall decline invitations from members to perform pastoral acts and refrain from asking members to directly or indirectly seek permission to perform such acts from the currently serving rostered minister. They shall not participate or interfere, whether personally or through a proxy, in the life of the congregation or ministry in any way, unless invited to participate by the current rostered minister(s) in conjunction with the congregation council or governing board. Such interference constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office or retirement status.

¹⁶ See "A Social Statement on: Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture," "A Social Statement on: Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action," and the social policy resolution, "Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric."

¹⁷ "Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council. (*Constitution for Synods*, †S14.19.)

- 15. Adherence to covenantal relationships:** Rostered ministers who actively and affirmatively incite, initiate, or encourage a congregation to leave the ELCA are engaged in conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.¹⁸ This does not apply to exploring a cooperative relationship with a full-communion partner congregation.
- C. Willful disregard or violation of the functions and standards established by this church for the rostered ministries of this church** is grounds for discipline. Such standards and responsibilities established by this church are found in Chapter 7 of this church's *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*.
- D. Willful disregard of the constitutions, bylaws, or continuing resolutions of this church** is grounds for discipline of rostered ministers.

¹⁸ "Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ... Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation ... encourage adherence to covenantal relationships with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*." (CABC 7.31.02.)

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF CONGREGATIONS

- A. **Departing from the faith confessed by this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church. A summary of the faith confessed by this church is found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this church's constitution.
- B. **Willful disregard or violation of any of the criteria for recognition as congregations of this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church. These criteria are set forth in 9.21. and 9.22. of this church's constitution.
- C. **Willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, or continuing resolutions of this church** is grounds for discipline of a congregation of this church.

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GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS

- A. Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith by a member of a congregation of this church** may be grounds for disciplinary action against the member. The behavior must be seen to bring harm to the faith of others and detract from the mission and ministry of the congregation. The Christian faith as confessed by this church is expressed in Chapter 2 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. A congregation member who persists in denial of this faith and seeks to convince others to do so may be subject to discipline. In order to warrant discipline, such behavior must be more than occasional expressions of doubt, private comments, or conduct contrary to the Christian faith.
- B. Willful and/or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming of a member of the Church** is grounds for disciplinary action against a congregation member. Commission of violent crimes including murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, rape, attempted rape, sex crimes, hate crimes, child abuse, intimate partner abuse, elder abuse, or any similar offense is seen as reprehensible to the Christian community and may warrant discipline. Persons who are found to have engaged or who are currently engaging in such actions remain in need of pastoral care and compassion.
- A member's use of harassing, abusive, discriminatory, libelous, slanderous, or hateful speech or actions, at any time, whether in person or on any form of social media, may be grounds for discipline.
- Conduct which includes membership in, or taking actions in concert with, organizations that encourage or promote hatred or bigotry on the basis of race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status may be grounds for discipline.
- C. Continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation** is grounds for discipline of a member engaging in such behavior. A congregation member who repeatedly interrupts the congregation's gatherings, worship services, fellowship or educational activities, congregation or council meetings, or disparages the congregation or its ministry to others in ways that damage or destroy the ability of other members to carry out the church's mission may be disciplined by the church. In order to warrant discipline, such conduct must be more serious than a member merely expressing disagreement, being impolite, or even exhibiting anger. The member must have engaged in a course of conduct and communication so persistent, inappropriate, and objectionable that the congregation's ability to perform ministry is being impaired.
- D. Willful and repeated harassment, abuse, bullying, libel, or slander of member(s) of the congregation** are grounds for discipline of a member. If the treatment of another, including rostered ministers or staff, by a member of the congregation repeatedly devolves into slanderous, vicious, or intentionally hurtful communications,

no matter the means of such communications, the behavior is unacceptable and may warrant disciplinary action. Similarly, if any members, rostered ministers, or staff are being constantly harassed by another member for any reason, whether such harassment is based upon race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, or immigration status or any other reason, perceived or real, the behavior may warrant discipline without regard to the nature of the harassment. The use of phone, email, text messages, social media or other remote communication, and behaviors including anything from shouting and gestures to actual stalking, may all be means of unacceptable defamatory or harassing behavior between members.

DRAFT

April 10, 2021

Bishop Tracie Bartholomew
New Jersey Synod, ELCA
Chair of the Conference of Bishops
Member of the Executive Committee, ELCA Church Council

Bishop Bartholomew,

We are writing to you as the nine Liaison Bishops to the ELCA Church Council with the hope that you will share this letter with others on the Executive Committee and with the members of the Church Council, if that is appropriate. We appreciate our presence at the Council meetings and want to reach out to you before the spring meeting on April 15-17, 2021 to offer an explanation of the very close vote on paragraph 5B of the proposed revision of the Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline, as it was presented to the Conference of Bishops on March 4, 2021. We have followed up by asking our colleague bishops in all nine regions to help us understand why they voted as they did, whether they affirmed or did not affirm the substance of 5B.

The greatest concern, expressed by bishops with differing perspectives, is the lack of prominence given to marriage, which plays a central role in the Lutheran understanding of vocation. This includes an understanding of marriage in the legal, as well as theological sense, to include LGBT couples. This more inclusive understanding of marriage is not defined in an existing social statement of the ELCA. However, it has been sanctioned by the 2015 action of The United States Supreme Court and has become the practice of the church to recognize such marriages.

We would propose that marriage be included in the opening section of Definitions, using language like "marriage is a legally recognized, committed, covenanted, and publicly accountable relationship between two individuals. Marriage includes relationships between gay, heterosexual, and transgender persons." In addition, we would propose the following be added in the main section on Sexuality and Public Ministry: "We affirm marriage as the appropriate setting within which Christians experience sexual intimacy."

Thank you for receiving this concern from us. We look forward to being present at the April 15-17, 2021 meeting of the Church Council and are prepared to speak further to this matter if that is helpful to the deliberations on the proposed Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Shelley Wickstrom, Alaska Synod
Bishop Andy Taylor, Pacifica Synod
Bishop Patricia Lull, Saint Paul Area Synod
Bishop Sue Briner, Southwestern Texas Synod
Bishop Jeff Clements, Northern Illinois Synod
Bishop Don Kreiss, Southeast Michigan Synod
Bishop John Macholz, Upstate New York Synod
Bishop Barb Collins, Upper Susquehanna Synod
Bishop Pedro Suarez, Florida Bahamas Synod

CC: Bill Horne, Vice President of the ELCA Church Council
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop
Murray G. Sagsveen, Chair of the Committee on Appeals



**SOUTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
SYNOD** EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA

Kurt F. Kusserow, Bishop

412-367-8222

kurt.kusserow@swpasynod.org

1014 Perry Hwy, Suite 200

Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Office of the Bishop

Attn: Secretary Sue Rothmeyer
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

March 20, 2021

Dear Church Council,

The Lord be with you.

We are writing to ask for guidance regarding the required triennial review¹ of the ministers on our retired roster and to propose that your guidance to us also be added to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for the benefit of the whole church.

We have encountered two obstacles in our exercise of this responsibility:

- we see no guidance for how a minister on the retired status is to be alerted to the possibility of having retired status revoked, and
- we see no mechanism beyond the endorsement or recommendation of the synod bishop for providing sufficient information to the Synod Council to make an informed decision in granting (c., below) or revoking (e., below) retired status, especially in situations that are not inherently clear-cut.

¹ The following material is copied from p. 36 of the Manual on the Roster:

c. The synod bishop shall determine whether the minister of Word and Sacrament is eligible for retired status and whether, in the bishop's sole discretion, to recommend to the Synod Council that such roster status be granted. If the synod bishop does not endorse the request, the bishop shall report the decision to the Synod Council, in executive session if deemed necessary. If the synod bishop does endorse the request, **the Synod Council shall determine, in its discretion**, whether to grant retired status.

d. The synod bishop shall act to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation or for those previously served by the retiring minister.

e. A minister of Word and Sacrament who has been granted retired status shall retain that roster status until (1) the minister is no longer on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, (2) the minister accepts a call, or (3) the Synod Council revokes retired status upon recommendation of the synod bishop. Such revocation of a minister's retired status may occur only upon **a two-thirds vote of the Synod Council**, present and voting at a legally called and conducted meeting.

f. The Synod Council shall engage in a regular, periodic examination of all ministers of Word and Sacrament on the retired roster such that each and every retired minister's status is reviewed at least once during a three-year cycle.

We propose that the Church Council direct the Committee on Appeals to consider how ministers might appropriately be alerted to the possibility of having their retired status revoked by the Synod Council and to provide a policy for how to do this well so that a salutary practice may be standardized across our church; and further that the committee develop a tool of discernment similar to the Consultation Panel available to bishops to help Synod Councils make informed decisions.

Here are two fictional case studies to illustrate our concern:

1. *Marginal Ministry Track Record*

Pastor Rocky Reckless has been asked to resign his most recent call by the Congregation Council. He has agreed to do so for three months' severance compensation, saying that he was thinking of retiring anyway and honestly was "glad to be done with you people." Having been advised by the bishop that he needs to request retired status if he wishes to remain on the roster, he does so, in a perfunctory one-sentence email. Ordained at 52, Pr. Reckless has served seven ministry sites in four states over the last sixteen years, and has been on-leave from call twice during that time. He has a passion for preaching the Gospel with a bold call for social justice and strongly expects to continue his ministry in retirement in pulpit supply, periodic interim work and local advocacy. Three congregations he had previously served as pulpit supply while on-leave from call have asked that he not be sent back to them. His use of social media blends powerful endorsement of ELCA social messages with stinging critiques of people who disagree with him. The bishop does not anticipate appointing Pr. Reckless to interim ministry again, but supposes that he can't do too much damage in pulpit supply work, which is badly needed in the synod, and endorses his request, although with visible reluctance. Some members of Synod Council have first-hand knowledge of Pr. Reckless' abrasive behavior. Others have never met him. There is a perceptible, non-verbal uneasiness as the motion is brought for action. One council member innocently asks, "Bishop, is there something we should know about?" The ensuing conversation lasts far longer than is helpful, draws some members into emotional turmoil, and leads one council member to exclaim, "How are we supposed to make an informed decision about this man's future without any objective data to go on?" Someone moves to table the motion to the next meeting. The motion carries. Now what?

2. *Muddled Misconduct*

Pastor Olive Overreach had been on the retired roster for more than two decades when her name appeared on the list of retired ministers for the Synod Council to review. The bishop, two years in office, invited the Synod Council members to read through all 142 names in an attitude of prayer, asking each council member to read a group of seven names followed by the petition, "For all these faithful servants, we give God thanks and praise!" All was going well until one council member read four of the names in the next group of seven, stumbled over the fifth, coughed, put down the paper and walked out of the room. The bishop immediately got up and followed, and in the ensuing conversation heard for the first time the oral tradition of an old rumor of financial fraud that had never been resolved. "They say she walked away with over \$30,000," is how the story ended. Immediately after the Synod Council meeting adjourned, the bishop went to read Pr. Overreach's roster file. There the bishop found a detailed narrative of an allegation of financial mismanagement that had been investigated by a now-deceased predecessor. According to the record, Pr. Overreach had, over a period of fifteen years, repeatedly "borrowed" small amounts of money from the discretionary fund to help her son-in-law get through a tough time, each time leaving an IOU in the

bottom left desk drawer. The cache of IOUs had been found four years after her retirement, and the Congregation Council had determined to let the matter lie, preferring not to sully the otherwise gracious and caring reputation of their Pastor Emerita. The previous bishop had provided a strongly-worded letter of private admonition to Pr. Overreach, intending to resolve the matter in that way. However, the current bishop brought the concern to the next Synod Council meeting with a recommendation that Pr. Overreach's retired status be revoked for documented financial misconduct, noting that after all, she was no longer engaged in any ministerial functions within the synod. With no actual discussion on the matter, since the details of the alleged misconduct were deemed confidential, the vote was held. Just as the result was being announced – 55% in favor, 45% against – Pr. Overreach learned, by text, from a colleague who had voted no, that she had very nearly been removed from the roster that day.

Thank you for humoring us by considering these fictional case studies. But seriously, we believe they serve to illustrate the value of the request and proposal we are making:

- We see in these illustrations the challenge that a Synod Council faces in making an informed decision in cases that could be argued either way.
- We see the value of a standardized practice of informing the minister of any pending action on retirement status, preferably with some mechanism for response to the Synod Council built in.
- We can imagine that a policy provision for something like a Consultation Panel designed to serve the Synod Council's discernment could be beneficial.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Synod Council of the
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod,
by action of the March 20, 2021 Meeting.



Kurt F. Kusserow, Bishop



Barbara Nugent, Vice President

En Bloc Items

I. Board Development Committee

II. Budget and Finance Committee

A. Revisions to Resolutions Regarding Authority to Act in Financial Matters

In March 2020, the Church Council adopted CC20.03.03a regarding the Appointment of Assistant Officers. A revision is being proposed to update the appointments and remove the assistant vice president appointments. Editorial revisions are also needed to the Authorization to Act for the ELCA as a Trustee. The proposed revisions are as follows:

1. Appointment of Assistant Officers

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant treasurers of this corporation: Cecilia Favela, ~~Kathy Freeman Summers~~, Santiago Padilla, and Annette Roman, to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Treasurer;

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing or attesting, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant secretaries of this corporation: Thomas A. Cunniff, Aja M. Favors, and Norman K. Fry to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Secretary.

RESOLVED, that prior resolutions adopted by this Council, including CC15.04.31b and the prior actions identified in CC15.04.31b, addressing the appointment of assistant officers are hereby rescinded and replaced by this action.

2. Authorization to Act for the ELCA as a Trustee

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer and the Executive ~~for Development~~ ~~Director of the Mission Advancement unit~~ are appointed as a committee having the authority of the Church Council in the management of the business and fiscal affairs of any trust for which the churchwide organization is acting as trustee to authorize and approve, on behalf of this corporation as trustee, transactions to which such trust is a party.

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer and the Executive ~~for Development~~ ~~Director of the Mission Advancement unit~~ are appointed as a committee having the authority of the Church Council to

authorize and approve establishment of any gift annuity agreement for which the churchwide organization is guarantor, on behalf of this corporation as guarantor.

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer or the Executive **for Development Director of the Mission Advancement unit**, or in absence of both of the foregoing, any two assistant treasurers may execute, and the Secretary or any assistant secretary may attest, any document previously authorized and approved as provided in this resolution, which is required or desirable in connection with the establishment of any gift annuity agreement for which the churchwide organization is guarantor or which is necessary and appropriate for the management of the business and fiscal affairs of any trust for which the churchwide organization is acting as trustee.

RESOLVED, that the **Development team within the Office of the Presiding Bishop Mission Advancement unit** must keep and maintain appropriate records of all transactions so authorized and, upon request, report such transactions to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council.

B. FY2021 Revised ELCA World Hunger Spending Authorization

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To revise the 2021 fiscal year ELCA World Hunger spending authorization from \$21,500,000 to \$23,500,000.

C. FY2020 Designation of Revenues Over Expenses

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve an addition to the Church Council Designated Fund in the amount of \$1.3 million representing excess revenue over expenses from fiscal year 2020 to be released to fund budget shortfall in future years.

III. Executive Committee

IV. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee

A. Revised *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

While protocols for sending ELCA missionaries to serve with companion churches are well established, there has been no clear guidance concerning a process for receiving rostered ministers from Lutheran World Federation member churches who wish to be considered for service in the ELCA. The Service and Justice unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, requests that the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* be amended to insert the following protocols in Section VI. Cooperation with other church bodies in the exercise of Word and Sacrament Ministry, Part B. With church bodies outside the United States, Item 1. Churches of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The rest of that section would remain intact. The revised section of the roster manual can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To adopt the revision to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* related to protocols for rostered ministers from member churches of The Lutheran World Federation who wish to serve in ELCA ministry settings; and

To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections to the manual for clarity and accuracy.

B. Synod Constitution Amendments

Provision 10.12 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: “Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification....”

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To ratify the following amendments to the constitution of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod:

†**S8.51.c.** The treasurer of this synod shall be ~~elected~~ appointed to a four-year term and may be re-elected or reappointed. The treasurer shall serve until his or her successor takes office.

S8.55. **Should the vice president** ~~or secretary or treasurer~~ die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the Synod Assembly, shall be four years.

~~**S9.07.** The Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.~~

C. Proposed Amendments to ELCA Foundation Bylaws

In March 2021, the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees considered amendments to their bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 17.60.05. The redlined version can be found [here](#) and the clean version [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – ELCA Foundation.

D. Proposed Amendments to United Lutheran Seminary Bylaws

The United Lutheran Seminary Board of Trustees considered amendments to their bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02. The proposed amendments can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of the United Lutheran Seminary.

Revised April 14, 2021

E. Proposed Amendments to Luther Seminary Bylaws

The Luther Seminary Board of Trustees considered amendments to their bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02. The redlined version can be found [here](#) and the clean version [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of Luther Seminary.

V. Planning and Evaluation Committee

A. Churchwide Organization Annual Report

The Church Council is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of churchwide units and the structure of the churchwide organization. The annual report of the churchwide organization can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To receive the ELCA Churchwide Organization Annual Report for 2020; and
To thank the staff of the churchwide organization for their ongoing work.**

VI. Program and Services Committee

A. Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities Chart

Church Council is responsible for reviewing this church's ongoing work in corporate social responsibility. The amended Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities Chart can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities Chart.

B. Assessing the need for and feasibility of initiating social message processes

In November 2020, the Church Council postponed the question of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Spring 2021 [CC20.11.33i].

The director for theological ethics recommends deferring again the questions regarding these social messages because it has not been possible to do the groundwork and assessment necessary. There are two reasons another delay is necessary. 1) The continuing effects of the pandemic and churchwide organization restructure on staff work capacity; and 2) the director for theological ethics had to take an extended health leave because of major surgery. These obstacles are largely resolved and the process of assessment and recommendation should be possible for the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To defer the questions of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting, when a new assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances will be made; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

VII. Other Items

A. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the [Nov. 12–14, 2020](#) and [Mar. 3, 2021](#) meetings of the Church Council have been provided to council members electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams. Minutes for Nov. 2020 and Mar. 3, 2021 meetings held in executive session were added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on [Nov. 12, 2020](#), [Dec. 8, 2020](#), [Jan. 19, 2021](#), [Feb. 23, 2021](#), and [Mar. 16, 2021](#) meetings have been provided electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams to members. Minutes for the Feb. 23, 2021 meeting held in executive session have been added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

Please provide in writing to the executive for Office of the Secretary administration any notations or typographical errors in the distributed text of the minutes. Proper corrections will be entered into the protocol copies of the minutes. Such corrections need not be raised in the plenary session in connection with the approval of the minutes.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the minutes of the Nov. 12–14, 2020, and Mar. 3, 2021, meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the Nov. 12, 2020, Dec. 8, 2020, Jan. 19, 2021, Feb. 23, 2021, and Mar. 16, 2021, meetings.

B. Church Council Nominations and Elections

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries (SIM), social ministry organizations, and seminaries. Bylaws 8.21.03. and 8.21.04. outline basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Pursuant to 14.22. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Church Council is also to elect nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

Biographical information is provided in [Biographies](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA — ELCA Foundation — to fill a vacancy with the term expiring in August 2022: Ms. Ingrid S. Stafford.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To re-elect to the board of directors of Mosaic, Inc. to a three-year term expiring in 2024: Ms. Patricia A. Nimitz and the Rev. Keith D. Hohly.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a six-year term beginning April 2021 and expiring Dec. 31, 2026: Ms. Miji Bell.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary to a four-year term beginning July 1, 2021 and expiring June 30, 2025: The Rev. Jeanne Hartfield and the Rev. Linda Norman.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a term expiring in June 2023: The Rev. Jim Johnson; and

To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a three-year term beginning in June 2021 and expiring in June 2024: Ms. Kara Lynne-Benson Haug.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term expiring June 30, 2023: Ms. Marla Butke; and

To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a three-year term beginning July 1, 2021 and expiring June 30, 2024: The Rev. Abraham Allende.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of trustees of United Lutheran Seminary to a three-year term expiring in 2024: Sr. Marianne Brock.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to a term beginning Oct. 1, 2021 and expiring Sept. 30, 2025: Mr. O. Gregory Lewis.

C. St. John Lutheran Home - Subordination of the ELCA's Right of Reverter and Re-Entry

St. John Lutheran Home wishes to refinance the mortgage on its property. At one time, the land on which the property sits was owned by the American Lutheran Church (ALC). In 1971, the ALC sold the land to St. John Lutheran Home. The deed states that if St. John Lutheran Home ever ceases to operate title to the land would revert back to the ALC (paraphrased). The lender cannot have a valid mortgage on the property unless the ELCA subordinates its right of reverter and re-entry to mortgage. The transaction can only proceed if the ELCA signs a subordination agreement.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of permitting St. John Lutheran Home to refinance the mortgage of the property at County Road 5 in Springfield, Minnesota, the ELCA shall subordinate, but not release, its right of reverter and re-entry as it pertains to the property; and

Be it further **RESOLVED**, that St. John Lutheran Home shall have the authority to sign the mortgage and other loan documents relevant to the transaction without any further action required by the ELCA or its Church Council (Board of Directors).

Responses to Previous Church Council Actions

A. Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent

Church Council action [CC19.06.23.]

To adopt “A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the People of African Descent” as a statement of apology for this church’s complicity in the legacy of slavery;

To thank the African Descent Lutheran Association for their 2015 biennial assembly resolution asking for a declaration of the ELCA to the people of African descent;

To call this church into a time of study and to direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to consider developing educational resources to support the apology and encourage congregations, synods and the churchwide organization to find ways to share this apology broadly;

To direct Planning, Research and Evaluation to measure and report progress on the discriminatory treatment within the call process and to urge Portico to assist with providing information to the churchwide organization to measure and report progress on inequitable compensation of clergy of color by the November 2021 meeting of the Church Council;

To request the presiding bishop to name a Day of Repentance for congregations, synods and churchwide organization to observe annually and to request the Office of the Presiding Bishop worship team develop a liturgical resource of lamentation and repentance to accompany this annual Day of Repentance; and

To affirm the June 2019 Lutheran World Federation Council resolution “Commemorating the 2019 Quad-centennial of the Forced Transatlantic Voyage of Enslaved African Peoples to the Americas—Human Beings Not for Sale!” and, in particular, LWF’s call to engage in anti-racism and racial justice work, work toward economic justice (including the study of reparations), and work to address and end modern forms of slavery and human trafficking.

Church Council action [CC20.11.33p]

To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the implementation of the resolution of the “Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent” (a statement of apology for this church’s complicity in the legacy of slavery);

To thank the churchwide staff for their efforts in providing educational resources to support the apology and encouraging members, congregations, and synods to find ways to share this apology broadly;

To encourage the continuation of the research and work toward economic justice and the study of reparations and engagement in anti-racism and racial justice work; and

To request a further report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the naming of an annual Day of Repentance, including a liturgical resource of lamentation and repentance to accompany this annual Day of Repentance, to the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (Spring 2021)

The 2016 Churchwide Assembly adopted a social policy resolution “[Renewed Action Regarding Racism Toward Lutherans of African descent communities, congregations, and ministries](#)” and to “recommit this church to growing its ethnic and racial diversity” in leadership, congregations, and communities. The resolution also called the ELCA to confess and repent of the Lutheran church’s complicity in 400 years of enslavement, oppression and marginalization of African descent people and other marginalized populations. In 2019, a “Declaration of the ELCA to the African Descent Community” was issued during the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, the ELCA Church Council adopted an action to encourage congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to observe an annual Day of Repentance.

In 2021, the presiding bishop in consultation with the director for racial justice, executive for worship, and the director for African descent ministries, named an additional ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism to be observed on the Tuesday following the celebration of the birthdate of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The date aligns with the National Day of Racial Healing (NDORH), which was

established in 2017 by more than 550 leaders from around the United States who wanted to act together to end racism. This annual observance continues to grow in communities across the U.S., including among this church's full communion partners.

This date will mark the second day of ELCA observance against racism. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution designating June 17 as a day of commemoration for the Emanuel 9—the nine persons shot and killed on June 17, 2015 during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC. The resolution called the ELCA to ground the day in prayer, to develop worship prayers and litanies around repentance from racism. On June 17, 2020, the ELCA observed the first commemoration with a virtual worship service. Worship leaders included ecumenical guests and the development of additional liturgical resources, including an antiracism pledge.

The resource "Lamenting Racism" was commissioned for [All Creation Sings](#), the new worship and song supplement for use in the ELCA. This lament and prayer may be used in preparation for the work of faithful listening in discussions about racism and racial reconciliation, and at other appropriate times. This resource has been shared as part of the initial [worship resources for the Commemoration of the Emanuel 9](#), as well as the recent [worship resources for the Day of Lament Against anti-Asian Racism](#). These are examples of the kinds of worship resources that might be developed for the ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism.

An additional planning consultation with the presiding bishop, executive for worship, the director for racial justice, the ethnic specific directors, the Ethnic Specific Associations, leadership from the Service and Justice and Christian Community and Leadership home areas, and Strategic Communications will take place in early Spring 2021.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the naming of an annual Day of Repentance, including a liturgical resource of lamentation and repentance to accompany this annual Day of Repentance;

To affirm the presiding bishop's decision to name the Tuesday following the celebration of the birth of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as an annual ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism; and

To encourage members, congregations, and synods to use the "Lamenting Racism" resource in *All Creation Sings* and other liturgical resources of lamentation and repentance offered by the worship team to accompany this annual Day of Repentance.

B. Deacon Cross Design Update

Church Council Action [CC18.11.22]

...To define the symbols of this ministry as a deacon's stole and cross, both to be presented at the entrance rite, and to request the Office of the Presiding Bishop worship staff share information about the appropriate use of the deacon stole and facilitate a conversation among deacons regarding a unified cross design; ...

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (February 2020)

In early Fall 2019, Deacon John Weit of the Worship team of the Office of the Presiding Bishop consulted with Deacon Sue Rothmeyer and Deacon Krista Anderson from the churchwide organization to begin addressing the need to facilitate a conversation among deacons regarding a unified cross design to be worn as a pin. A consultation with five additional deacons representing various ministry contexts was held in October. This consultation discussed the various cross designs that already exist within diaconal communities, both those represented by ELCA deacons and

by ecumenical partners. We addressed several paths forward including looking to name a metal worker/designer that could work with the ELCA to potentially both design and produce pins for purchase by individual deacons.

Staffing transitions on the Worship team caused this project to slow through the winter months. This work will continue this spring with the hope of engaging a designer to consider a sustainable process for production and a potential design. Although we anticipate that the production costs of the individual pins would likely be offset by individual purchases, we will likely need to identify funding to begin this design work. As this will become an official symbol of the ministry of Word and Service, a final design would be presented to the Program and Services Committee for affirmation, likely in Fall 2020.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Spring 2021)

On Feb. 1, the Worship team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop moved to Christian Community and Leadership.

Since the previous update to Church Council in February 2020, the swift change in focus due to the pandemic necessitated delaying further conversation regarding a unified Deacon cross design. The subsequent elimination of a staff position on the Worship team further required reprioritization of this work.

Deacon Krista Anderson and Deacon John Weit looked to resume this work in January 2021. Throughout the month of February, informal sharing and conversation among deacons occurred via social media and soliciting direct feedback. It was hoped that this conversation and collaboration might offer some consensus around imagery and concepts that would inform a jewelry designer to be commissioned to craft a proposed design. The feedback among deacons showed that there is a considerable variety of opinions on design concepts, or in some cases, an apparent lack of interest in a common cross design for ELCA ministers of Word and Service. The team's research and conversation have found dozens of symbols used by diaconal communities worldwide, including former and current communities that include ELCA ministers of Word and Service.

This unified cross pin, once designed, will need sustainable manufacturing and distribution venues. A preliminary conversation with Old Lutheran has presented a possible path forward. Such a partnership will need further collaboration and coordination with other ELCA ministries who have existing partnerships with Old Lutheran. The production and sale of these pins should be financially self-sustaining at a reasonable price point for deacons. The manufacturing and sales process must also account for a higher number of pins to be sold in the first months of availability. Subsequent sales will be generally limited to deacons soon to be ordained and those who need to purchase a replacement. Some funding for design, prototype, and start-up costs may be necessary.

A grass-roots effort for online Zoom conversation with ELCA deacons and candidates from across the church will occur in March and April 2021. We hope this emerging venue will allow an additional conversation opportunity prior to commissioning a design. With a designer, funding, and manufacturing and distribution venues in place by Summer 2021, it is possible that a final design could be affirmed in Fall 2021.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the update from the Christian Community and Leadership unit on a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service; and

To request a final design be presented to the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

Responses to Synod Council Actions

A. ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act Northeastern Iowa Synod [5F]

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth and everything therein and proclaimed it good (Gen 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Gen 2:15); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has adopted social policy statements, “Caring for Creation” (1993) and “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood” (1999) that call for economic and environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and for economic justice, to consider how our actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with the Caring for Creation social statement, we realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children. Time is very short;” and

WHEREAS, carbon pricing is one policy tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion, which complements other tools like regulations on polluting industries and tax incentives encouraging investment in energy efficiency and renewable forms of energy production; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, over 3,500 of our nation’s leading economists across the political spectrum, including 28 Nobel Laureates and 4 former chairs of the Federal Reserve, issued a joint “Economists’ Statement on Carbon Dividends” that argued “A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary” but also recommended “the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates,” and concluded “The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in ‘carbon dividends’ than they pay in increased energy prices;” and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Churchwide Assembly received with gratitude a memorial from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin regarding a Carbon Fee and Dividend, and the Church Council directed the Domestic Mission unit to develop “a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy;” and

WHEREAS, in October 2019 ELCA Advocacy published a primer on “Carbon Pricing Basics” that provides an overview to the topic and identifies several principles rooted in ELCA social statements that should be used to assess carbon pricing proposals; and

WHEREAS, the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019” has received bipartisan support in the last two sessions in Congress and is consistent with the principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy’s “Carbon Pricing Basics;” and

WHEREAS, ELCA Advocacy does advocate for particular pieces of legislation after careful review and moral grounding in the ELCA’s social statements; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Iowa River Conference of the Northeast Iowa Synod urges ELCA Advocacy to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, or similar legislation during the 117th United States Congress and, if necessary, future Congresses; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Iowa River Conference directs the Synod Council to consider this resolution at their next meeting and to forward it to the ELCA Church Council or its Executive Committee for further consideration and action by directing ELCA Advocacy to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council to the Service and Justice unit for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

**B. Guidance on retired or retiring ministers from the roster of the ELCA
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod [8B]**

Bishop Kurt Kusserow submitted a letter to the Church Council on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council seeking guidance for how to handle situations with retired or retiring ministers from the roster of the Church whose status is in question or uncertain. Specifically, the synod council is asking about the required triennial review of the ministers on this church's retired roster and to propose that the guidance be added to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for the benefit of the whole church. The correspondence from the synod council can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the request from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council requesting guidance regarding the review of retired ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To refer the matter to the Office of the Secretary for further research and to request that a response be provided at the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions

A. Social Purpose Funds (Portico)

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06s]

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Greater Milwaukee Synod concerning Portico Benefit Services Social Purpose Funds; and

To urge Portico Benefit Services to conduct an educational campaign for plan members designed to increase awareness of the Social Purpose Investment Funds and provide an update to the November 2020 Church Council meeting.

Response from Portico Benefit Services (April 2021; originally received in November 2020)

Portico welcomed this request to conduct an educational campaign to increase awareness of social purpose funds, and the memorial influenced much of its work in 2020.

- In January 2020, Portico surveyed a randomly selected group of members to gauge social purpose (SP) fund awareness.
- February through April, staff conducted a multi-touch campaign designed to educate all 27,000 sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members about its SP funds, and stepped up SP fund information in quarterly financial communication and on social media.
- In the spring, survey results helped to inform the new investment lineup for Fall 2020 — we chose to create both SP and unscreened target date funds, and to default new members into a SP target date fund.
- In July, a second multi-touch campaign was launched, educating members about the new investment fund lineup, target date funds, and the continuing importance of SP funds.

Portico sent an online survey to 6,000 randomly selected sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members, and received a very good 15.8% response rate. Findings demonstrated that a significant majority are aware of the SP fund options and support their place in the ELCA Retirement Plan's fund lineup.

- 92% correctly stated that not all of Portico's funds are SP funds.
- 82% were aware, prior to taking this survey, that they have the choice to invest in SP funds.
- 79% felt it very or somewhat important for Portico to offer SP funds.
- 76% strongly agreed or agreed that they would be comfortable investing in SP funds with different risk and return projections than unscreened funds.
- 74% were confident or somewhat confident that they know what steps to take to change their fund selection.
- 68% were aware that Portico's default fund was not a SP fund.

The late February campaign targeted 27,000 sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members via mail, email, and web with a simple two-step call to action — “Read about SP funds, then look at your Retirement Account Summary on myPortico and ask: ‘Am I in the fund(s) I want to be in?’ If not or you're not sure, call a Portico Financial Planner for help.” Staff measured strong engagement on several fronts.

- Staff tracked a net total increase in investments into the SP funds of \$2.2 million during the first week of March 2020, a significant step up from the pre-campaign \$130,000 increase tracked a month earlier during the first week of February 2020.
- Pageviews of the personalized Retirement Account Summary on myPortico nearly doubled: 2,643 during the first week of March 2020, compared to 1,442 during the same week in 2019.
- Calls to Portico Financial Planners regarding asset allocation and risk assessment spiked significantly: 242 in March 2020, compared to 31 in March 2019.

The July campaign built on the earlier campaign, targeted the same 27,000 members via mail, email, and web to inform them of the upcoming fall change to the ELCA Retirement Plan's investment fund lineup and the addition of target date funds — both SP and unscreened. Already oriented to their investment choices and SP funds, members were more prepared in July to understand and appreciate their new investment fund choices.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To receive the update from Portico Benefit Services on an educational campaign for plan members designed to increase awareness of the Social Purpose Investment Funds; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

B. Unaltered Augsburg Confession

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.09q]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from Allegheny and Southeastern synods concerning renewed awareness and use of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; and

To refer the proposed actions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media, Mission Advancement unit and other units, for additional analysis and planning in the churchwide organization for a report and possible recommendations to the Church Council.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a11]

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media and other appropriate churchwide organization units, provide a report or a timeline on when the Unaltered Augsburg Confession will receive further attention; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Church Council action [CC19.11.47u]

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a report with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council's Spring 2021 meeting; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

Over the past 18 months, the focus of the work of the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation has been the 2020 initiatives on Luther's “The Freedom of a Christian.” 1517 Media generously made a PDF of the treatise freely available to accompany a study guide and compendium of case studies developed and published at elca500.org. A number of public events drew upon these resources and themes.

Consideration is currently being given to marking the 500th anniversary of the Diet of Worms this year.

Given these projects, an extension is requested for the work detailed in the November 2019 report. As this church journeys toward the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030, the Rev. Marcus Kunz (Executive, Discernment of Contextual and Theological Issues) will serve as the facilitator for processes and consultations that will:

- clarify or define the purpose of any organized action by the churchwide organization in the years leading to the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession;
- assess what resources already are or will be available and what activities will likely be planned and undertaken by other organizations (for example, resources already available or planned by the

- ELCA publishing house; activities that may be undertaken by theological faculties and or ecumenical groups, the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the 13th Assembly in 2023);
- consider which, if any, of the actions requested in the memorials are appropriate for the churchwide organization to undertake itself or to coordinate with or among others, and considering what other actions related to the Augsburg Confession may be beneficial;
 - give full attention to the letter and spirit of the ELCA's representational principles in any and all related processes and consultations; and
 - make a progress report with possible recommendations for next steps to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a progress report with possible recommendations be provided to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

C. 50th Anniversary on the Ordination of Women

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.05.30]

...To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with other churchwide units, to conduct a gap analysis of rostered women, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by rostered women of color; ...

Church Council action [CC19.11.47p]

To receive the response on “50th Anniversary of Women Ordination” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a report on the gap analysis results with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council's Spring 2021 meeting; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

The 2019 Churchwide Assembly and Church Council requested a “gap analysis results with possible recommendations.”

This request flowed from the memorials from many synods in 2019, calling upon this church to address the systemic causes of gender-based problems, including disparities among ELCA rostered ministers. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly called upon this church through Implementing Resolution #7 of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*, “To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to address inequities (in pay, senior leadership, availability of second and third calls, etc.), as well as the systemic causes of such inequities, for rostered and lay women of various backgrounds, identities, and personal experiences, and to advocate for adequate and equitable leave for all parents and families” (*Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*, pp. 81-82).

Based on a comparative analysis of compensation data collected from Portico Benefit Services [Portico] in 2015 and a survey of a representative sample of rostered ministers in late 2019/early 2020, the requested data show many clear differences by race/ethnicity and gender. However, it should be noted that the self-reported data shown for 2020 will be less accurate than what was provided by Portico for 2015, and that could affect the comparison being made.

Based on that data, there were significant differences by gender for compensation in 2019/2020.¹ (See Table 1.) The churchwide staff working on the analysis selected only respondents with full-time congregational calls for these analyses due to the large variation among part-time and non-congregational calls. Men had higher levels of compensation compared to women, with a difference of about \$6,600.

Table 1: Compensation Differences by Gender

	Full-Time Women (N = 249)	Full-Time Men (N = 206)	Difference
Mean	\$68,245	\$74,880	\$6,635
Median	\$65,365	\$72,000	\$6,635

The differences by race were also significant, with white rostered ministers reporting higher compensation levels, with a difference of about \$8,000. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Compensation Differences by Race and Ethnicity

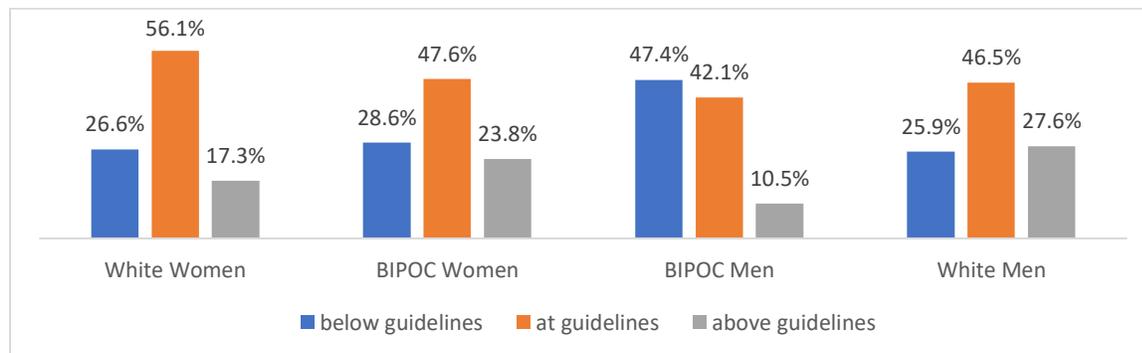
	Full-Time BIPOC (N = 27)	Full-Time White (N = 428)	Difference
Mean	\$64,320	\$71,686	\$7,366
Median	\$60,000	\$68,579	\$8,579

Based on the respondents' reports in 2019/2020, there were also significant differences by race/ethnicity for synod guidelines. (See Figure 1.) Note that small sample sizes for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or People of Color) ministers can also affect accuracy of data. Despite staff efforts to survey 100% of BIPOC rostered ministers, response rates were low.

Based on that data, more white men (28%) reported being above the synod guidelines than any other group. More white women (56%) reported being at the synod guidelines while more BIPOC men (47%) reported being below the guidelines.

These results are very similar to the 2015 study with one exception. In 2015, BIPOC women were more likely to be below synod guidelines, while in 2019/2020 BIPOC men were most likely to be below the guidelines. In 2019/2020, the BIPOC women's results followed the pattern of results for white men, rather than the results for BIPOC men.

Figure 1: Differences among Word and Sacrament Ministers with Respect to Synod Compensation Guidelines



¹ All reported differences are significant at the .05 level.

Although a full report of efforts to serve all the implementing resolutions related to the social statement from the 2019 Churchwide Assembly will be shared with the Church Council at the Fall 2021 meeting, here are some of the ways people through this church are working to address compensation disparities specifically.

1. The Quality of Call initiative team provides reports and other tools to cultivate reflection and action in collaboration with synod bishops, synod staff members, and pastors. For example, in March 2021 the bishops received a report on family leave policies for families adding a child. (See [Parental Leave Policies Across the ELCA report](#)).
2. The Quality of Call initiative team is working collaboratively with synod bishops, synod staff members, and pastors to support conversations, practices, and protocols to foster equitable compensation for rostered ministers.
3. The bishops and synod offices of Region 9 work within an eight-point relational agreement, which includes using a regional worksheet to guide conversations with congregations on compensation.
4. The Justice for Women director is collaborating with others to have an online study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* for congregational and other use available Fall 2021. Root causes of inequities is a central feature of the learning focus. Learning activities focus on applying ELCA social teaching and policy on patriarchy and sexism from an intersectional perspective to personal, congregational, ecclesial, and social life, which encompasses compensation.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the gap analysis of rostered women, with a particular focus on challenges faced by rostered women of color, from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To commend the ongoing efforts of congregations, synods, and churchwide organization to address compensation disparities; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

D. Seminary Tuition

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06t]

...To direct the Domestic Mission unit, in consultation with other churchwide units, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of current and potential seminary tuition funding sources, with a report and recommendations regarding funding for seminary tuition to be provided to the Church Council by its spring 2021 meeting.

Response from the Christian Community and Leadership unit (April 2021)

On Feb. 1, the seminary portfolio in the Domestic Mission unit moved to Christian Community and Leadership unit.

The Montana Synod presented a full tuition memorial to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The assembly directed the Domestic Mission unit (now Christian Community and Leadership unit), in consultation with other units, to conduct an analysis and provide this report and recommendations to the Church Council by its 2021 Spring meeting.

Since this memorial was adopted, all ELCA seminaries moved to offer free or greatly reduced tuition (90% discount) to full time Master of Divinity ELCA student candidates for Word and Service or Word and Sacrament ministry. In addition, the ELCA Fund for Leaders program is now providing full tuition equivalent scholarships for almost 300 current seminarians.

However, tuition alone only accounts for half the actual cost of attendance to seminary which averages \$45,000 (tuition averages \$19,000). To address these concerns (perhaps outside the scope but not the intent of the memorial), a more comprehensive approach is needed. See recommendations at the end of this report.

Seminarian's debt

In the 1990s, average tuition for students in Master of Divinity programs (not specific to the ELCA) increased 74%. Inflation was only 30% for the same decade. Over that period, student aid levels remained relatively constant, meaning that most students at most schools paid considerably more than students ten years before, even after controlling for inflation. In addition to tuition increases, living expenses also increased. At the same time, support from churches (both denominationally and congregationally) was declining. These factors, in large part, accounted for a significant increase in educational debt (200%) during this period.

Educational debt, which includes previous college debt and seminary debt (private, government and seminary loans applied for books, housing, living expenses, etc.), continued to rise throughout the 2000's. These increases produced a host of concerns for theological schools and denominations, including the difficulty of repayment that graduates might face, the potential stress that carrying a large amount of educational debt may produce, and the possibility that a high level of debt might directly impact a graduate's persistence or longevity in ministry. The Auburn Center posited that a higher number of theological school graduates were reporting their level of debt was affecting their career choices, holding them back from purchasing homes, preventing them from saving for their children's education, limiting their retirement savings, causing them to delay health care needs and creating stress in their personal and professional lives.

In the same way that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the finances of society at large, the finances of the ELCA churchwide organization, seminaries, synods, congregations, seminarians and their families were likely impacted. All churchwide expressions, along with seminaries, adjusted rapidly to this new panorama. The ability of seminaries to provide their academic programs online not only helped seminarians and seminaries to address this emergency, but also created a much-needed infrastructure and academic alternative that can help address debt in the future. Online programs can contribute to a reduction in living expenses for seminarians and their families.

ELCA initiatives to address educational debt

Response to educational debt, which addresses the tuition concern, includes: 1) the Stewards of Abundance Program (2009-2013); 2) the Resourceful Servants Program; 3) the Fund for Leaders scholarships provided to seminarians; and 4) by the seminaries movement toward offering full tuition.

Stewards of Abundance

The emphasis of the Stewards of Abundance project was on the extent, the causes, and the consequences of educational debt among seminarians in the ELCA. Research conducted as part of Stewards of Abundance indicated that more than 75% of graduates from ELCA Master of Divinity programs between the years of 2006 and 2013 borrowed educational loans to finance their seminary education. Over that time, the average theological education debt at graduation of those who borrowed increased from approximately \$34,000 to \$41,500. Over the same time period, the proportion of graduates who carried undergraduate debt increased from 34% to 47%, and among these borrowers, average undergraduate indebtedness rose from \$14,000 to \$18,000. In 2013, overall, 84% of graduates carried educational debt (either undergraduate, theological, or both) at graduation. The average amount among borrowers was just over \$49,000. Data from 2015 onward has been difficult to gather and research.

Resourceful Servants

Several years after the completion of Stewards of Abundance, and as a follow up grant from the Lilly Endowment, the Resourceful Servants project was developed. The project is part of the Lilly Endowment national initiative called Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders (ECFPL). The research conducted with ELCA rostered ministers identified three main financial pressure points: 1) educational debt; 2) a lack of emergency savings; and 3) a lack of retirement savings.

Both the Stewards of Abundance and the Resourceful Servants have taken a more comprehensive approach to identify and research seminarians' financial situations, provided valuable information about financial wellness among current and future ELCA rostered ministers and fostered meaningful networks with leadership in synods and seminaries.

ELCA Fund for Leaders

The ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship program supports students attending ELCA seminaries. These scholarships make seminary more affordable, and the fund enables more future ministers to go to seminary and helps them graduate with less debt. In 2019-2020, the fund supported 283 students and awarded \$3,008,142. In 2020-2021, Fund for Leaders will grant 45 new scholarships, support 297 students, and distribute almost \$3,000,000 in scholarships.

Seminary tuition initiatives

Seminaries have transitioned from being mainly funded by the denomination to being funded mainly by donors, third party institutional grants, and development strategies.

In the last three to five years, seminaries have been able to move toward offering full tuition. Three seminaries provide full tuition. The other four seminaries provide generous and renewable financial aid for most students that generally account for at least 90% of full tuition. Overall, the total FTE (full time equivalent) in the system is 1056. Of these, 63% receive full tuition. The remaining 37% receive 90% or more of full tuition. When paired with Fund for Leaders scholarships, students receive stipends for living expenses, helping them manage their finances and lessen their debt. We also have 102 Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) students systemwide. Generally, TEEM students do not participate in the full tuition programs available.

The movement toward covering tuition fully is encouraging and exciting; however, there are additional costs to attending seminary. On average, the annual cost of tuition at an ELCA seminary is \$19,000. The average cost of attendance for a full-time residential learner at an ELCA seminary is about \$45,000. Therefore, a more comprehensive way to analyze and address the cost of seminary attendance would consider these additional expenses. This wider approach would serve to address issues of justice and the situations of ethnic-specific seminarians, seminarians living in rural areas, single mothers, and other marginalized communities.

The combination of Fund for Leaders scholarships and the seminaries' movement to offer full tuition have addressed, although timidly and not strategically, seminary tuition costs in this church's theological education system. While seminary tuition costs are a part of seminarians' debt, other substantial issues are previous educational debt, living expenses and family matters (including emergencies). Additionally, on the other side of seminary, rostered ministers' vocational opportunities may not provide sufficient financial resources to easily manage accrued educational debt.

Recommendations

- To continue supporting the Resourceful Servants program and its recommendations;
- To continue supporting Fund for Leaders as an intentional strategy to provide for seminarians and address educational debt in this church's theological education system;
- To broaden the call for comprehensive reporting on full tuition to request reports on seminarian's educational debt and cost of attendance;
- To explore alternatives to address educational debt and cost of attendance of seminarians;
- To call seminaries and churchwide to include TEEM students in full tuition programs, scholarships and this church's educational debt and cost of attendance efforts; and
- To explore financial alternatives in our three expressions of the Church addressing educational debt of first call pastors.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response and recommendations for "Seminary Tuition" from the Christian Community and Leadership unit;

To continue supporting the Resourceful Servants program;

To continue supporting ELCA Fund for Leaders as an intentional strategy to provide for seminarians and address educational debt in this church's theological education system;

To request the churchwide organization to broaden the call for comprehensive reporting on full tuition and request reports from ELCA seminaries on seminarian's educational debt and cost of attendance;

To direct the churchwide organization to explore alternatives to address educational debt and cost of attendance of seminarians;

To ask the seminaries of this church and the churchwide organization to include Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) students in full tuition programs, scholarships and this church's educational debt and cost of attendance efforts; and

To encourage this church's congregations, synods, and churchwide organization to explore financial alternatives to address educational debt of first call pastors.

Publishing House of the ELCA (1517 Media) Report

Submitted by Tim Blevins, President and CEO

During the past six months, the COVID-19 health crisis has continued to have a profound effect on the life of the world, and that includes the churches, institutions, and individuals we are called to serve. We are grateful for their continued support and partnership, as they have been able while facing their own challenges. We look forward with hope to the promising possibility of resuming more regular in-person gatherings in the months ahead, even as we seek to learn how this experience may change the landscape and focus of our work.

We intend that the publishing activities of 1517 Media complement the goals of the ELCA, especially as recently reframed in the Future Church design. We join in seeking a common purpose: to activate each of us to invite more people into the way of Jesus and discover together community, justice, and love. We share in the work of becoming a church that supports and partners with vital congregations to reach and embrace younger generations in all their diversity, a church that gives voice to those whose voices have sometimes gone unheard or been dismissed. This summary highlights a few recent initiatives in our two publishing areas, Congregational Resources and Books, toward the fulfillment of this mission.

Congregational Resources

Augsburg Fortress (augzburgfortress.org) and Sparkhouse (wearesparkhouse.org) are our principal imprints focused on helping congregations thrive in their worship and faith formation ministries.

WORSHIP: Our support for the ongoing renewal of worship has continued during this time in several ways. Digital worship planning and content resources like sundaysandseasons.com continue to provide 24/7 support for the vastly widened use of livestream and podcast technology for worship services, a trend that is likely to continue in some fashion even when in-person worship resumes for many.

In Nov. 2020, the worship teams of the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress, in partnership with more than fifty additional contributors and consultants, completed and released *All Creation Sings: Evangelical Lutheran Worship Supplement*. Church leaders are actively discovering two new communion settings (one with bilingual Spanish and English), a contemplative Service of Word and Prayer, more than 75 new prayers, and 200 hymns and songs in diverse genres, in a resource that addresses contemporary needs with special attention to topics such as creation and the earth, society and justice, lament and praise.

FAITH FORMATION: The work of congregations to lead people into deeper Christian faith and practice has been challenged more than worship activities, especially with respect to children. In the coming months, we will conduct comprehensive research into the rapidly evolving Christian education landscape, even as in-person learning begins to resume. We continue to expand and enrich content on our online platform, Sparkhouse Digital, that serves a variety of learning environments. Quarterly Digital Activity Kits, resources to engage families with children at home, have been especially popular this year.

In May 2021, we are releasing a new curriculum with resources for children, youth, and adults based on Daniel Erlander's *Manna and Mercy* introduction to the Bible. Also coming in May is *Hay Un Lugar Para Ti*, a bilingual Spanish/English edition of Erlander's *A Place for You* communion resource. This year's Sparkhouse summer program offering is *Good Stewards Together*, twelve intergenerational events focused on using our gifts and talents to care for creation and one another.

Books

Our several book imprints reflect our commitment to support “a thriving church, rooted in tradition and radically relevant.” **Fortress Press** (fortresspress.com) has long been a vital part of this church's publishing ministry, offering “scholarship that matters” for the church, the classroom, and the academy.

Beaming Books (beamingbooks.com) strives to reach a younger generation of parents and others who want children to thrive emotionally, socially, and spiritually, with a mix of religious and values-based children's titles. **Broadleaf Books** (broadleafbooks.com) brings titles grounded in a grace-based theological tradition, aiming to deepen faith and understanding and bring wholeness to readers and society. As we plan for new titles to be released in the coming years, our books program has significantly expanded the number of authors who are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.

Here is a sampling of recently published books. The titles are descriptive of the range of subjects: practical resources for church leaders; essential texts for students; lively treatments of current topics, for both professionals and general readers; and world-shaping books for children and their caregivers.

FORTRESS PRESS

Black Power and the American Myth, 50th Anniversary Edition, C.T. Vivian

Open Wounds: A Story of Racial Tragedy, Trauma, and Redemption, Phil Allen Jr.

The Nones: Where They Came From, Who They Are, and Where They Are Going, Ryan Burge

Resurrecting Church: Where Justice & Diversity Meet Radical Welcome & Healing Hope, John Cleghorn

Stories from Global Lutheranism: A Historical Timeline, Martin Lohrmann

Made, Known, Loved: Developing LGBTQ-Inclusive Youth Ministry, Ross Murray

BEAMING BOOKS

A Girl's Bill of Rights, Mucha/Rivera Sonda

Simple Prayers for Children, Heather Ellis

When Things Are Hard, Remember, Rowland/Calderón

BROADLEAF BOOKS

First & Only: A Black Woman's Guide to Thriving at Work and in Life, Jennifer Farmer

The Seeker and the Monk: Everyday Conversations with Thomas Merton, Sophronia Scott

Be the Brave One: Living Your Spiritual Values Out Loud, Ann Kansfield

30-Day Journey with Julian of Norwich, Carol Howard Merritt

In My Grandmother's House: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories We Inherit, Yolanda Pierce

We're on the Move

Between now and Fall 2021, the 1517 Media home office will move about a mile northwest from its present space to the Minneapolis North Loop. Like many organizations over the past year, we have learned new and more flexible ways of doing our work both in person and remotely. Our new space will offer advanced technology, workspaces designed to facilitate interactivity for those working in and away from the office, and significant cost savings, as we seek to be good stewards of the business and ministry to which we are called.

We strive to work with partners in ministry all across the ELCA as we work together toward the future into which God is calling us. Thank you for your continuing interest and support! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Tim Blevins, 1517 Media President and CEO, at blevinst@1517.media.

DIGEST OF BOARD ACTIONS

1517 Media, Publishing House of the ELCA
Submitted by: Tim Blevins, President and CEO
Date of Board Meeting: November 6, 2020

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

Voted to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting in open session.
(PH.20.11.04)

Voted to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting in open session.
(PH.20.11.05)

Voted that the Board of Trustees of 1517 Media, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, express appreciation and extend thanks to Bishop Mansholt for his four years of service as an advisor of this board. (PH.20.11.06)

Executive Session actions

Voted to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2020 Board of Trustees meetings in executive session.
(PH/ES.20.11.03)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA (MIF) Report

Submitted by Eva M. Roby, President and CEO

Financial Update

As the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) confronted the challenges of the past year, MIF responded with alacrity to meet their customers' needs and continued to deliver strong financial performance.

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as MIF shifted to primarily remote working arrangements, all of the business operations have continued, uninterrupted. MIF staff were prepared with an extensive business continuity plan already in place, and they adjusted it to fit the special needs of the time. At the same time, MIF delivered stellar financial performance and moved the business forward in transformative ways.

At December 31, 2020, MIF's loans increased to \$596.4 million from \$575.1 million at year-end 2019. Investment obligations increased to \$543.1 million from \$493.4 million the prior year. Investors increasingly looked to MIF investments as safe havens during a year of heightened market volatility.

At year-end 2020, total assets increased to \$773.8 million from \$712.3 million at year-end 2019. Net assets rose to \$218.2 million from \$211.9 million the previous year. MIF's capital ratio remained strong at 28.20 percent.

MIF responded quickly in offering financial relief to borrowers affected by the pandemic. Throughout 2020, MIF provided 171 interest-only loans and 27 deferred-payment options. Need for these payment options was greatest in the early months of the pandemic lockdown. By the end of the year, all deferred loans were on track for regular payments, and fewer than 40 congregations and ministries still required interest-only payments.

Key Initiatives and Partnerships

Providing assistance during the pandemic drew MIF and the ELCA Federal Credit Union into an increasingly collaborative relationship. Together, we worked together to make Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans available to congregations and ministries experiencing hardship during the pandemic. As the Credit Union became certified by the Small Business Administration to provide these loans, MIF provided funding, strategic guidance, and operational assistance. In 2020, the Credit Union provided more than 200 PPP loans totaling more than \$8 million—loans that proved to be a vital lifeline keeping employees on the payroll and covering other operating expenses during the pandemic. As additional PPP funding became available early in 2021, the Credit Union began accepting loan applications for this second round, and MIF continued to provide support. This type of transformational, collaborative work with the Credit Union is a key strategic imperative for MIF going forward.

To gain a deeper understanding of our customers and segment and target our markets more effectively, MIF completed the second phase of our market research effort, the qualitative component, comprising many interviews with customers and other members of the ELCA. This round of research confirmed our findings from the initial quantitative phase of online surveys: Customers choose MIF for our shared values and financial expertise. Based on this research, MIF is already taking a fresh look at the customer journey and investigating new sales and marketing approaches.

MIF made great strides in organizational effectiveness efforts last year. MIF identified key competencies required for our work going forward, and MIF continued to emphasize leadership development and effectiveness.

Our recent research efforts coupled with our findings over several years have led us to the decision to end our church building consulting service. While the service was valuable for congregations over the years, it was not sustainable for MIF going forward. Continuing the program at an appropriate level would have mandated investing significant resources and restructuring the program. MIF will be refocusing our efforts in other areas where MIF can provide greater value to our customers.

Looking Ahead

Today, the capabilities and capacity of MIF are strong. Our position of strength and stability—our ongoing strategic priority—remains steadfast.

Mission Investment Fund (MIF) Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Eva Roby, President and CEO

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

None

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

Portico Benefit Services (Portico) Report

Submitted by the Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann, President and CEO

Greetings. As we move into 2021, I’m reminded that resilience is not just about surviving adversity; it’s about being improved by it. Throughout this pandemic, Portico has focused on learning and adapting, and those we serve tell us they appreciate our responsive, consistent presence. This report is rich with information about benefit opportunities, and I’ve highlighted key points. You can help by finding creative ways to invite members to make the most of them.

— **Jeff Thiemann**, twitter.com/@RevJeffThiemann

Learning Highlights (as of Dec. 31, 2020)

<p>98point6® is a 24/7, text-based primary health care service introduced last year to help ELCA-Primary health plan members save money while accessing care more easily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22% of eligible members registered • 11% visited once, nearly half of those visited twice • 87% of visits resolved, with the rest referred to in-person providers • 75% of visits likely replaced a more expensive in-person visit, avoided COVID-19 exposure • 10% of visits made by members who would not likely have sought care 	<p>Learning: Many members are comfortable with virtual care. Quality care with \$0 copay increases access and convenience, expands care options.</p>
<p>Being is a holistic, faith-based, video platform introduced last year to give ELCA-Primary health plan members a bite-sized, entertaining way to grow their well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of eligible members now registered • 49% enrolled in multiple courses • 74% course completion • 46 minutes per visit, on average 	<p>Learning: According to the platform vendor, our members are using this benefit at well-above-average levels.</p>
<p>Learn to Live® is an online, self-directed mental health program introduced in 2020 to respond to an increase in ELCA-Primary health plan members seeking mental health care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% of eligible members now enrolled • 50% of those have never or have not recently been in therapy • 98% satisfied with the service • 83% more confident about dealing with emotional or sleep challenges • 67% say it’s helped them show up more consistently at work 	<p>Learning: This program is delivering positive results for those seeking privacy, easy access, and self-directed care. A good first step for those struggling emotionally during the pandemic.</p>
<p>Portico Customer Care Center was again named a Benchmark Portal Center of Excellence in 2020.</p>	<p>Last April, with Portico just beginning to work remotely, our call center earned its highest member satisfaction score ever – and kept it there through the end of May.</p>	<p>Learning: We deliver excellent service but know what’s most important — to be there for our community, now more than ever.</p>

Request to Amend the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan

Following its November 2020 meeting, the ELCA Church Council forwarded to Portico’s board of trustees (BOT) a synod resolution requesting that Portico amend the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan — specifically, to no longer factor into the Social Security offset Social Security dependent benefits related to the same disability. Portico staff researched disability plans in the commercial and church segments for the BOT February meeting. The BOT determined that the synod resolution was not aligned with the plan’s intent or industry practices and would negatively impact benefit affordability.

Governing Documents Review

In preparation for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Portico has created a governance working group to review all our governing documents and identify areas in need of change — including how our trustees are elected and re-elected, alignment with current IRS language, and removal of obsolete language. At this meeting, Portico will begin this discussion with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, with the goal to bring final proposals to the Church Council in November 2021.

Interest in Newly Recommended Silver+

To provide greater flexibility, the ELCA Church Council recommended two ELCA-Primary health benefit options for 2021 — Gold+, and Silver+ paired with a health savings account (HSA) employer contribution. While the pandemic likely caused many to hold fast to their current benefit option for 2021, Portico did see 12% of employers elect Silver+ for 2021 — a 3.3% increase over 2020. In addition, Portico saw a 146% increase in the number of employers offering a one-time health savings account (HSA) contribution.

Live Well 2021: An Invitation for All Our Members

As a holistic benefits organization, Portico's goal is to help members grow their overall well-being, regardless of which Portico benefits they have. Portico is sending a simple, short email every month or so, inviting all members to take one of several small steps. Each step is designed to take 15 minutes or less; helps people gently boost their financial, emotional, or physical well-being; and comes with a free online resource. It's early, but Portico staff is hearing that the small-step approach is a good fit for trying times.

Target Date Funds Implemented

Last fall, Portico successfully replaced the Select Series balanced funds with target date funds (both social purpose and unscreened) designed to guide members to an age-appropriate asset mix over time. As expected, the vast majority of members transitioned to target date funds without adjusting their fund selection, before or after the transition.

Investment Market & Fund Performance

In a year filled with challenges, **stock and bond markets delivered surprisingly strong results in 2020**. U.S. stocks were up 12.2% in the fourth quarter and finished up over 18% for the year. Non-U.S. stocks were up 17.2% in the quarter and finished up over 11%. U.S. bonds were up 0.7% for the quarter and finished up 7.5%. Reminder: In uncertain times, it's easy to overlook positive market factors — in this case, low interest rates, injections of government fiscal stimulus and support, and rapid vaccine development.

Two New Virtual ELCA-Primary Health Benefits

These benefits offer welcome relief to pandemic-weary members — at **no out-of-pocket cost**.

- **BurnAlong** is a **virtual health and fitness platform** with something for everyone, especially those missing the gym. It offers thousands of online classes with a community twist — members can work out with each other remotely as well as invite up to four others to join the platform at no additional cost.
- **SWORD** is a **virtual therapy program for members experiencing back, joint, and muscle pain**. To address an uptick in musculoskeletal claims and help those now deferring care during the pandemic, this convenient alternative to in-person therapy enables physical therapists to work virtually with members, monitoring their physical progress digitally via electronic sensors.

Portico Benefit Services Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann, President and CEO

Meeting Dates: November 4-6, 2020 and February 23-26, 2021

Category 1: (*Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.*)

November 2020 Resolutions/Actions

PLAN AMENDMENTS

ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Approved amendment to eliminate wellness dollar provisions and references.

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Approved amendments to:

- Eliminate wellness dollar provisions and references.
- Clarification of the Plan's provision of providing the Gold+ option to ELCA-Primary health benefits members and the Standard option for ELCA Medicare-Primary health benefits members.
- Add voluntary vision insurance coverage.
- Add a hearing aid benefit for children.

ELCA Disability Benefits Plan – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Approved amendment to add clarifying language about the health plan options the ELCA Disability Benefits Trust will pay for disabled members.

ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Approved amendment to add Non-Qualified Church-Controlled Organizations (Non-QCCOs) under a separate fee structure for a new Class 3 and Class 4 Life Insurance Group Policy.

TRUST AMENDMENTS

ELCA Retirement Trust – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Sections 1.03, 2.04, 3.02, 3.05, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04, 6.04, 6.14, 7.01 (Language in the Trust updated to clarify fiduciary obligations.)

ELCA Retirement Savings Trust – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Sections 1.03, 2.04, 3.02, 3.05, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04, 6.04, 6.14, 7.01 (Language in the Trust updated to clarify fiduciary obligations.)

ELCA Participating Annuity Trust – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Sections 1.03, 2.04, 3.02, 3.04, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 6.04, 6.14 (Language in the Trust updated to clarify fiduciary obligations.)

ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Trust – *Effective January 1, 2021*

Sections 1.02, 1.04, 1.05, 2.03, 2.04, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.05, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04, 6.04, 6.05, 6.14, 7.01 (Language in the Trust has been updated to clarify fiduciary obligations and references to the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society have been removed.)

February 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Approved resolution concerning the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan that the current Plan provisions in place are appropriate and no benefit change is recommended.

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

November 2020 Resolutions/Actions

Adopted the 2021 Budget.

Approved resolution establishing the annuity adjustment (3.1%), dividend (14.5%) and interest-crediting rate (6.3%) for 2021 for the ELCA Participating Annuity of the ELCA Retirement Fund.

Approved resolution designating a portion of 2021 remuneration as rental/housing allowance for the following Portico Benefit Services employees:

The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann
The Rev. Catherine Schibler-Keegan
The Rev. Shelley Cunningham

Approved resolution designating retirement and disability payments as rental/housing allowance for 2021.

Approved resolution related to the Augustana Annuity Trust.

February 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Approved resolution concerning approval of consultant's direction to further evaluate and/or implement recommendations made regarding the Bacon class action litigation.

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

November 2020 Resolutions/Actions

Received the November 2020 Portico Benefit Services Management Report.

Approved changes to the Charters and Calendars for Board Development Committee, Finance Committee, and Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee.

February 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Received the report on 2020 Employee Conflict or Duality of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Received the report on 2020 Trustee Conflict or Duality of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Received the February 2021 Portico Benefit Services Management Report.

Approved revision to the Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee Charter and Calendar.

ELCA Foundation Report

Submitted by Kathy Summers, President and CEO

Despite having a year of tremendous challenges - the pandemic, racial tension, wildfires, floods, and political divisiveness – the ELCA Foundation generated exceptional results. On Dec. 31, 2020, we achieved a major milestone as the Foundation now oversees more than \$1 billion in gifts, endowments, and other investments for this denomination. This was largely accomplished due to our earlier proactive changes to our asset allocation and because of prompt actions taken to increase communication to our constituents and partners to provide ongoing reassurance and critical information throughout 2020.

Financial Results (Unaudited)

Total assets on a combined basis increased to \$1,017 million as of Dec. 31, 2020. The Endowment Fund Pooled Trust asset balance of \$905.3 million is up \$88.2 million from Sept. 30, 2020. Foundation operations generated a surplus of \$935.2 thousand largely due to increased revenues from services and savings in compensation, benefits, and travel. Staff is working through the year-end procedures to get the financial reports ready for the audit.

Financial Systems and Administration Services

The Workday endowments module had a soft launch on Dec. 1, 2020 and executed a launch on Jan. 1, 2021. There are some issues to be resolved and internal procedures that need to be modified, but the system appears to be working as designed. Due to the ELCA churchwide organization's recent restructuring, significant changes have been made to the financial system, some of which have affected the Foundation. Staff from both organizations are working through the changes. As staff become more familiar with the entire system, enhancements will be added.

Development Results

- **Endowment Fund A**

Endowment Fund A net investment results for the fourth quarter and year to date through Dec. 31 were 10.75% and 12.00%, respectively. The modified benchmark returns were 11.41% and 11.00%. The modified benchmark replaces the private markets target allocation (10%) with the private markets current allocation (4.5%) and reweights the components. Reaching the private markets target allocation will take approximately three more years.

As of Dec. 31, 2020, the value of participant accounts invested in Endowment Fund A was \$904.2 million, compared to \$817.6 million on Dec. 31, 2019. There are 1,155 investing participants in Fund A, including 938 congregations and 54 synods. During the year, 53 new endowment accounts were opened, totaling \$7.1 million, and 14 accounts were closed, totaling \$3.0 million. Contributions from outside participants to new and existing endowment accounts totaled \$31.1 million; withdrawals totaled \$18.6 million.

- **Charitable Gift Annuity Pool**

The Charitable Gift Annuity program totaled \$54.2 million on Dec. 31, compared to \$50.4 million on Dec. 31, 2019. Throughout 2020, 20 new charitable gift agreements were signed, with a total value of \$630,706.25.

- **Charitable Remainder Trusts**

The Charitable Trust program totaled \$66.8 million on Dec. 31, 2020 compared to \$67.4 million on Dec. 31, 2019. There was one new charitable remainder trust funded with assets totaling \$677,125.00 and one addition of \$112,449.95 to an existing trust.

- **Gift Planner Results**

The ELCA Foundation network currently has 23 regionally located gift planners and 21 partnerships with over 150 ministry partners. The Foundation, including affiliates, posted solid results during the year, with \$118.2 million in total gifts and endowment assets. Of that, \$78.5 million was written in future planned gifts, \$20.3 million in current gifts (including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments) and \$19.4 million in new outside-investor-managed assets.

New gift plans written during this time period totaled 249. In addition, gift planners stewarded over \$60 million in previously written plans, in some cases increasing the estimated gift size to ministry.

- **Gift Distributions**

Throughout 2020, approximately \$59.0 million was distributed to ministry.

- **Board of Trustees**

At the Fall board meeting, 2021 officers were elected and are as follows: Eric Brudos (Chair), Liza Canino (Vice Chair), Naomi Horsager (Secretary), and Kori Reed and Eric Golberg (Members at Large). We look forward to welcoming Ingrid Stafford in April, when the ELCA Church Council is expected to approve her candidacy and appoint her to the Board of Trustees.

- **Highlighted Action Items from last Board Meeting**

The Board of Trustees took under consideration one major action affecting the business of the Foundation. The Foundation is pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees approved a 4% distribution rate for 2022, keeping the rate unchanged from 2021.

DIGEST OF BOARD ACTIONS

ELCA Foundation

Submitted by: Kathy Summers, President and CEO

Date of Board Meetings: January 26, 2021 and March 18, 2021

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which requires Church Council approval.)*

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the bylaws as amended. (FO.21.03.10)

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the engagement of BKD, LLC as the ELCA Foundation's internal auditor. (FO.21.01.01)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To rescind approval of the use of MS Gift to support the ELCA Foundation's DAF program. (FO.21.03.04)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve changing the name of Endowment Fund A to ELCA Ministry Growth Fund. (FO.21.03.05)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve revisions to two sections of the Investment Policy Statement for the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust: (1) to use the Modified Target benchmark for reporting to external participants, and (2) to replace the Portico custom investment grade fixed income benchmark with the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Aggregate Bond index effective April 1, 2021. (FO.21.03.06)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve a distribution rate of 4% for the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust for 2022. (FO.21.03.07)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the Sept. 17-18, 2020, minutes and the Jan. 26, 2021, written action of the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees. (FO.21.03.02)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees Role Description as amended. (FO.21.03.08)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the resolution to establish a Governance Committee. (FO.21.03.11)

VOTED AND APPROVED:

To approve the resolution to establish a Strategy Task Force. (FO.21.03.12)

**COVID-19 Special Appeal Narrative Summary Update
April 2021**

Since the inception of the special appeal, the ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund has received \$1,829,083 in donations. This fundraising effort continues to “support congregations, synods, relief and development, global mission, and affiliate ministries that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.” [CC20.04.09]

This special appeal is part of a comprehensive COVID-19 response announced by ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on March 27, 2020. A COVID-19 Fund Distribution Committee was formed to aid in the disbursement of the funds to directly support ELCA ministries most in need and best positioned to help. The committee included representatives from the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and churchwide staff. They were responsible for reviewing applications from synods and recommending disbursements through a block-granting process to synods in rounds. The grants were prioritized using two core values: 1) care for the people and communities at-risk for impacts from COVID-19, and 2) care for congregations and ministries most vulnerable to impacts from COVID-19. Synods retained the decision-making responsibility for requirements and distribution to congregations and ELCA ministries.

There was a total of eight rounds of distributions to synods. The first \$500,000 raised in the fundraising effort went directly to synods in increments of \$5,000-10,000 through this block-grant process for congregational and ministry support. After the first \$500,000, funds were shared 80% to synods for congregations and ministries, and 20% to support churchwide-related COVID-19 responses, such as through ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response. The committee recommended that the eighth round be the final round for the block-granting process and all future funds should be disbursed 100% through churchwide-related COVID-19 responses. Presiding Bishop Eaton approved this recommendation.

During eight rounds, there were 190 synod block grants distributed to 63 synods, for a total of \$1,560,000, serving the needs of more than 400,000 people and funding more than 830 ministries across this church. Overwhelmingly, the grants went to feed people in poverty. A second common theme was to help install new technology in congregations for faith formation, and a third theme was to help pay salaries for outdoor ministries or ministers in small, poor congregations. Many of the grants also focused intentionally on addressing COVID-19 needs in communities of color hardest hit by the pandemic.

Synods will continue to share their reports on how the grants were distributed until all their grants have been spent. The churchwide organization will continue the fundraising effort for the ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund to support ministries negatively impacted by the pandemic. The Church Council will receive periodic reports on how all the funds are used.

In the midst of the struggles with the pandemic, this church is blessed by the remarkable generosity of this church’s donors and the faithful stewardship of the ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund shared by synods, congregations, and churchwide ministries. Thanks be to God!

Ecumenical Visit Reports

Name: Rev. Joanne Elise Engquist
Meeting: Executive Council, The Episcopal Church
Places: Salt Lake City, UT and online
Dates: February 13-16, 2020 (Utah)
June 8-11, 2020 (online)
October 9-12, 2020 (online)
January 22-25, 2021 (online)

In February 2020, the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church (TEC) had its final in-person meeting prior to restrictions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Administrative, financial, and legal matters were undertaken in plenary sessions; notably the council readmitted the Diocese of Cuba to The Episcopal Church. Work to become an anti-racist church was deepened through discussion following presentations on the history of settlers among the indigenous people of the geographic region. In addition, Dr. Kristine Stache (Wartburg Theological Seminary) presented the Executive Council with research regarding the observed steady decline in baptized members and average attendance; she spoke also of the need for visionary leaders and adaptive change. I brought greetings on behalf of the ELCA and Presiding Bishop Eaton and noted upcoming agenda items for the March meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

From April through November 2020, five additional meetings of Executive Council TEC were held on the Zoom platform to discuss various responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on infrastructure needs for online meetings, financial considerations (including application for a Paycheck Protection Program loan), and impact on the 80th General Convention. I requested to be and was excused from all but the November meetings (at which I was an observer only).

In June 2020, the Executive Council met online in the immediate aftermath of the death of George Floyd and amidst unfolding protests against white supremacy and police violence. Administrative and finance matters were largely focused on relief related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Small group Bible study and reflection considered the context of seeking justice in the midst of race-based violence. The work of the joint standing committees largely focused on emergency actions intended to address the COVID-19 pandemic and to further the work of continuing to become an anti-racist church. I brought greetings on behalf of the ELCA and Presiding Bishop Eaton, and noted the ELCA's commitment to stand with The Episcopal Church working against racism as expressed in the May 29, 2020, news release entitled "ELCA reaffirms commitment to combat racism and white supremacy."

In October 2020, the Executive Council met online. I requested to be and was excused from this meeting.

In January 2021, the Executive Council met online. Administrative, finance, and legal matters continued to sort through needed adjustments because of the COVID-19 pandemic, including details related to the one-year postponement of the 80th General Convention (now scheduled for 2022). Small group reflection focused on "The Hill We Climb," Amanda Gorman's poem for the January 20, 2021, inauguration. Materials also were distributed regarding "From Many, One" that launched on January 18, 2021, as a year-long campaign encouraging one-to-one listening and sharing across the many differences that separate us. In light of the January 6, 2021 insurrection at the United States Capitol, a resolution was adopted denouncing, and committing to action that will oppose white supremacy. The Executive Council noted the collaboration of Presiding Bishops Michael Curry and Elizabeth Eaton in a January 27, 2021 (online) event, "Democracy and Faith Under Siege: Responding to Christian Nationalism." A bylaw action also moved the designated "invited guests" (currently liaisons from the ELCA and The Anglican Church in Canada) out of the membership section to align with the Constitution and Canons. Leadership reached out to both liaisons to clarify that there is not intent to create distance from either church body, or others as may be invited in the future. I brought greetings on behalf of the ELCA and Presiding Bishop Eaton and emphasized the ELCA's Future Church aspirations.

Name: Clarence Smith

Meeting: Reformed Church in America (RCA) General Synod Council meeting

Place: virtual meeting using Zoom

Date: October 23-24, 2020

The RCA General Synod Council (“Council”) met virtually in late October 2020. The October meetings historically occur in conjunction with meetings of the various RCA Commissions (“Commissions” in RCA nomenclature is more akin to the ELCA understanding of committees. However, commission structure within the RCA is much broader in terms of scope and membership. Commission members, for example, typically would not be members of the Council.) Due to COVID concerns, the RCA Commissions did not meet in October 2020.

Much of the October 2020 meeting agenda was devoted to the topic of the postponed Assembly that had been scheduled for Orange City, IA in June 2020. Again, due to COVID, the Assembly did not occur, and the RCA is expecting to move all agenda items into a June 2021 Assembly scheduled for Pella, IA.

The RCA has been on a path for the last 2-3 years to discern the future of the denomination. There is considerable disagreement between conservatives and progressives in the denomination, with human sexuality and Biblical authority at the roots of the disagreements. In order to discern its future, the denomination has been engaged in Vision 2020, a process that seeks to determine one of 3 pathways: 1) continue to operate the same as before; 2) incorporate new ways to incorporate diverging viewpoints; or 3) seek graceful separation for congregations that wish to exit the denomination.

At the present time, there are approximately 800 congregations within the RCA. The denominational office has received letters indicating that approximately 20-25% of congregations desire to separate. The actual number could be higher, as some congregations are waiting/watching, or do not intend to reveal their intentions at this time.

Other stress points within the RCA are akin to what other denominations are experiencing – struggles due to COVID, budgetary pressures, and/or congregational weariness. These challenges only compound stress within the denomination.

The RCA Council is scheduled to meet in March 2021. At this time, a virtual meeting is planned. However, if COVID restrictions improve, the meeting will be in-person in Grand Rapids, MI. The agenda will most assuredly focus on finalizing any plans for the June 2021 Assembly in Pella, IA. The denominational leadership expects that the Assembly meeting will occur in-person, despite the notion that any large-scale gatherings may not be a possibility, even by June 2021.

The RCA governance includes its Book of Church Order (BCO). The BCO mandates that the Assembly must be held in an in-person format. There is no provision for a virtual alternative. Therefore, the pathways for the future of the denomination are somewhat limited. If the RCA can’t meet in June 2021, it is my opinion that the Council will shift to an Assembly to be held in October 2021. My assumption is that such a decision would be made in March 2021.

Finally, due to budgetary constraints, it was announced to the Council that the role of the RCA Ecumenical Officer was eliminated. Monica Schaap Pierce held this position, and she was a valued partner of the ELCA and other denominations. She attended the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee, WI. Her leadership will be missed.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve the ELCA in this important role.



2021 Roster of Dialogue Participants

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Mid-judicatory Member:

Rev. Richie Sanchez, Regional Minister and President, Pacific Southwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Fullerton, CA

Theologian:

Rev. Dr. Mark G. Toulouse, Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, TX

Parish Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Robert Cornwall, Senior Pastor, Central Woodward Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Troy, MI

Seminarian:

Ms. Allison Bright, Seminarian, Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, TX

National Setting:

Rev. Paul Tch , President, Christian Unity and Interfaith Ministry, Indianapolis, IN

Ex-Officio:

Rev. Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Indianapolis, IN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Mid-judicatory Member:

Rev. Dr. William O. Gakfjen, bishop, Indiana-Kentucky Synod

Theologian:

Dr. Kristen E. Kvam, Professor of Theology, St. Paul School of Theology

Theologian:

Dr. Carl S. Hughes, Assoc. Professor of Theology, Texas Lutheran University

Pastor/Chaplain:

Rev. Bridget L. Piggue, ThD, Director of Spiritual Health, Emory University Hospital Midtown

National Setting:

Kathryn Lohre, Executive, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, Office of the Presiding Bishop

Rev. Dr. Carmelo Santos, Director, Theological Diversity and Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Engagement

Ex-Officio:

Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church In America

Rev. Don P. Kreiss, Chair, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Committee, ELCA Conference of Bishops

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Observer/National Setting:

Rev. Mark Pettis, Manager, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Synod Visit Reports

Name: Bill Rice
Synod Visited: Northern Great Lakes Synod
Visit Date: January 16, 2021
Purpose of Visit: Synod Council meeting

1. What are the joys and opportunities happening within the Synod?

HOPE! A new year, new season, a new administration. Joy and opportunities with new ways of doing things - online and Zoom meetings save time and money, and allow for reaching homebound people with worship, classes, Bible studies, and so forth. However, this is tempered with the realization that the separation of friends and families, coupled with outside influences and stresses, has caused division in many congregations, which may contribute to members leaving the church to go elsewhere.

2. How did the visit deepen the relationship between the Synod and the Churchwide Organization? What, if anything, should be shared with the Church Council and/or Churchwide Organization?

In my verbal report, I asked about congregational awareness of and connection to the churchwide organization, explaining my early impression of the churchwide business being somewhat remote from and not discernibly relatable to a small congregation. Bishop Finegan explained the relationship and understanding of synod staff regarding churchwide, and her connection for keeping pastors and rostered personnel informed of ongoing matters. Synod Vice President Thomas mentioned the growing efforts to connect synod vice presidents as a group, and he reinforced the need to engage lay people to help relieve pastors of new burdens, such as younger folks pitching in with IT support. While many churches are utilizing many different forms of IT to reach out to people, the challenge remains of trying to figure how to reach out to new people remotely without being able to engage them personally, face-to-face.

Name: Tara Lynn
Synod Visited: Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
Visit Date: January 23, 2021
Purpose of Visit: Synod Council meeting to update on November 2020 Church Council meeting

1. What are the joys and opportunities happening within the Synod?

At this meeting, the content centered around the functional and regular work of the synod. Joys included a successfully completed virtual synod assembly in November 2020.

2. How did the visit deepen the relationship between the Synod and the Churchwide Organization? What, if anything, should be shared with the Church Council and/or Churchwide Organization?

The presence of a Church Council member was well received, and a report on the Church Council's work at our November 2020 meeting was given. This exchange alone deepened our cross-expression relationship.

Parentalⁱ Leave Policies Across the ELCA

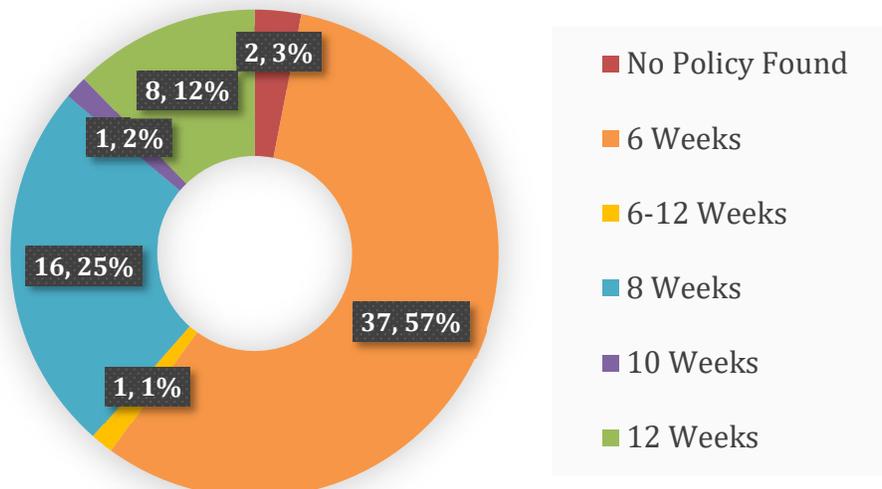
Report prepared by Deacon Shannon Johnson, project coordinator for the Quality of Call Initiative

This report compiles data on parental leave policies that have been gathered from synod websites.ⁱⁱ These policies vary from synod to synod in both the terminology used and the elements included in policy recommendations. This initial report focuses on the leave that synods establish, recommend, or expect of their congregations for rostered ministers adding a family member.

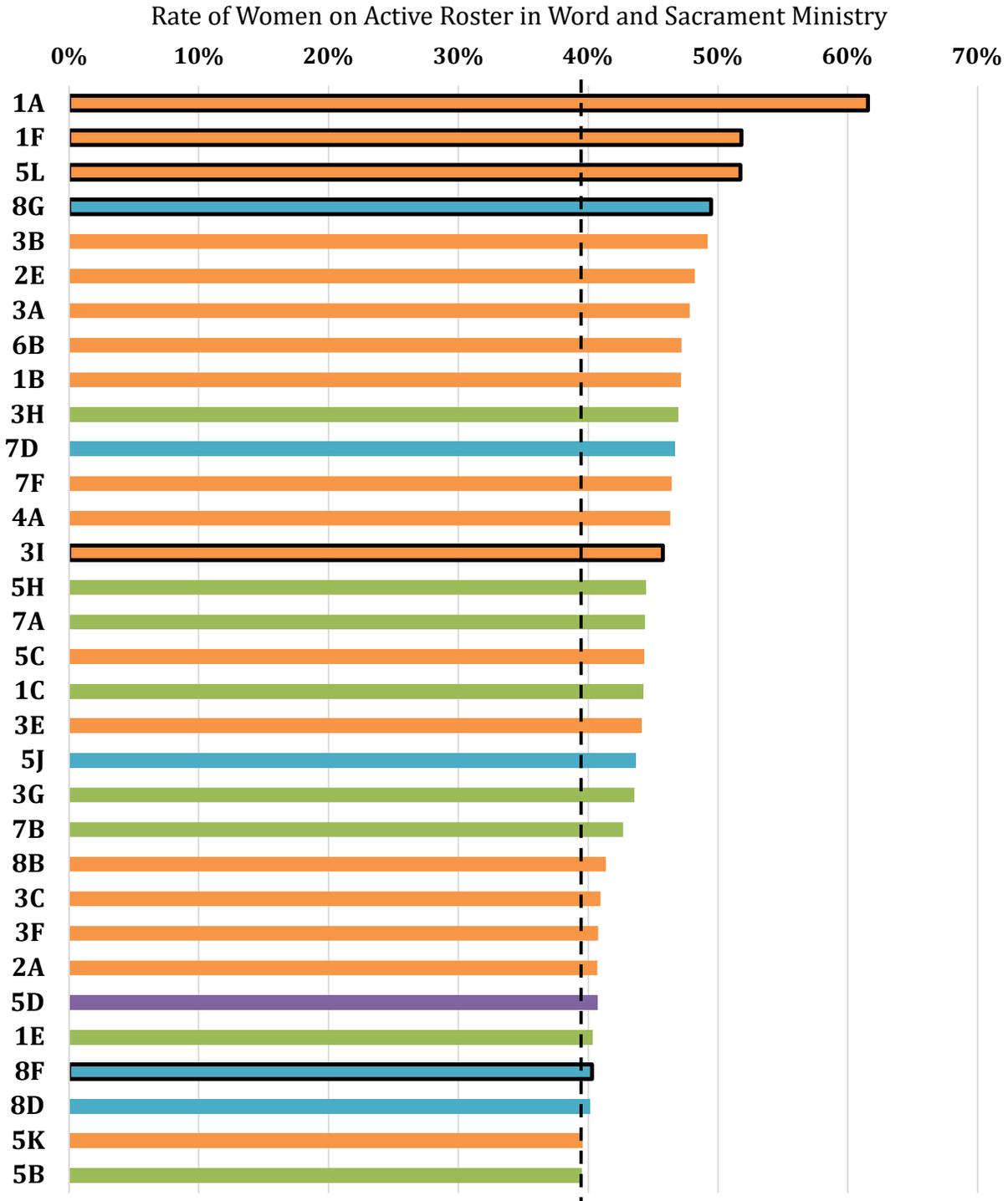
Elements of Parental Leave Policies

- **Parent’s Gender:** 48 synods (74%) recommend parental leave policies which are the same for all parents, regardless of gender.
- **Childbirth and Adoption:** 55 synods’ (85%) parental leave policies recommend the same leave for parents of all children, whether adopted or naturally born. Eight of these synods include foster placements and guardianship. Three synods’ (5%) parental leave policies differentiate leave for parents of adopted children based on age, recommending little to no leave for parents adopting older children.
- **High Rates of Women Serving:** 44% of synods with a higher rate of women serving on the active roster than the overall ELCA rate recommend maternity leave durations greater than six weeks.
- **Recommending More Time:** Eight synods (12%) recommend 12 weeks of parental leave, and these synods all have higher rates of women serving than the ELCA rate.
- **Recommending Less Time:** 37 synods (57%) recommend a parental leave duration of only six weeks. 20 of these synod policies state six weeks as the maximum duration of leave, and five of these synod policies state six weeks as a minimum duration of leave.
- **Letter of Call:** Five synods’ (8%) policies state that a congregation should include the specific benefits of parental or family leave in its Letter of Call or call paperwork.
- **Employment Commitment Before or After Leave:** Four synods’ (6%) policies require six months’ employment in the congregation after leave and one synod (2%) requires six months’ employment in the congregation before and after leave.

Synod Parental Leaves by Recommended Duration



Duration of Parental Leave, With Rate of Women on Active Roster, Serving in Word and Sacrament in Each Synodⁱⁱⁱ



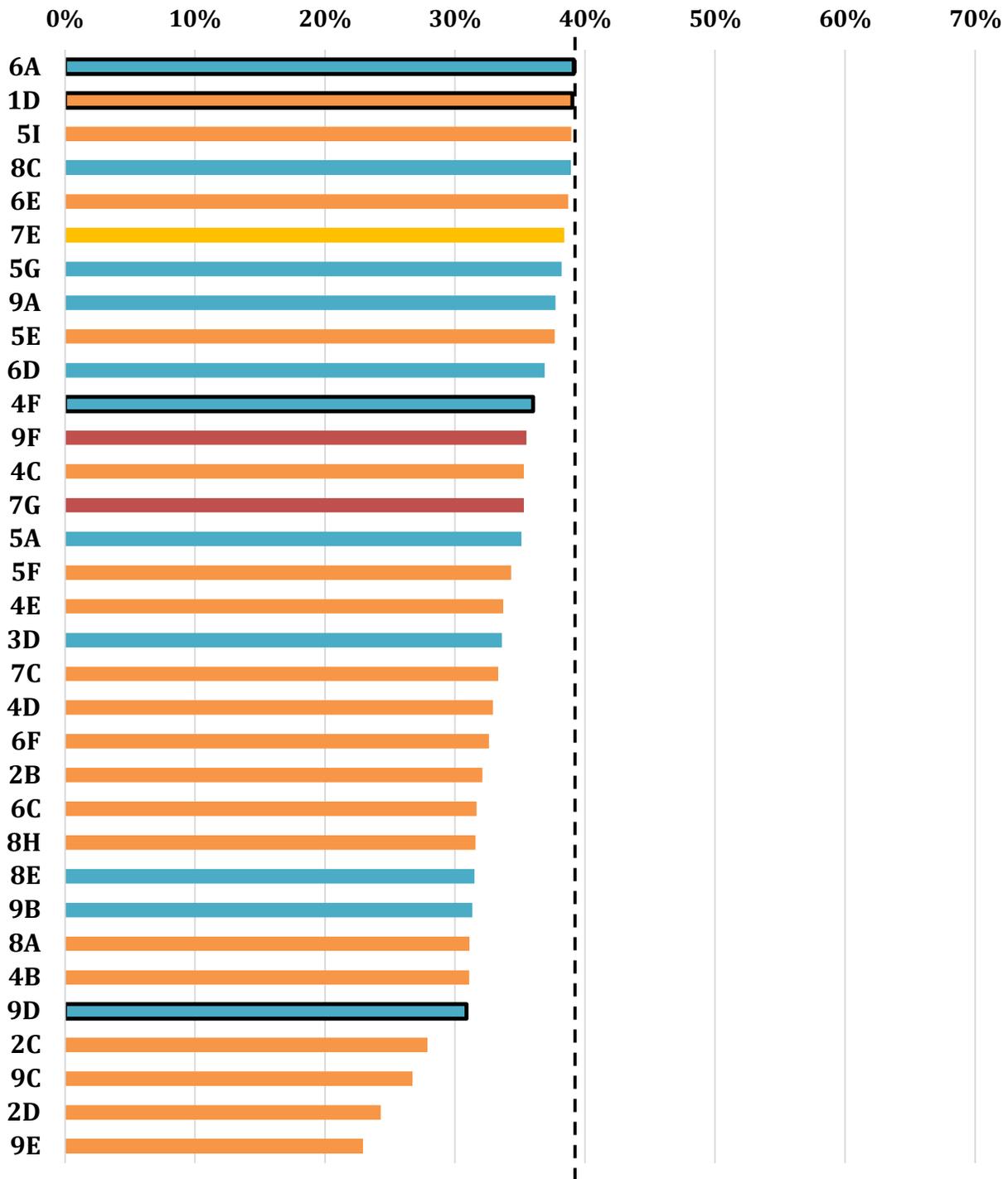
Duration of Parental Leave



Black outlines indicate that the synod policy recommends this duration of leave as a minimum.
 The dash line indicates the ELCA rate of women active in ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Duration of Parental Leave, With Rate of Women on Active Roster, Serving in Word and Sacrament in Each Synod

Rate of Women on Active Roster in Word and Sacrament Ministry



Duration of Parental Leave



Black outlines indicate that the synod policy recommends this duration of leave as a minimum.
 The dash line indicates the ELCA rate of women active in ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Synod Reference List

Region 1

1A Alaska
1B Northwest Washington
1C Southwestern Washington
1D Northwest Intermountain
1E Oregon
1F Montana

Region 2

2A Sierra Pacific
2B Southwest California
2C Pacifica
2D Grand Canyon
2E Rocky Mountain

Region 3

3A Western North Dakota
3B Eastern North Dakota
3C South Dakota
3D Northwestern Minnesota
3E Northeastern Minnesota
3F Southwestern Minnesota
3G Minneapolis Area
3H Saint Paul Area
3I Southeastern Minnesota

Region 4

4A Nebraska
4B Central States
4C Arkansas-Oklahoma
4D Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana
4E Southwestern Texas
4F Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast

Region 5

5A Metropolitan Chicago
5B Northern Illinois
5C Central/Southern Illinois
5D Southeastern Iowa
5E Western Iowa
5F Northeastern Iowa

5G Northern Great Lakes
5H Northwest Wisconsin
5I East-Central Wisconsin
5J Greater Milwaukee
5K South-Central Wisconsin
5L La Crosse Area

Region 6

6A Southeast Michigan
6B North/West Lower Michigan
6C Indiana-Kentucky
6D Northwestern Ohio
6E Northeastern Ohio
6F Southern Ohio

Region 7

7A New Jersey
7B New England
7C Metropolitan New York
7D Upstate New York
7E Northeastern Pennsylvania
7F Southeastern Pennsylvania
7G Slovak Zion

Region 8

8A Northwestern Pennsylvania
8B Southwestern Pennsylvania
8C Allegheny
8D Lower Susquehanna
8E Upper Susquehanna
8F Delaware-Maryland
8G Metropolitan Washington, D.C.
8H West Virginia-Western Maryland

Region 9

9A Virginia
9B North Carolina
9C South Carolina
9D Southeastern
9E Florida-Bahamas
9F Caribbean

ⁱ The Quality of Call committee recognizes the importance of both family leave, designated for rostered ministers to care for children, spouse, parents, or other family members, and parental leave, designated for rostered ministers adding a family member. This report focuses on the parental leave policies of synods in the ELCA.

ⁱⁱ Data was collected in February 2021.

ⁱⁱⁱ Data about ministers of Word and Sacrament with active status were collected on June 30, 2020.



Open Doors is a new initiative to support ELCA congregations interested in **meeting new people** during this time of re-gathering in physical spaces.

As shared with ELCA Church Council on 4.17.2021



A world experiencing the difference
God's grace and love in Christ makes
for all people and creation

OUR VISION

OUR PURPOSE

Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.





OUR GOAL

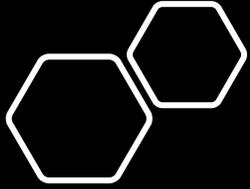
Share the story of Jesus and the ELCA with a million new people.





OPEN DOORS

- Open to all ELCA congregations.
- A good idea should be able to come from anywhere, and while not every good idea needs money, no good idea should be held back due to a lack of seed money to get it started!
- There is no set of “best practices” for how to meet new people following a global pandemic. We are committed to learning together and from the experiences of congregations.



Open Doors Grant Eligibility

- ELCA congregation in good standing with their synod;
- Have a specific and actionable idea for how congregation might meet new people while re-gathering in community as COVID-19 pandemic considerations;
- Commitment to shared learning over the next three years.



How does it work?

ELCA Open Doors

If selected, your congregation can expect to receive a one-time, set payment amount of between \$1,500 and \$2,500.

A

Congregation Applies

It's easy! All you need is a specific, actionable idea for meeting new people.

No budget or receipts required.

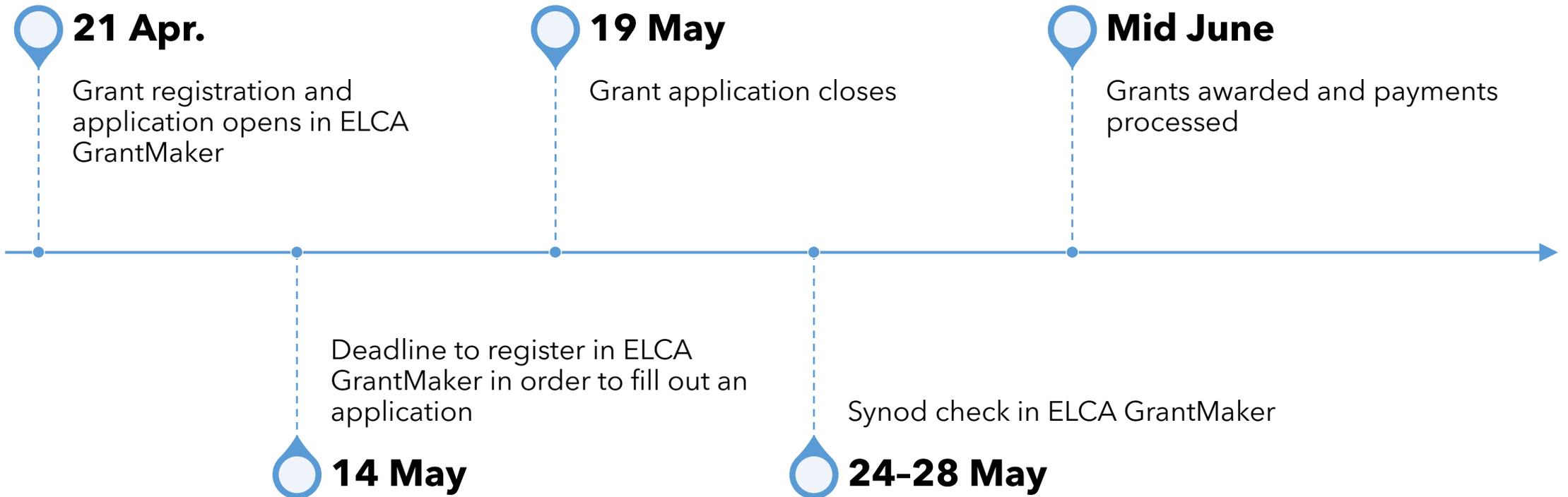
All eligible applications will move into a common pool. Awards will be made, at random, from the pool.

B

If not selected, your congregation will still be requested to share information through a brief, annual questionnaire. Upon completion, your congregation will receive a small stipend to honor your time and participation.



TIMELINE

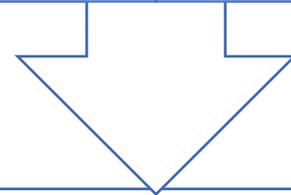


Congregation Customer Service

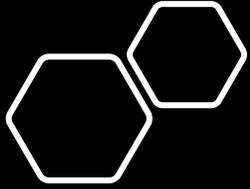
Visit elca.org/opendoors

FAQs

Sample application and guide
to apply



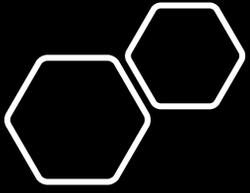
Application and registration questions, email
grants@elca.org



Your Leadership

- This is an opportunity to experiment and learn within and from the congregational context, but also together as one church.





Public Idea Sharing

Open Doors Grant
Post your idea below!

This is my amaazing idea
0 likes
Add comment

Adding a comment to test
0 likes
1 comment
Anonymous 3d
Thankst
Add comment


0 likes
Add comment

Audio recording test

Audio recording test
00:11 audio
padlet drive
1 like
Add comment

I have a great idea too!
3 likes
1 comment
Anonymous 3d
Wow! Are you going to apply for a grant?
Add comment

I have a great idea!

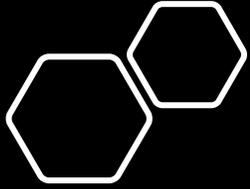
Home
The ELCA is one of the largest C...
elca.org
0 likes
1 comment
Dan Michel 2d
test
Add comment



<https://elca.org/open-doors-grant-test>



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



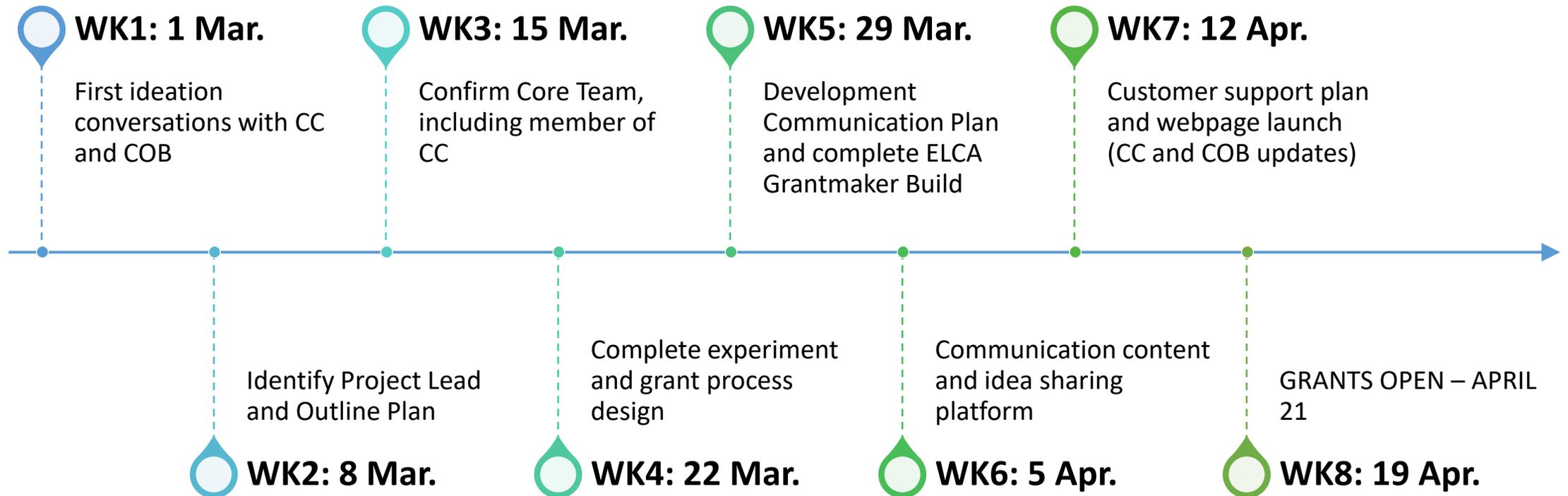
Discussion

(breakout groups)

- What are the post-COVID needs you are seeing in your community - for example, grieving, community care, isolation?
- How has your congregation connected with people online?
- How might your congregation reach out to those you do not know yet?
- What does it mean to engage new people? To “befriend” them?



Project Timeline (8-week launch)





Allison Beebe



Iain Chester



Pastor Tara Lynn

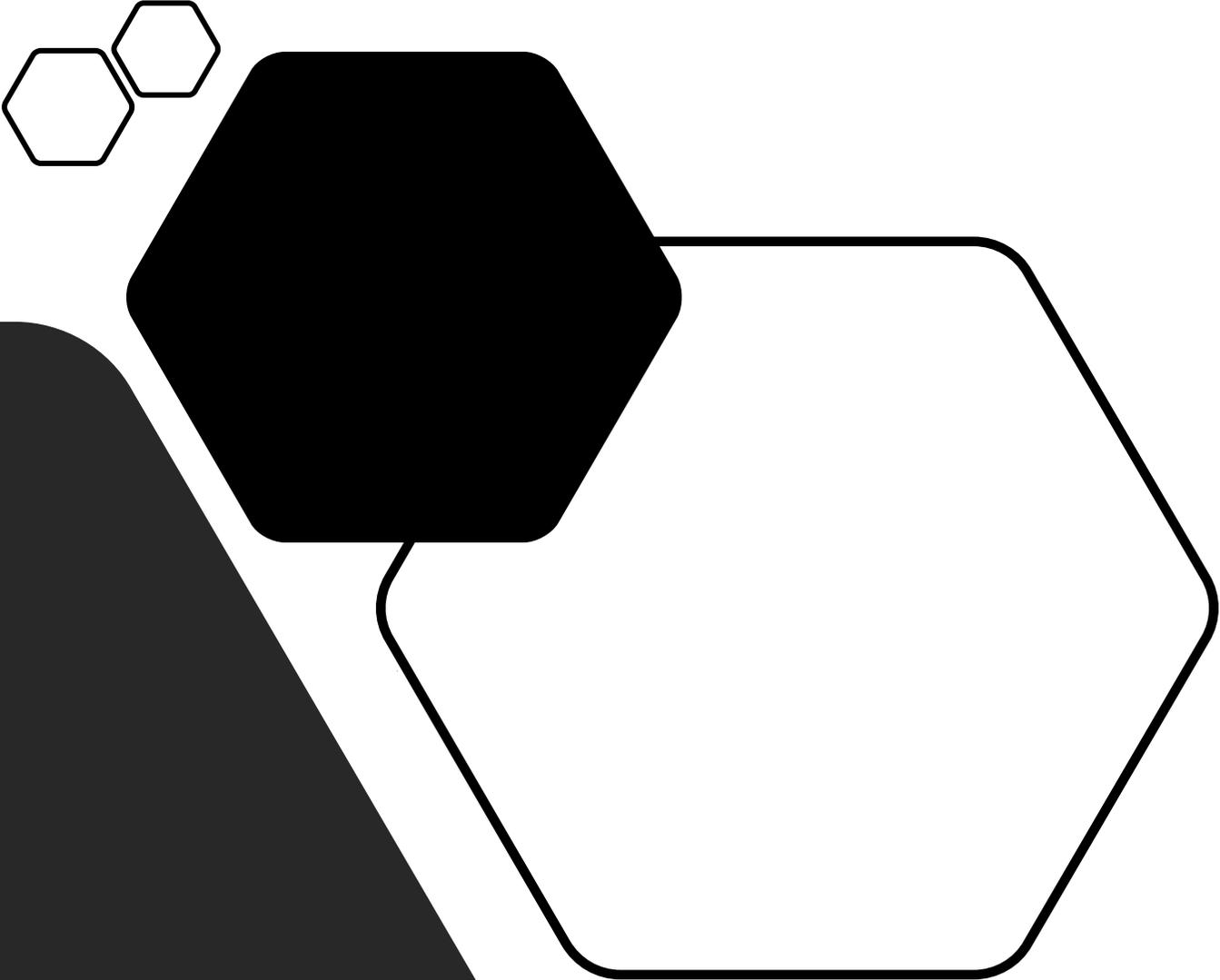


Haley Toresdahl

Project Core Team



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

A decorative graphic consisting of several hexagons. At the top left, two small white hexagons with black outlines are positioned. To their right is a large, solid black hexagon. Further right is a large white hexagon with a black outline. A thick black line connects the bottom-left corner of the large black hexagon to the top-left corner of the large white hexagon. The word "Questions?" is written in white on a dark grey background that occupies the left side of the image.

Questions?



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God's work. Our hands.