

Report from the Presiding Bishop

When I think of our late vice president, William Horne, the words of St. Paul come to mind, “Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.” (Philippians 4:8-9) Bill lived and lead with all these qualities. For him, serving as vice president was a deeply felt call from God to serve the church. Bill especially enjoyed being the churchwide representative at synod assemblies. It gave him an opportunity to see the church at work. He is missed.

Now we welcome (back) Carlos Peña who is serving as the interim vice president until the election of a new vice president at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Carlos served for thirteen years as the ELCA vice president during the time when the ELCA took significant action on welcoming LGBTQIA+ people to be fully themselves and fully serve the church, during the Malaria Campaign, and the launch of the ELCA’s first comprehensive campaign, *Always Being Made New: the Campaign for the ELCA*. We are grateful to Carlos for his willingness to serve and to his family for sharing him with this church again.

Though sometimes it feels we have been slogging through the pandemic, ministry in congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization not only continues but has demonstrated adaptability and creativity. The Church Council has been an important partner as we developed and began to implement the Future Church design. The COVID-19 Appeal, Open Door Grants, Hidden Evangelists, and the newly launched Collaborative are not only direct results of the new design but have shown that we can work collaboratively and quickly. Though not directly linked to the Future Church design, the Congregations Lead Initiative supported by a \$1,000,000 Lily Endowment Grant has started work with a cohort of congregations giving them the tools to implement design thinking and innovation in their contexts and teach this to other congregations. We made the case to the Lily Endowment that the ELCA can become the innovation denomination.

One of the priorities for Future Church is that we are “a thriving church: rooted in tradition and radically relevant.” To be clear, the tradition in which we are rooted has nothing to do with culture or cuisine. It has everything to do with the evangelical tradition based on Scripture and the Confessions that, as Pope Francis said, rediscovered the liberating good news of God’s grace. This was affected by the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus and continually revealed to us by the Spirit. This is not the message of contemporary culture. This is not the message of American civil religion. This is most certainly not the message of Christian Nationalism. This is not the message of moral, therapeutic deism. This is not the message of individualism. The good news of justification by grace is a great leveler. All people are in need of justification and God’s grace extends to all people.

I am concerned that we have lost some of this evangelical edge. People new to the Lutheran movement find joy and freedom in this grace. When Martin Luther finally grasped the implication of God’s grace he declared, “I felt that I had been born anew and that the gates of heaven had been opened. The whole of Scripture gained new meaning. And from that point on the phrase ‘the justice of God’ no longer filled me with hatred, but rather became unspeakable sweet by virtue of a great love.” Can we, will we, be bearers of this good news today and in the future? Do most of us have a basic understanding of the theology of the Lutheran movement? Can we make it clear and “radically relevant” in our context?

Our purpose is to activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love. Activation is the Spirit’s work. Our shared ministry goal is to share the story of Jesus and the ELCA by engaging 1,000,000 new, young, and diverse people by the end of this decade. This takes each of us and all of us. The work cannot belong to, and must not be assigned solely to, congregations, synods, or the churchwide organization but must draw on the engagement and resources of our colleges and universities, seminaries, Separately Incorporated Ministries, social ministry organizations and agencies, and all our networks. We have received this gift. We are called to share it (out

loud) with the world. We welcome to the staff Jen DeLeon, director for racial justice. Our work towards racial equity is crucial if we are to engage 1,000,000 new, young, and diverse people.

Who are these new, young, diverse people? The Innovation home area has been conducting field research with Generation Z. (born between 1997 and 2012) This is the most racially and ethnically diverse generation. This is a generation that, in many cases, is not active in our congregations. We realized we didn't know very much about Gen Z. Generation Alpha is already nine years old. We are shifting the way we work to engage these generations and generations still to come. We will not abandon current members (Greatest, Silent, Boomers, Millennials, Gen Y) but we need to stretch ourselves. We asked this cohort where they found meaning, purpose, and belonging. The data and conclusions drawn from the data are still being analyzed. Stay tuned.

The council approved the [Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People](#). We pledged to do 21 things. Of course, this is the work of the entire church, but it is also the responsibility of the Church Council. The team working on the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery would find it helpful if a progress report could come to the council on a regular basis. How frequently would the council like a report? Also, where does the council individually and corporately see itself working on these 21 pledges? There will be a study guide for this Declaration available in Lent.

Christian Community and Leadership and Service and Justice home areas have done brilliant work in difficult times. The role and function of Directors for Evangelical Mission has been examined. We are launching Hidden Evangelists. We are supporting and learning from Abide, an on-line community of over a thousand young adults. Two new seminary presidents have been inaugurated – the Rev Dr. R. Guy Erwin, United Lutheran Seminary, and the Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen, Wartburg Seminary. Missionaries have returned to their fields of service. We continue to advocate for and support the work of the Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem and the Reconciliation Church and Health Center in Juba, South Sudan.

I feel a little like St. John the Evangelist when he wrote – my paraphrase – “There are so many other things that we are doing; if every one of them was written down, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” But one last thing, it is important to remember that the work that belongs uniquely to the church is to preach the gospel according to a pure understanding and to administer the sacraments in conformity with the divine Word. (Augsburg Confession VII) No other institution has this call. Everything else that we do comes from this center.

Please join with me in thanking the churchwide staff for their remarkable work during the pandemic. And please join with me in thanking the Conference of Bishops for their leadership in these strange times. None of us does this work alone. We are church. We are Lutheran. We are church together. We are church for the sake of the world.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Report from the Interim Vice President

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

– Psalm 46 :10

This psalm is such a beautiful song. It’s full of hope and praise and reassurance. It is a passage my mind refers to when life gets rough, when it seems things are spiraling out of control. I found that my heart went to it when I heard the news about the untimely passing of my friend, Bill. When I was asked to be interim vice president for the remainder of Bill’s term, I immediately felt my defenses come up and started to question – *will I have time? So much has changed since I was called to serve as vice president. How can I get caught up to speed with the work of the council?*

When we are anxious and facing adversity, God tells us to be still and know that he is God. Lay down all our weapons of defense: pride, envy, fear of failure to name and recognize the power of God. Let go and let God.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve again.

As I begin to write this report, I can’t help but think of the story of Rip Van Winkle and the message it conveys. I’m sure you remember the story. His was a legendary tale of a man that heads into the Catskill Mountains to escape unpleasantness and falls asleep for 20 years. Was Rip Van Winkle lucky he got to sleep through some rough times, like the American Revolution? Not really. Sure, life had changed, but the changes had nothing to do with him. Sleeping through it is irresponsible – staying in the game equals hard work and responsibility. When I am engaged in life, Christ lives his life through me. In Christ, I can feel the joy of life and the satisfaction of the work I do for him.

Nevertheless, as I look back these past 5 years, I can’t really say I’ve been sleeping. Quite the opposite, as I really didn’t get a chance to retire as I had announced in 2016. In fact, I’m probably working more hours as my business continues to thrive and flourish during these challenging times. This year we celebrate 50 years in business. In addition, my son has joined the family business and is set to take over as President/CEO in 2022 leading the business into the next quinquagenary. Thanks be to God!

I also continue to serve as a Central Committee member of the World Council of Churches, a position I have held since 2006. With the pandemic, we were not able to meet in 2020 in Geneva for our in-person meeting. In fact, it was almost a year later, June 2021, before we were able to meet online. It was quite an event to have over 200 people on video conference from throughout the world speaking in different languages – all of us in different time zones, online, at the same time. For the most part, those in the US met in decent hours (me 6-10 am CST) the entire 7 days. While that might seem early, it was better than some folks who participated in the late or wee hours of the morning. Together, we addressed a limited agenda, mostly focused on preparations for the 11th Assembly taking place August 2022 in Karlsruhe, Germany, under the theme “*Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity.*” In addition, the meeting was an opportunity for strengthening the fellowship through sharing and praying. Overall, I thought this was one of our more productive meetings in my time of service on this board as our limited agenda kept us focused on the work at hand. Nonetheless, as expected, we ran out of time without finishing all our work. This will now necessitate an in person meeting in Geneva, February 2022. You’ll hear more about this throughout the remainder of my term.

After a year of rest and relaxation, in 2017 I also agreed to serve on both the boards of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Baltimore, Maryland.

As our time together goes on, you will hear more from me about these two organizations and the work we do together in this ever-changing world.

Report from the Secretary

“But faith provides you with an understanding of how to reconcile death.”

Bill Horne

As I walked into the worship space for Bill Horne’s funeral, I was struck that, in addition to countless photos of Bill shown on the screens, there were several quotes displayed. The above is one. As we all have struggled to reconcile ourselves to Bill’s sudden and unexpected death, Bill’s thought-filled and faith-filled words provide a comforting reminder of resurrection promise. It was a gift to be able to join with others in celebrating the wonderful ways in which Bill lived out his various senses of vocation. As Bishop Eaton so poignantly stated in her sermon, while we in the ELCA thought he was OUR Bill, he was a man who was so highly respected and loved in so many contexts: the military, the city of Clearwater, the Florida-Bahamas Synod, his local congregation, his family and friends. Thanks be to God for this man who enriched the lives of so many and embodied his faith so deeply in the many ways he lived out his call.

As we in the Office of the Secretary mourn the loss of relationship with our colleague and friend Bill, we also give thanks for those whom we have welcomed into our midst in the last few months. Adam DeHoek joined the OS Staff in July as Program Director for Resourceful Servants and Congregation Statistics Analyst, having served the churchwide organization in research-related positions for the past 10 years. Adam will have primary responsibility for the annual congregation report, while continuing his work with the Lilly-funded Resourceful Servants project. Christina Ptack joined the meetings team in July as our new Meetings and Events Manager. Christina comes to us following 16 years serving at a nearby retreat and conference center. Prior to that she worked right next door to the Lutheran Center at the Chicago Marriott O’Hare! She will serve as registrar for the Churchwide Assembly, receiving information related to voting members from synods. Deanna Brend began her work as executive assistant September 20. Deanna brings a wide range of experience in administrative support and will be a resource to synod offices.

2022 Churchwide Assembly

Preparations for the upcoming Churchwide Assembly are well underway! Led by Jodi Slattery and Dana Adams, members of the Churchwide Assembly Planning Team were finally able to do a site visit in Columbus, Ohio, in mid-September. We were delighted to be able to have Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt and a few of her colleagues join us for part of the meeting. Know how eager they are to welcome the church back to Columbus 35 years after the constituting convention of the ELCA in the spring of 1987!

If you receive questions about how we will convene, there is a Churchwide Assembly web page (<https://elca.org/cwa-2022/COVID19FAQ>) that responds to some of the frequently asked questions related to COVID-19. The web page will be updated as staff learns more, and we get closer to the assembly week.

Christina Ptack, registrar for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, has begun processing information received from synods regarding voting members. The final deadline for receiving information is November 1.

Vice President Election

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly will be electing a vice president for a six-year term. In 2018, the following continuing resolution was adopted by the Church Council:

In a year when the vice president or secretary shall be elected, the voting members elected to serve at the Churchwide Assembly shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons who might be considered for election as vice president or secretary. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall contact those persons identified and request biographical information. At least 60 days prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members.

Early in 2022, the Office of the Secretary will extend this invitation to voting members of the upcoming Churchwide Assembly. Now that Church Council members are voting members of the assembly, you will be receiving this invitation as well.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee met again in mid-September. We invite Church Council members to give serious consideration to possible nominees for positions on the Nominating Committee, Committee on Appeals, and the Committee on Discipline, and youth members of the Church Council. Nominations may be made through Feb. 1, 2021. Potential nominees should fill out the biographical information form at elca.org/nominations. Please notify the Office of the Secretary if you have invited members from your synod to fill out the form. You may also email Marit Johnson at marit.johnson@elca.org with individuals' contact information, and she will forward the submission information. If you would like to review the open committee positions, Marit Johnson will provide the Nominations Workbook upon request.

Constitutional Revisions

OS staff members have been diligently at work suggesting revisions to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, and the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee has begun meeting to review those proposed changes. The Church Council will consider proposed revisions to continuing resolutions at its November meeting. It will act to forward proposed changes to constitutional provisions and bylaws to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, with official notice sent to the synods regarding these changes by February 1.

Committee on Appeals

The Committee on Appeals met in September, responding to the Church Council action to “encourage the Committee on Appeals to add a definition of ‘promiscuity’ to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.” Attached to this report is a memo from committee chair Murray Sagsveen detailing the committee’s proposed response to the council’s request. We are grateful for this committee’s thoughtful, careful attention to their work.

Synod Vice Presidents

The synod vice presidents met online the weekend of October 8 and 9, welcoming newly elected vice presidents and providing an orientation/overview of the responsibilities and role of synod vice president. Several members of the Office of the Secretary presented information regarding constitutions, roster matters, legal concerns, and bishop elections.

Synod Secretaries

The Office of the Secretary held a webinar for synod secretaries on September 20. Mindful that both new and ongoing secretaries would be in attendance, we provided a general overview of the role and responsibilities of the office. We are grateful to Church Council member David Lenz, who just completed his term as secretary of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, for sharing his wisdom with the group.

Congregation Annual Reports

Summaries of Congregation Reports for 2020 are now available. The report on congregations that did not file (CD950) remains unchanged. Information on total assets held by congregations has been added back in to CD160 after being gone for a while.

A more substantial change has been made on reports CD150 and CD170. This is the distinction between online and on-site worship attendance. Metrics related to worship attendance are reported separately for online and on-site worship. As the Office of the Secretary has stated previously, the combined attendance figures collected on Form A this year had little to no meaning, so they will not be reported. Additionally, on CD170, the average worship attendance figures for 2019 are included as a reference point. Only one figure for 2019 is reported on CD170 because no distinction was made between online and on-site attendance in 2019. Going forward, we will continue to ask congregations to track and report separate figures for in-person and online worship.

Looking toward the future, our goal is to make attendance data, and all data from congregations, easier to report. We will be seeking to update our online platform to increase its flexibility and robustness. We will also provide further resources to congregations and synod staff to answer frequently asked questions.

I continue, as always, to give thanks for the staff of the Office of the Secretary who continue to ably and affably serve as resource to this church in all its expressions. Special thanks go to team leaders Dana Adams, Tom Cunniff, Keith Fry, MaryAnn Schwabe, and Jodi Slattery. They make weekly meetings something to look forward to and bring such good care and competence to their work. We all look forward to seeing you in November!

ELCA Committee on Appeals

To: Executive Committee, Church Council
From: Murray G. Sagsveen, Chair, Committee on Appeals
Copy: Committee on Appeals, Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, and General Counsel Thomas Cunniff
Subject: Definition of “Promiscuity”
Date: October 20, 2021

On April 17, 2021, the Church Council approved amendments to *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* and asked the Committee on Appeals to define one additional word: “promiscuity.”

On September 15, the Committee on Appeals met and unanimously agreed to this definition:

“Promiscuity” means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.”

On September 30, the Committee on Appeals submitted the draft definition to the Conference of Bishops (*see page 2*) for review and comment. Two bishops commented:

- “If we are defining promiscuity for purposes of discipline then I believe we need marriage in the definition.”
- “I think the definition of promiscuity ... would be stronger if it read: ‘Promiscuity’ means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations outside of a monogamous relationship which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.”

After committee officers (Rev. Fritz Fowler, Rev. Cheryl Meinschein, and I) reviewed the comments, we decided not to call a special committee meeting to consider amending the proposed definition. The Church Council, on April 17, had already addressed the marriage issue in section B.5. (and the accompanying footnote) of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, and we decided it would be inappropriate to raise the issue again (directly or indirectly) in the proposed definition.

Accordingly, the Committee on Appeals plans to submit the proposed definition quoted above to the Church Council.

Adopted by the Church Council on April 17, 2021 [CC21.04.09; CC21.04.10]

B.5. Sexuality and public ministry: 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

Footnote 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).

Current Definitions:

- "Adultery" means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than that person's current spouse.
- "Infidelity" means the act or fact of having a romantic or sexual relationship with someone other than one's spouse or partner.
- "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.

Proposed Definition – to be Submitted to the Church Council

"Promiscuity" means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.

2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Schedule
 Subject to Change - Updated 9/20/21

Date/Time	Aug 8	Aug 9	Aug 10	Aug 11	Aug 12
8:30 a.m.		Opening Plenary - Hall A (8:30 - 11:30 a.m.)	Plenary - Hall A	Worship (8:30 a.m.) Battelle Grand Ballroom	Holy Communion & Installation of Vice President-Elect Battelle Grand Ballroom
10:30 a.m.			Break (10:00 - 10:30)	Break (9:20 - 10:00)	Break (9:50 - 10:30)
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch on own	Lunch - Hall B	Lunch - Hall B	Lunch - Hall B	
1:30 - 2:00 p.m.			Break	Break	
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m. Assembly Orientation Hall A 4:00 p.m. ELCA mobile app training Hall A	Plenary - Hall A (1:30 - 3:30 p.m.)	Plenary - Hall A	Plenary - Hall A	
5:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Dinner - Hall B	Dinner - Hall B			
Evening	6:30 p.m. Pre-Service Music 7:00 p.m. Holy Communion Battelle Grand Ballroom 8:30 p.m. Dessert Reception Hyatt Regency Ballroom				

Registration Desk Hours: 12:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
 Nomination Desk Hours: Closed 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Closed Closed Closed

Hearings will be held the week prior to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly - dates and times to be announced later

Report from the Treasurer

Operating Results – Current Fund

The net unrestricted operating results of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were favorable to the budget for the eight months ended September 30, 2021 by \$7.9 million and favorable to the same period in the prior year by \$4.6 million. Operating revenues exceeded the budget and prior year by \$1.4 million and \$3.4 million, respectively. Also contributing to the favorable variance is that spending was at 81% of the year-to-date spending authorization.

Mission Support represents 64% of our current fund revenue stream for first eight months of the year and is 0.8% over plan. Not only are we grateful for these gifts, which flow from members to congregations to synods to the churchwide organization, but we are encouraged that even in the midst of the continued pandemic, many synods have been able to maintain their commitments. While the trends vary across the country, 60% of our synods have shared more than their estimated budget for mission support.

Unrestricted spending is \$8.4 million below the budget through September. Primary areas of savings include compensation and benefits (due to vacancies), reduced travel and event expense, savings in operating costs on the building and grants. The savings in grant expenses amount to approximately \$3.5 million of the total; these are expected to be distributed in 2021, just later than they were budgeted. We do expect other savings, such as compensation and travel, to carry through to the end of the fiscal year; however, this should provide some cushion should we incur unexpected expenses, experience a market downturn or shortfalls in all forms of gifts.

ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger revenues from Direct Giving for the eight months were \$8.4 million compared to \$7.6 million and \$8.1 million for the same periods in 2020 and 2019, respectively. Historically over half of the World Hunger income for the year will be received in the last four months of the year; however, based on our trends to date, we expect to exceed the revenue budget for the year. This, along with the accumulated fund balance from bequests, will be factored in as we develop detailed spending plans for FY22.

Expenses are running behind budget primarily due to timing of grant distributions, reduced travel expenditures, staff vacancies, and addition of new programs given additional spending approved in April 2021. Spending is expected to increase in the last four months of the year and be near the full year budget amount.

Paycheck Protection Program Loan

The churchwide organization received a Paycheck Protection Program loan which amounted to \$7.5 million in April 2020. Approximately \$5.6 million of this amount applies to the churchwide organization while the remainder was distributed to the separately incorporated ministries that fall under the churchwide office payroll and personnel policies. The funds were spent in accordance with the requirements of the loan. The churchwide office applied for forgiveness in 2021. We received notification in July that the loan had been fully forgiven by Small Business Administration as well as notification from our lender that funds from the SBA were received to extinguish the loan. From a financial statement perspective, in 2021 the debt will be derecognized and recognized in the income statement as a gain upon debt extinguishment.

Future Church Reorganization

The general ledger system which was implemented in July 2020 was remapped to correlate to the new Home Areas. You will see these changes reflected in the accompanying financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

November 11-13, 2021

Report from the Treasurer

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As the world continues to experience the impact of the global pandemic and other political and economic uncertainties, we give thanks to God and to the many individuals, congregations, synods, and ministry partners who both prayerfully and financially continue to support our work. We take very seriously our responsibility to safeguard and faithfully use these resources entrusted to us so that more may come to know Jesus.

Report from the Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops (COB) met Sept. 29 – Oct. 1 via Zoom. This is the third meeting we've held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and while I am grateful for the technology that allows us to gather in this way, I am eager for our next meeting to be in person. I believe I have said that twice before! I offer a special thank you to the churchwide support team, especially Jennifer Johnson, who takes care of behind-the-scene logistics.

Below are some highlights of our time together:

- ❖ Welcomed 7 new bishops at a reception on Wednesday evening.
- ❖ Elected Bishop Pedro Suárez to serve as member-at-large on the Executive Committee.
- ❖ Elected liaison bishops to Church Council from regions 2,5,7, and 9. Bishops new to this role beginning in January will be Bishop Yehiel Curry, Metro Chicago (region 5) and Bishop Christopher deForest, Northeastern Pennsylvania (region 7). Bishops Andy Taylor (region 2) and Pedro Suárez (region 9) were re-elected.
- ❖ Spent time with the Rev. Dr. Carmelo Santos (ELCA director for theological diversity) and Bishop Laurie Jungling (chair of the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee) exploring Baptism and Eucharist. This conversation will continue in the COB as we seek to be faithful to our understanding of the sacraments while serving Christ's church in a changing and challenging time.
- ❖ Previewed a 5-session study guide for "The Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent." This study guide is a response to the Church Council action calling this church to a time of study, support, sharing the apology, and studying reparations.
- ❖ Evaluated the redesigned first call process learning that the process is working well overall – for congregations looking to call a deacon or pastor and for candidates. The nine-member working group will continue to look at how candidates move better between regions.
- ❖ Heard reports from our presiding bishop, secretary, and COB committees, including the Academy Committee, which cancelled the 2022 Academy planned for January in Montgomery, Alabama due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Began and ended our time with worship led by Deacon John Weit, executive for worship.

I will not be at the Church Council meeting so if you have questions for me, please feel free to email them to bartholomew@njsynod.org.

I give thanks to God for this church and its leaders, including you who serve on the Church Council. Thank you for your partnership in serving Christ's mission in the world.

CONSIDERATION OF “A DECLARATION OF THE ELCA TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY”

Background

Building on the 1974 statement “The American Lutheran Church and the Jewish Community,” and the consultation and 1984 statement on “Luther, Lutheranism, and the Jews” of the Lutheran World Federation, the ELCA Church Council adopted “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” in 1994. In 2019, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, reaffirmed “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” in its twenty-fifth anniversary year when it adopted “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment.”

Developed by the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations, “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” repudiates Luther’s anti-Judaic writings, opposes anti-Semitism, and expresses the ELCA’s desire to build right relationships with the Jewish community. It provides a measure of accountability within the ELCA, and to this church’s Jewish partners. Amid today’s alarming rise in anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence, the Declaration continues to convey an important message to be amplified across the ELCA and throughout God’s world.

In addition to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community,” four other relational declarations have been adopted by the ELCA¹, most recently “A Declaration to American Indian and Alaska Native People” by the Church Council in September 2021. This most recent addition is a preliminary step toward the implementation of the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly’s “[Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery](#).”

The connections between and among this church’s various relational commitments are vital to the ELCA’s life as church together. Therefore, the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations proposes a revision to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” that reflects this church’s commitments with regard to the alarming rise in anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence, and the ELCA’s Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

Explanation of Each Revision

The Panel proposes three revisions:

- 1) Lines 1-3: We recognize that the Holocaust does not stand apart from other “grievous and shameful” parts of church history.
- 2) Line 19: By adding “incitement to violence” we acknowledge our recognition that anti-Semitism has a more violent public face today than it had in 1994.
- 3) Line 20: The change of “or” to “and” is an acknowledgement that hatred and violence are directed at both Judaism, and the Jewish people.

Proposed Action

To adopt the proposed revisions to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” as an expression of this church’s continual opposition to rising anti-Semitism and ongoing work to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery;

¹ A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment (1991); A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community (1994); A Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent (2019); A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment (2019); A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People (2021).

To reaffirm “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” as an enduring message for this church, our Jewish neighbors, and all of our ecumenical, inter-religious, and global partners; and

To call this church into a time of study and reflection using the declaration and other Lutheran-Jewish relations [resources available](#) from the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

Revisions to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” (1994)

1 In the long history of the church, the treatment accorded the Jewish people by Christians has been among
2 our most grievous and shameful legacies. In the long history of Christianity there exists no more tragic
3 development than the treatment accorded the Jewish people on the part of Christian believers. Very few
4 Christian communities of faith were able to escape the contagion of anti-Judaism and its modern
5 successor, anti-Semitism. Lutherans belonging to the Lutheran World Federation and the Evangelical
6 Lutheran Church in America feel a special burden in this regard because of certain elements in the legacy
7 of the reformer Martin Luther and the catastrophes, including the Holocaust of the twentieth century,
8 suffered by Jews in places where the Lutheran churches were strongly represented.

9 The Lutheran communion of faith is linked by name and heritage to the memory of Martin Luther, teacher
10 and reformer. Honoring his name in our own, we recall his bold stand for truth, his earthy and sublime
11 words of wisdom, and above all his witness to God's saving Word. Luther proclaimed a gospel for people
12 as we really are, bidding us to trust a grace sufficient to reach our deepest shames and address the most
13 tragic truths.

14 In the spirit of that truth-telling, we who bear his name and heritage must with pain acknowledge also
15 Luther's anti-Judaic diatribes and the violent recommendations of his later writings against the Jews. As
16 did many of Luther's own companions in the sixteenth century, we reject this violent invective, and yet
17 more do we express our deep and abiding sorrow over its tragic effects on subsequent generations. In
18 concert with the Lutheran World Federation, we particularly deplore the appropriation in our day of
19 Luther's words by modern anti-Semites for the teaching of hatred and incitement to violence toward
20 Judaism and ~~toward~~ the Jewish people ~~in our day~~.

21 Grieving the complicity of our own tradition within this history of hatred, moreover, we express our urgent
22 desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people. We recognize in
23 anti-Semitism a contradiction and an affront to the Gospel, a violation of our hope and calling, and we
24 pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry, both within our own circles and in the
25 society around us. Finally, we pray for the continued blessing of the Blessed One upon the increasing
26 cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community.

27 -----

Proposed Church Council Committee Restructure

Overview

This proposed Church Council committee structure is designed to align the Church Council (CC) committees with the churchwide organization restructure. Additional committees – Board Development Committee, Audit Committee and Resource Development Committee – remain as is.

The continuing resolutions and draft charters for the proposed committees would be developed in time for the Church Council's consideration at its April 2022 meeting.

Introduction

The Church Council currently has four standing committees – Budget and Finance Committee, Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, and Program and Services Committee. With the exception of the presiding bishop, the vice president, and the chair of the Conference of Bishops, each Church Council member serves as a voting member of exactly one standing committee. Following the adoption of a Governance Policy Manual, the Church Council requested that the Executive Committee establish a process to assess the existing committee structure and future needs for the Church Council. [CC19.04.06] In Nov. 2019, the Executive Committee established a temporary committee for this purpose. [EC19.11.43]

The work of the committee was originally scheduled to be completed in connection with the April 2021 meeting of the Church Council, but progress was delayed by the adoption and implementation of a plan for the restructuring of the churchwide organization. Two options were presented to the April 2021 meeting and feedback was gathered. At the conclusion of this discussion, the Church Council authorized an extension of the consideration of a revised committee structure to be presented at the Nov. 2021 meeting. [CC21.04.12]

Proposed Standing Committees - Church Council members must serve on one*

1. Christian Community and Leadership
 - Congregations, authorized worshipping communities and developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels
 - Review churchwide policies addressing standards for ministry
 - Multi-cultural ministries
 - Seminaries and colleges
 - Youth ministries, YAGM, ELCA Youth Gathering
 - Federal chaplaincies
 - Worship and sacramental resources
2. Service and Justice
 - Ethnic specific ministry strategies
 - Sanctuary guidelines
 - Advocacy
 - Disaster response
 - Missionaries
 - Corporate Social Responsibility

* The committee expects that the historical practice will be continued, under which the presiding bishop, the vice president, and the chair of the Conference of Bishops will not be a member of any standing committee.

3. Faith, Society, and Innovation
 - Ecumenical and inter-religious relations
 - Strategic planning
 - Racial justice ministries
 - Social teaching documents
 - Innovation processes
4. Budget and Finance
 - Budget development and approval
 - Financial review and oversight
 - Information technology review and oversight
 - Audit and Resource Development Committees
5. Legal and Constitutional Review
 - Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions
 - Review of legal matters as appropriate
 - Personnel policies for churchwide organization
 - Roster manual
 - Seminary articles of incorporation and bylaws
 - Review policies and procedures that establish and implement relationships with Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies

Other Constitutionally Permitted Committees

1. Executive Committee (*elected from Church Council*)
2. Audit (*2-year renewable terms; not limited to Church Council members; appointed by Budget and Finance, approved by Church Council*)
3. Resource Development (*3-year renewable term while on Church Council; not limited to Church Council members; appointed by Executive Committee*)
4. Board Development (*3-year renewable term; at least 2 Church Council members from each class and at least one Executive Committee member; appointed by Executive Committee*)

Revisions to Executive Committee Membership

Of the 12 members of the Executive Committee, seven members are elected from and by the Church Council. The four churchwide officers and the Chair of the Conference of Bishops are automatically members of the Executive Committee. Of the seven at-large members, four such members have been the chairs of the standing committees while three additional members are elected from the remaining members of the Church Council. If the proposed committee structure is adopted, the five chairs of the standing committees are expected to be elected as members of the Executive Committee, and only two other members would be elected by the Church Council as at-large members of the Executive Committee.

Timetable for Transition and Implementation

The new committee structure will not be fully implemented until immediately after the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Church Council members whose terms end with the 2022 Churchwide Assembly will continue to serve as members of their current standing committee until their term ends on Aug. 12, 2022. Church Council members whose terms end with the 2025 or 2028 Churchwide Assemblies will begin serving on the newly established committees immediately after the 2022 Churchwide Assembly or upon their formal appointment to a standing committee, whichever occurs last.

The Board Development Committee should begin to plan for the size and composition of the new standing committees by soliciting indications of interest from the continuing members of the Church Council (terms expiring in 2025). Church Council members will be assigned based on interests, skills and/or committee needs. The Executive Committee will review the preliminary assignments and forward the final appointments to Church Council for ratification.

Consistent with past practices, the new standing committees should begin their organizational process at the time of the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting. New standing committees should elect/select their respective chairs prior to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly so that each such committee will be fully functional at the conclusion of the assembly (except for the election of members from the class of Church Council members elected by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly).

The Legal and Constitutional Review Committee will prepare and forward to the Church Council the revisions to the continuing resolutions under Constitutional Provision 14.41. to establish each of the new standing committees and to remove provisions for committees that will be discontinued. This committee will recommend adoption of such revisions to the Church Council at its Spring 2022 meeting. Each new standing committee will prepare its own charter for adoption by the Church Council at the same meeting.

En Bloc Items

I. Committee on Appeals

A. Additional Definition to *Definition and Guidelines for Discipline*

The Committee on Appeals met in September 2021, responding to the Church Council action to “encourage the Committee on Appeals to add a definition of ‘promiscuity’ to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.” [CC21.04.10] A [memo](#) from committee chair Murray Sagsveen detailing the committee’s proposed response to the council’s request can be found in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Committee on Appeals folder.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the additional definition of ‘promiscuity’ to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

II. Budget and Finance Committee

A. Audit Committee Membership

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the reappointment of Mr. Kevin Anderson, Ms. Tracey Beasley, Mr. Gary Hecht, Mr. Keoni Newman, and Ms. Ingrid Stafford as members to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2021; and

To approve the appointment of **Ms. Kerry Fehrman as a member to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2021.**

B. Audit Committee Report

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the preliminary report of the ELCA Audit Committee for the churchwide organization’s fiscal year ended January 31, 2021; and

To authorize the Executive Committee to approve the final report.

C. Synod Mission Support Experiment

The final report and decision from the Synod Mission Support Experiment will be presented at this November 2021 meeting. [CC20.11.33b] The Synod Mission Support Experiment was approved by the ELCA Church Council at its April 2015 meeting for three years (FY2016-FY2018) and extended at its November 2018 meeting for two years (FY2019-FY2020).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To express gratitude for all those who participated in the planning, implementation and assessment of the Synod Mission Support Experiment;

To recommend that changes to congregational vitality grants and the funding/employment model for the Director for Evangelical Mission position (DEM) include a review of possible

implications to future models of Mission Support sharing between synods and the churchwide expression (to be completed June 30, 2022), and these implications be shared with the Budget and Finance Committee;

To recommend that the five synods which participated in the Synod Mission Support Experiment (4A-Nebraska, 4F-Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast, 7B-New England, 8D-Lower Susquehanna, 8G-Metropolitan Washington, D.C.) continue their models of Mission Support sharing with the churchwide expression until decisions have been made with respect to the Director for Evangelical Mission position and congregational vitality grants. At that time, it is recommended each synod meet with staff from the churchwide Christian Community and Leadership home area and the Mission Support team to discuss how their current models of funding and decision-making with respect to the DEM position and congregational vitality grants compares with the revisions that may be made to these ministry areas. It is recommended that these discussions include ways to move toward closer alignment if areas of difference remain between a synod's model and the revised Christian Community and Leadership model;

To remind all synods that any proposed changes in their models of Mission Support sharing between synods and the churchwide expression are to be undertaken through mutual conversation between representatives of the synod and of the churchwide organization. Section 10.71 of the ELCA Constitution states, "Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of amount of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod. The actual percentage or amount shall be determined through individual consultations with each synod;" and

To recommend that the Resource Development Committee (RDC) continue to review strategies for increasing Mission Support shared with the churchwide organization, as outlined in the RDC charter.

III. Executive Committee

A. Revisions to Governance Policy Manual

At its June 2019 meeting, the Church Council adopted the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual [CC19.06.25].

In accordance with the manual, "At least triennially, provisions of this Church Council Governance Policy Manual shall be reviewed and amended, as necessary. Proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary in advance of presentation for action to the Church Council. Any Church Council member, liaison bishop, or churchwide staff member may suggest amendments by submitting proposals to the Executive Committee. Amendments will be adopted by majority vote of the Church Council and become effective immediately upon adoption."

The [revisions to the manual](#) are indicated in track changes and posted in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Executive Committee folder.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

- To approve the revisions to the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual; and
- To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.

B. Appointment of Memorials Committee

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.21., in regard to the Churchwide Assembly, provides for the appointment of a Memorials Committee to review memorials from synod assemblies and make

recommendations for assembly action. The 15-member committee includes members of the Church Council, voting members of the assembly, and representatives of the Conference of Bishops. The Church Council appoints the committee at its November meeting prior to the Churchwide Assembly to allow for adequate notice to members for their participation in the meeting of the Memorials Committee subsequent to the completion of the 2022 synod assemblies.

CC ACTION [En Bloc]

Recommended:

To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

1. Ms. Cheryl Chatman [3G; POC] (co-chair)
2. Mr. Joseph Nolte [5D] (co-chair)
3. Pr. Joanne Engquist [1B]
4. Bp. Laurie Larson Caesar [1E]
5. Bp. Yehiel Curry [5A; POC]
6. Mr. Randall Foster [2B; POC]
7. Mr. Glenn Austad [2D]
8. Mr. Mark Hollabaugh [3E]
9. Mx. Joan Saltzman [4B; YA; Not Identified]
10. Ms. Melissa Peper-Firestone [6D]
11. Pr. Carey Hovland [6F]
12. Mr. Arundel Clarke [7A; POC]
13. Mr. Christopher Vergara [7C; POC]
14. Deacon Alicia Anderson [8C]
15. Pr. Viktoria Parvin [9A]; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Memorials Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.

C. Appointment of Reference and Counsel Committee

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.11., in regard to the Churchwide Assembly, provides for the appointment of a Reference and Counsel Committee to review items—proposed resolutions—that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly and also to review all changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws submitted by voting members at the assembly. The 15-member committee includes Church Council members, assembly voting members, and Conference of Bishops representatives.

CC ACTION [En Bloc]

Recommended:

To appoint the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

1. Ms. Tracey Beasley [7F; POC] (co-chair)
2. Mr. David Lenz [6E] (co-chair)
3. Mr. Kevin Anderson [8G]
4. Bp. Regina Hassanally [3I]
5. Bp. Paul Erickson [5J]
6. Ms. Marjorie Fiedler [1F]
7. Ms. Dorothy Arata [2A]
8. Mr. Jason Langworthy [3H]
9. Deacon Timothy Siburg [4A]

10. Ms. Brenda Pinero [4E; POC]
11. Pr. Michael Ashman [5F]
12. Ms. Hannah Limbong [6C; POC; YA]
13. Pr. John Longworth [7B; Not Identified]
14. Pr. Stephen Herr [8D]
15. Ms. Esther Smith [9F; POC]; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Reference and Counsel Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.

D. 2022 Churchwide Assembly Process for Elections

At the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, elections will be held for vice president of the ELCA. The procedure for this election is established in the ELCA constitution, specifically in bylaw 19.01.03. as well as continuing resolutions 19.01.A18., 19.01.B09., and 19.01.C19. Other relevant information is contained in Chapter 13. In addition to these constitutional procedures, the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly usually provide opportunities during the balloting process for voting members to hear nominees' views on matters relevant to this church and the office for which they have been nominated.

In previous elections of officers, the Executive Committee of the Church Council has played a role in helping shape the election process. The processes recommended by the Executive Committee became part of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly.

For the 2022 election, it is proposed that the Church Council delegate to the Executive Committee the authority to review, evaluate, and make possible recommendations for Part 16 of the draft Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, particularly the assembly discernment process.

CC ACTION [En Bloc]

Recommended:

To delegate to the Executive Committee of the Church Council responsibility for review and evaluation of and recommendations for Part 16 of the draft Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, particularly the assembly discernment process; and

To bring to the Church Council recommendations for Part 16 of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly no later than the April 2022 meeting.

IV. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee

A. Proposed continuing resolution amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

The Office of the Secretary recommends proposed amendments to various continuing resolutions in the ELCA Constitution. The most recent proposed amendments can be found in "[Proposed Amendments-Continuing Resolutions](#)" in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee folder.

The process for continuing resolutions is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution. A two-thirds vote of the Church Council is required for adoption.

CC ACTION [*EN BLOC* – *Two-thirds approval required*]

Recommended:

To adopt the amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as described in “Proposed Amendments – Continuing Resolutions.”

B. Ratification of amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

At the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, constitutional provision 4.02.c. [CA19.05.27.] and related provisions [CA19.05.28] were amended. The adopted amendments must go to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for ratification.

The amendments can be found in “[Proposed Amendments-4.02 Related](#)” in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee folder.

A majority vote of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly is required for ratification.

CC ACTION [*EN BLOC*]

Recommended:

To recommend the following for ratification by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To ratify, *en bloc*, the actions of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly regarding amendments to constitutional provision 4.02.c. and related provisions in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

C. Proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

The Churchwide Assembly adopts amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The process for amending the governing documents is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution. Proposed constitutional amendments for consideration at the Churchwide Assembly in 2022 must be considered at the Church Council meeting in November 2021. Although the process for adopting bylaw amendments at a Churchwide Assembly does not require similar notice, the historic practice of the Office of the Secretary has been to seek to provide as complete a set as possible of proposed governing document amendments at the fall Church Council meeting in the year before the Churchwide Assembly.

The proposed amendments represent an ongoing commitment of the Office of the Secretary and this church to continue to evaluate the efficacy of its governing documents and their alignment with its mission and ministry. The most recent proposed amendments can be found in “[Proposed Amendments-General](#)” in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee folder.

A two-thirds vote of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly is required for adoption.

CC ACTION [*EN BLOC*]

Recommended:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt, *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make appropriate changes in the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations* congruent with the ELCA Constitution as amended.

D. Proposed amendments to the Mission Investment Fund Bylaws

In October 2021, the Mission Investment Fund considered amendments to their bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 17.30.03. The amendments can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of the Mission Investment Fund.

V. Program and Services Committee

A. Corporate Social Responsibility Documents

Church Council is responsible for reviewing this church's ongoing work in corporate social responsibility. Program and Services Committee reviewed [three issue papers and one social criteria investment screen](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amendments to the following corporate social responsibility documents to serve as the basis for ongoing corporate social responsibility work in this church:

- Private Prison Social Criteria Investment Screen
- Environmental Topics Issue Paper
- Climate Change Issue Paper
- Health Issue Paper; and

To request that the original issue papers be archived for historical and research purposes.

B. Assessing the need for and feasibility of initiating social message processes

In Spring 2021, the Church Council postponed the question of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Fall 2021. [CC21.04.061] There is also another pending request for a social message on climate change. [EC20.02.12]

The capacity for social teaching writing projects during any given year is one social statement, one social message and one study resource. The director for theological ethics has assessed the need and feasibility for the pending social message requests. The director has a specific recommendation for the development of one social message and brings recommendations to the Church Council regarding the remaining pending requests.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To thank the Southwestern Minnesota Synod for encouraging the ELCA Church Council to authorize the use of existing resources to create a message on climate change;

To authorize the development of a social message on climate change, in light of existing social teaching and in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018), with council action to be taken at the November 2022 Church Council meeting; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the assessment from the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the feasibility of developing a social message on U.S. national drug policy and to decline to initiate the development of a social message on that topic.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To thank the Virginia Synod for drawing attention to this social issue with its request that the ELCA “bring the 1978 statement, ‘Aging and the Older Adult,’ out of retirement and revise it as appropriate to make it a living document;”

To release the request for the development of a social message on aging, with the understanding that an ELCA study on aging should be developed when possible as a means to foster discernment, especially in congregations; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To release the request to develop a social message on gender identity and gender expression in light of the various actions already underway to address the topic, with the understanding that the ELCA will continue its ongoing efforts to address the concerns expressed in the “Gender Identity” memorial [CA19.02.09].

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To maintain the request for consideration of developing a social message on U.S. national gun policy as pending and to be assessed by the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for possible recommendation to the Church Council at its November 2022 meeting.

C. Aspirational Document

At the November 2020 Church Council meeting, the council deferred “the question of developing an aspirational document until after Spring 2021 when *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* is further redeveloped.” [CC20.11.33]

Based on feedback from the Conference of Bishops and with other consultations, the executive director of Christian Community and Leadership has a proposed recommendation for the Church Council.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the response and recommendation from the Christian Community and Leadership unit regarding the question of developing an aspirational document; and

To suspend the consideration of developing an aspirational document until a need arises.

VI. Other Items

A. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the [Apr. 15–17, 2021](#) and [Sept. 27, 2021](#), meetings of the Church Council have been provided to council members electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on [Apr. 15, 2021](#), [May 11, 2021](#), [June 29, 2021](#), [Aug. 24, 2021](#), [Sept. 21, 2021](#), and [Oct. 26, 2021](#), meetings have been provided electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams to members.

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 Apr. 15–17, 2021, and Sept. 27, 2021, meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the Apr. 15, 2021, May 11, 2021, June 29, 2021, Aug. 24, 2021, Sept. 21, 2021, and Oct. 26, 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 advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a term expiring in June 2024: The Rev. Jessica Obrecht.

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, 2024: The Rev. Niklaus C. Schillack.

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. Megan M. Gustafson.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA — Portico Benefit Services — to fill a vacancy with the term expiring in August 2022: Mr. Todd J. Maloy.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to fill vacancies on the board of trustees to the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – ELCA Foundation between now and the next meeting of the Church Council.

C. Classification of ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees

In accordance with ELCA continuing resolution 17.60.B19, the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees presents to the Church Council a proposed classification for its term limits.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the classification of board of trustees to the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – ELCA Foundation:

Class 1 (term limit ends in 2022):

Kristy Albrecht, Liza Canino, Pr. Kelly France, and John Quello

Class 2 (term limit ends in 2025):

Karen Bohn, Eric Brudos, Keith Christensen, and Eric Golberg

Class 3 (term limit ends in 2028):

Bruce George, Naomi Horsager, Kori Reed, and Chuck Self

Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions

1. Earth Charter

Background:

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.02.09c]

...To refer to the Domestic Mission unit for implementation consistent with this memorial.

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (November 2019)

The ELCA endorsed the Earth Charter on Oct. 4, 2019. Endorsement of the Earth Charter means that the ELCA will support the charter's implementation, values, and principles and will work with others toward the same goal.

Endorsers are expected to contribute to the charter initiative and to charter-inspired action projects, implement the charter in its professional work, and agree with this endorsement statement: "We, the undersigned, endorse the Earth Charter. We embrace the spirit and aims of the document. We pledge to join the global partnership for a just, sustainable, and peaceful world and to work for the realization of the values and principles of the Earth Charter."

To raise awareness of this endorsement, the Earth Charter logo and a link will be added to the elca.org/environment webpage. In early 2020, ELCA Advocacy will convene a staff team to develop a high-level formalized plan promoting the transition to sustainable ways of living into forthcoming resource development and projects. These will center on the Earth Charter action guidelines:

- a. Respect and care for the community of life
- b. Ecological integrity
- c. Social and economic justice
- d. Democracy, nonviolence, and peace

A progress report will be brought to the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (Nov. 2020)

The Earth Charter's ("Charter") pillars and 16 principles address equitable sustainability and sufficiency for all communities; and it aligns with ELCA social teachings. ELCA's Sustainability Table ("Table") conducts the implementation work to fulfill the Charter endorsement. The Table includes ELCA churchwide staff (Advocacy, Stewardship, World Hunger, Global Mission, Lutheran Disaster Response, Office of the Presiding Bishop, Lutheran Office for World Community, Campus Ministry, Outdoor Ministry, colleges and universities, Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries, Mission Advancement, Faith Formation, and Young Adult ministries), Lutherans Restoring Creation, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, rostered ministers, and lay leaders. Listed below is ongoing implementation work.

Pillar 1—Respect and Care for the Community of Life: Equip congregations and members for advocating in their communities' interest; support #ELCAvotes initiative; advocate for child nutrition programs and housing reform; support federal disaster aid resources and equitable access programs that assist communities impacted by natural disasters; advocate for support for international antipoverty, humanitarian and global health funding; advocate for migrant rights and immigration reform both domestically and globally through Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities ("AMMPARO") and our international companions; advance immigration reform; train Creation Care Ambassadors (to date over 50trained).

Pillar 2—Ecological Integrity: Implement through pillar-focused leadership of the Delaware-Maryland Synod energy conservation and waste reduction (<https://youtu.be/Lo5qLVjTIVs>); explore funding options for projects with the Mission Investment Fund through the Table; lead a global interfaith "Good Trouble for a Healthy Planet" webinar with follow-ups; promote policies to protect all from the impacts of environmental degradation; received Stewardship of Life Institute grant with which synod leaders in four synods will be trained, accompanied and encouraged with skills identified by the ELCA Organized for Mission Network on local and state level stewardship of creation. (The Young Adult Ministry led efforts to give up plastics for Lent in the first quarter of 2020.)

Pillar 3—Social and Economic Justice: Produce resource series on intersectionality of racism and sexism for a just society supporting global health, racial equity, hunger eradication, environment, and housing; advance intra- ELCA and social efforts for equitable compensation; foster ongoing dialogical and theological engagement

across this church towards gender and racial justice; address the disproportionate impact environmental injustice and climate change have on people of color and poor communities globally; utilize a racial justice lens to end the impacts of racism and develop models of equitable sustainability for all communities; assist migrants not covered by stimulus packages as well as support state and local advocacy through the AMMPARO network, congregations and synods.

Pillar 4—Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace: Advocate for support of international funding for conflict prevention and peace-building programs; support and encourage global cooperation, such as the Paris Agreement, to protect the environment; protect human rights to defend democratic values, reject all forms of discrimination, encourage nonviolence and work for peace with the aim of creating a rich and varied space to enable sustainable development (SD); promote election integrity and voter protection; and participate in LWF's Waking the Giant initiative focused on SD goals related to health, justice, education, reduced inequalities, and peace.

The Earth Charter implementation work is ongoing. The final report will be issued to the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

Church Council action [CC20.11.33r]

- To receive the progress report on "Earth Charter" from the Domestic Mission unit;
- To request that a final report be provided at the fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and
- To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)

The [Earth Charter's](#) (Charter) pillars and 16 principles address equitable sustainability and sufficiency for all communities; and it aligns with ELCA social teachings. ELCA's Sustainability Table (Table) supports and other ELCA ministries carryout the implementation work to fulfill the Charter endorsement. Listed below is ongoing implementation work.

Pillar 1—Respect and Care for the Community of Life: Equip congregations for advocating in their communities' interest; Support #ELCAvotes initiative; Advocate for child nutrition programs and housing reform; Support federal disaster aid resources and equitable access programs that assist communities impacted by natural disasters; Advocate for support for international antipoverity, humanitarian, and global health funding; Advocate for migrant rights and immigration reform both domestically and globally through AMMPARO and our international companions; Advance immigration reform; Train Creation Care Ambassadors (242 trained and 48 have signed to become Ambassadors).

Pillar 2—Ecological Integrity: Implement through leadership of the [Delaware-Maryland](#) Synod energy conservation and waste reduction; Pilot efforts in Pennsylvania's synods for significant carbon footprint reduction; Promote policies to protect all from the impacts of environmental degradation; Received Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) grant for training leaders in four synods with skills identified by the ELCA Organized for Mission Network for local and state level stewardship of creation.

Pillar 3—Social and Economic Justice: Produce resource series on intersectionality of racism and sexism for a just society supporting global health, racial equity, hunger eradication, environment, and housing; Advance intra-ELCA and social efforts for equitable compensation; Foster ongoing dialogical and theological engagement across this church towards gender and racial justice; Address the disproportionate impact environmental injustice and climate change have on people of color and poor communities globally; Utilize a racial justice lens to remedy the impacts of racism and develop models of equitable sustainability for all communities; Assist migrants not covered by stimulus packages as well as support state and local advocacy through the AMMPARO network,

congregations, and synods. Advance prevention of gender-based violence across U.S. foreign policy engagement.

Pillar 4—Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace: Advocate for support of international funding for conflict prevention and peace-building programs; Support and encourage global cooperation, such as the Paris Agreement, to protect the environment; Protect human rights to defend democratic values, reject all forms of discrimination, encourage nonviolence and work for peace with the aim of creating a rich and varied space to enable sustainable development; Promote election integrity and voter protection; and Participate in LWF’s Season of Creation and climate change initiatives.

The Earth Charter implementation work is ongoing within the ELCA. This document serves as the final report on the Earth Charter endorsement implementation. The project initiated by the SOLI grant will be sustained into the future through a new program called “Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Faith Active in Love,” offered by Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary’s Center for Climate Justice and Faith in collaboration with the ELCA’s Organizing for Mission Network. This new program begins in Feb. 2022 and will give priority to teams coming from synods and congregations. To apply or for more information, see: https://www.plts.edu/programs/continuing-education/community_organizing_climate_justice.html .

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the final report on the implementation of the “Earth Charter” memorial from the Service and Justice unit; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

2. Social Statement *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*

Background:

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.05.20]

- 1. To urge members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, social ministry organizations, church-related institutions, ecumenical partners, and all people of good will to be guided by this statement’s convictions and commitments to resist and dismantle patriarchy and sexism, and to transform life in the church and in society;*
- 2. To call upon members of this church to pray, work, and advocate for justice for all those affected by sexism and patriarchy and to draw upon this statement in forming their judgments and actions in daily life;*
- 3. To encourage members to be guided by the ELCA social message on “Gender-based Violence” (2015) in taking action, such as urging their congregations to implement policies and to become intentional sites of advocacy and support for local efforts that serve those affected by such violence;*
- 4. To call upon all members of this church to reflect on how mass media (films, video games, etc.) and social media distort sex, gender, and sexuality and to address this problem in their own actions (especially their care for children);*
- 5. To call upon congregational leaders, rostered and lay, to encourage women and girls to pursue leadership roles within congregations and in discernment toward rostered ministry;*
- 6. To encourage ELCA congregations to present positive gender roles in their educational activities, preschools, and day care, and to urge youth-related ministries within this church*

to adopt positive modeling of gender equity in all leadership, programs, and educational events;

- 7. To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization (CWO) 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;*
- 8. To call upon the Conference of Bishops, synods, and the churchwide organization to use gender-inclusive and expansive language for God, and to direct the ELCA worship team
 - a) to use such language whenever it commissions, curates, or develops new liturgical and related educational resources;*
 - b) to supplement existing resources toward that end; and*
 - c) to explore the development of an inclusive language lectionary similar to the Psalter in Evangelical Lutheran Worship.**
- 9. To direct the Mission Advancement unit of the CWO to collaborate with the Office of the Presiding Bishop in creating a single page at ELCA.org where readers can access the existing resources of the ELCA and the Lutheran World Federation related to the concerns of this statement and to work to make those resources available in languages other than English;*
- 10. To call upon this church's advocacy and related ministries, such as ELCA Advocacy and ELCA World Hunger, to support and advocate for measures, policies, and laws consistent with this social statement and to give sustained attention to its convictions and commitments in the creation of programs and projects;*
- 11. To recognize past and present CWO efforts to address institutional sexism and foster gender justice in this church, and to urge sustained devotion of resources, such as support for the CWO's Justice for Women program;*
- 12. To encourage the ministries of Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Men in Mission to continue and expand their work to address the issues identified in this social statement and to commend greater participation in these efforts;*
- 13. To call upon those engaged in publishing activities throughout the ELCA to continue and extend their support for gender equity in ELCA resources and communications through such dimensions as language, images, stories, Bible studies, themes, and representation of contributors;*
- 14. To urge faculty, staff, and administrators of ELCA-related colleges, universities, and seminaries to renew their efforts to develop syllabi and best practices that affirm and promote the gifts of women from varied identities and backgrounds;*
- 15. To call upon rostered and lay congregational leaders, synod and CWO staff, social ministry organizations, and faculty and staff at ELCA colleges, seminaries, and universities to renew their efforts to welcome, care for, and support the lives and gifts of LGBTQIA persons and to oppose discrimination against these persons so that they may live into the promise of gender justice envisioned in this social statement;*
- 16. To call on the church in all its expressions and related agencies, organizations, and institutions to embed and incorporate anti-sexism training and protocols in their ongoing work, including appropriate adaptations to boundaries training for rostered ministers, and*

to create institutional resources to support rostered ministers who experience sexual misconduct or gender-based harassment, as well as pastoral care resources for all affected by sexism;

17. *To direct the ELCA Church Council to establish a process for public repentance regarding the sins of patriarchy and sexism and establish a churchwide day of confession and repentance no later than the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and*
18. *To call upon the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with appropriate units in the CWO, to establish and oversee processes for implementation of and accountability for these resolutions and to report to the fall meeting of ELCA Church Council in 2021.*

Response from Office of the Presiding Bishop (Nov. 2021)

The 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted [Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action](#) (FSJ) as this church’s thirteenth social statement. (Social statements are theological-ethical teaching and policy documents that guide this church’s public witness and faith formation. They are rooted in the Scriptures and Lutheran theology. All but one are available in English and Spanish.)

Implementing resolutions associated with ELCA social statements are voted upon separately from them. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly voted in favor of 18 resolutions, which includes the request for a report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on progress made on the implementing resolutions. (English, pp. 81-83; Spanish pp. 90-93)

This report includes known activities and is not intended to be exclusive. Across the ELCA, many individuals, congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, including schools, live out the implementing resolutions in a variety of ways, even while opportunities for serving neighbors with gender justice continue to abound. Not every resolution requires action from the churchwide organization, as noted at the end of the chart.

WORK: What has been or is being done?	WHO	RELATED IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION/S	TIMELINE	NOTES
study guide to <i>FSJ</i>	Justice for Women, Theological Ethics and Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations, Communications	1, 2	November 2021	six digital sessions, in- person or online
online engagement with <i>FSJ</i>	Justice for Women	1, 2		
50 40 10 ordination anniversary initiatives	Office of the Presiding Bishop (OPB), including Justice for Women, Communications, Research and Evaluation, Archives	5, 7, 11	March 2019 to fall 2021	

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50 th anniversary of the ordination of women survey and report	Research and Evaluation, Office of the Secretary (OS), Justice for Women, (former) Domestic Mission	1, 5, 7	final report posted by end of November 2021	
ELCA Quality of Call initiative	OPB (including Justice for Women), Christian Community (CCL) and Leadership, OS, Conference of Bishops, synods, rostered ministers	1, 2, 5, 7, 15, 16	ongoing	three foci to Quality of Call initiative: pastors who are women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+. focus on women underway other two foci in planning stages donor-funded
Report on ELCA family leave policies	ELCA Quality of Call initiative (OPB, CCL)	7		
ELCA Womanist Theology Initiative	Justice for Women, Quality of Call, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Luther Seminary, Thrivent (in part). All seminaries are working in conversation on this initiative.	1, 2, 5, 14, (15), (16)	begun fall 2020 and ongoing	proposed pan-seminary courses and certification (courses January and June 2021; January 2022) lecture series online reading groups young women and girls of African Descent participated in cohorts organized by the Rev. Dr. Beverly Wallace in an online womanist conference
online sessions on language and images for God	Justice for Women	8	ongoing	

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book publication by Fortress Press, <i>Language for God: A Lutheran Perspective</i>	Mary J. Streufert, director for Justice for Women	8	anticipated publication, June 2022	written for rostered leaders and lay members
consultation with NCC partners on possible ecumenical collaboration on an inclusive lectionary supplement	Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations and Justice for Women	8	open	
legislation that affects and effects gender justice	Witness in Society, with occasional consultation with Justice for Women	10	ongoing	
online database of Lutheran Women's Works in Religion	Justice for Women	14	ongoing	allows searches by race and ethnicity, subject, and Lutheran World Federation regions national and global database includes broad theological work—sermons, lessons, articles, books, etc.
gender justice orientation	People First, Justice for Women	16	ongoing	
ELCA Candidacy Summit, workshop on sexism in candidacy process	CCL, Quality of Call	16	March 2021	led by former social statement task force member and ELCA deaconess
boundary education	CCL, Quality of Call, Region 9 synods, unknown others	16	ongoing	some boundary educators incorporate anti-sexism into education; required boundary education for persons in

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				candidacy process
finance and gender-based violence	Justice for Women	3	fall 2020 and 2021	early stages of collaboration with Criterion Institute, which works with financial entities to invest in ways that prevent and mitigate the effects of gender-based violence
Lutheran World Federation collaboration on 2017 assembly resolutions related to gender justice	Justice for Women, Service and Justice, Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations	1, 2, 3, 7, 16	ongoing	
relational influence	ELCA Church Council	12, 13, 14, 15	ongoing	
governance influence	ELCA Church Council	11	ongoing	
process of public repentance and day of confession and repentance for churchwide assembly 2022	ELCA Church Council in collaboration with Justice for Women	17	November 16, 2021 meeting planned with key staff and council members spring 2022 church council meeting	
	Various spheres of the church	4, 6		

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop in response to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action related to the implementing resolutions for the social statement, Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action.

Responses to Previous Church Council Actions

1. Deacons Unified Cross Design

Background:

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 (Feb. 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.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06q]

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.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Nov. 2021)

The process to commission a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service was delayed in 2021 as churchwide staff continued to reprioritize ongoing work, key projects and new tasks identified as a result of staffing reorganization and a lingering pandemic. Although work on this project is resuming, a proposed design could not be completed in time to bring to Church Council for the Fall 2021 meeting. The Worship team respectfully asks that this be delayed to 2022.

An updated timeline is already in process to identify a final design and solidify a sustainable manufacturing and distribution plan. Barring any delays outside the control of churchwide staff, the timeline anticipates a design to be presented to the Church Council at the Spring 2022 meeting.

An earlier report to Church Council noted a considerable variety of opinions among deacons about potential design concepts, or in some cases, an apparent lack of interest in a common cross design for ministers of Word and Service. One possible path forward may be to propose not adopting a unified cross design.

While it is anticipated that start-up and prototype costs may be funded from existing sources, some one-time funding may need to be proposed in the FY2022 budget. It is anticipated that ongoing manufacturing and distribution will be financially self-sustaining.

Appropriate guidance about the use of the symbols of the ministry of Word and Service will be drafted in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary and the Candidacy and Leadership Manager – Word and Service.

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 postpone a final design recommendation to the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting.

2. Climate Change Action

Background:

At its November 2019 meeting, Church Council referred a recommendation on climate change from the Conference of Bishops [CB19.09.26] to the Domestic Mission unit for a timeline on when the resolution would receive further attention [CC19.11.41].

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (March 2020)

The ELCA response to climate change is not unified but is conducted across all three churchwide expressions. Programmatic responsibility includes Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), Advocacy, Global Mission, World Hunger, Stewardship, and Congregational Vitality. In addition, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) as a grassroots Lutheran entity is instrumental in education and resourcing congregations and synods. These and other stakeholders met in January 2020 to propose a holistic and integrated approach and coordination on the impacts of climate change as a matter of sustainability.

The first phase in addressing climate change is the formation of a Sustainability Table that brings together the different churchwide programs and ministries to address not only climate change, but other environmental and energy matters that recognizes the intersectionality and impact of climate on every fiber of life; and to move

with resolve to implement actions. (Please see below) The convener initially will be the Advocacy Program Director, Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility.

	Sustainability Table Description
Purpose	To explore and pull together holistically ELCA churchwide and congregational strategies and activities that care for and protect all of creation into a coordinated effort for being more effective stewards of God’s good creation.
Goal	To build capacity at all levels for equipping the Church to actively utilize our many gifts in witness and service in response to human need in our communities, countries and the world.
Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop specific goals and measurements 2. Establish Steering committee members: Advocacy; Young Adult, Domestic Mission, Global Mission, Mission Advancement, Synods/Congregations, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) 3. Create Smaller Working Issue Groups: Communication, Education, Advocacy, Energy/Building Grounds, Worship, Justice (racial, ethnic, economic, environmental) and Funding.
Membership	Advocacy, LDR, Campus Ministries, Global Missions, Universities and Colleges, Young Adult Ministry, Multi-Cultural/Ethnic Ministry Associations, Synods Rep., Deacons, Lay people, Church Council, Outdoor Ministry, Bishop Rep., Facilities/Operations (CW), Investment staff, Strategic Communications, Coaches, Ecumenical Partners, Science/Tech & Faith; and Worship/Music, Stewardship, and Mission Advancement.
Meeting Timeline	Initial Introductory Call -----December 16, 2019 Organizing Meeting-----January 27, 2020 Steering Committee Call-----On or before March 2, 2020 Full Table Meeting-----On or before March 31, 2020 Scheduled Meetings-----Once per quarter

Church Council action [CC20.03.03g]

- To receive the response on climate change from the Domestic Mission unit;
- To affirm the coordinated approach and proposed timeline for this church’s response to climate change; and
- To anticipate progress reports at future Church Council meetings with a final report by the April 2022 Church Council meeting.

Response from Domestic Mission unit (Oct. 2020)

Addressing climate change in a more unified manner across ELCA began with the 2019 fourth quarter launching of the Sustainability Table (Table). The Table seeks to build capacity and brings together the different churchwide programs and ministries. It embodies our responsibility as stewards of God’s creation through climate action seeking justice and equity for all. Below is a synopsis of the climate change work.

Sustainability Table: The Table operates with Funding, Faith Formation, Capacity Building, Organizational and Operational, Communication, and Advocacy workgroups; and a Steering Committee. The work includes: seeking sources of funding for resiliency projects; building up ELCA congregations’ and ministries’ capacities for adapting to climate change; piloting a Rainwater Harvesting project to teach and share learnings about water conservation; developing plan to address the impact of racism on sustainability; and formulating strategies to address the interconnectivity of climate change and disasters. Areas being evaluated include notification to potential buyers of areas prone to flooding and subject to wildfires, how to build back better, assist Lutheran Disaster Response in preparing for January 2021 consultation; identifying role for ELCA in greenhouse gases mitigation measures, and devising climate migration action plan.

Advocacy: Promoting policies to equitably transition to resilient societies without leaving anyone behind. ELCA leadership and interfaith colleagues organized two (2019 and 2020) innovative interfaith events to galvanize experiences, relationships, and resources toward addressing the climate crisis infused with conviction and hope at this watershed moment each held during United Nations Climate Change Week. Through

collaboration with ecoAmerica's Blessed Tomorrow, the ELCA co-branded an ELCA-specific video and researched resources for talking about climate change with congregations and members (available at [Resources](#)). ELCA votes initiatives and advocacy tools equip members with facts and tips to express their creation care concerns in policy consideration and the ballot. Awareness of intersection of environmental racism and health is raised in resources produced by ELCA advocacy staff. Arranged for diverse ELCA group to participate in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) as an accredited party.

Corporate Social Responsibility: Review and update issues sheets and screens for social purpose funds investing guidance. Participate in the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) committees addressing justice and climate change issues; and serve on ICCR's Board.

Stewardship: ELCA Caring for Creation Coaching has 16 Level II coaches prepared to work with congregations. We are currently preparing guidelines and orientation for some of these coaches to accompany congregations on their Earth Charter Implementation Plans. A new cohort of coaches will start in October. Also introducing 10 Questions to Manage Your Energy Footprint to congregations and synods.

The next update will be issued in the Spring of 2021.

There was not significant progress to report to the Spring 2021 meeting of the Church Council, so the progress report was postponed to the Fall 2021 meeting.

Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)

The Sustainability Table (Table) established in 2019 assists ELCA in addressing climate change. Below is a synopsis of the ongoing climate change work.

Sustainability Table (including Building Resilient Communities (BRC) and Witness In Society (WIS)): The Table's work includes preparing ELCA congregations' and ministries' capacities for building resilient communities in the face of climate change and other environmental matters.

The Table's Capacity Building working group from December 2020 – February 2021 conducted an online survey in the Delaware-Maryland Synod on Care for Creation. The survey helped develop a baseline understanding of environmental issues. Most respondents believed climate change is happening now but see a gap between what they perceive can be done and what is being done. The follow-up work assisted by ELCA Creation Care Coaches (now numbering 22) includes holding eight focus group sessions. The Capacity Building working group submitted a question on creation care in the Form C questionnaire for the ELCA Congregation Annual Report for inclusion in the 2021 report. The responses will help inform the current thinking and capacities of the church and its ministries. Listening Sessions were held with Central States and Arkansas-Oklahoma synods. The sessions helped identify needed resources for synods. The Table, working with the Member Communications Strategy working group, will develop a Sustainability website to provide a centralized churchwide space for resources. The Table's Organizational and Operational working group will assist in procuring the resources.

WIS led a coalition of partners in holding a side event during President Biden's April 2021 Summit on Climate Change. The consultation called for the inclusion of the expertise of Indigenous and faith communities alongside career politicians and others to implement climate solutions. ELCA will send a diverse delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties (COP 26) from October 31 – November 12, 2021. COP 26 will be the most significant COP since 2015 for addressing the climate crisis, "seen as the summit to both address what has and hasn't been achieved since 2015, while also setting concrete plans to reach the Paris Agreement targets" ([Euronews](#) Sept. 30), the US also having rejoined the Paris Agreement." ELCA met with high level Treasury Department officials on ways multilateral financial institutions can align with climate change goals.

BRC and WIS are partnering to initiate a Net-Zero by 2050 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions pilot project with the Pennsylvania synods to accompany communities on the journey to a livable

future where no one is left behind, starting with support for ministries in reducing their GHG emissions. Interested facilities will receive a baseline assessment of their emissions and site-specific long-term evergreen climate action plan proposals informed by their ministry priorities. Depending upon the ministry site, the recommendations may cover energy efficiency, water use, waste reduction, transportation, and land use/farming.

The Corporate Social Responsibility staff updates documents for social purpose funds investing guidance and is a member of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) committees addressing justice and climate change issues and serves on ICCR's Board.

The final update will be issued in the Spring of 2022.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To receive the progress report on climate change from the Service and Justice unit; and
To request the final report at the April 2022 Church Council meeting.**

3. Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent

Background:

At the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, the assembly received the African Descent Lutherans memorial from 10 synods calling for a number of actions related to the ELCA's observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the commemoration of the United Nation's International Decade of People of African Descent. In response, the assembly requested in part that the Domestic Mission unit staff create a "Declaration to the African Descent Community." [CA16.05.17]

At its special meeting in June 2019, the Church Council adopted "A Declaration to the People of African Descent" and directed additional action steps to be taken. [CC19.06.23]

Church Council action [CC19.06.23]

...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...

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Nov. 2021)

Due to the transition of related research staff, the progress report will be delayed, and the Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area will not be ready to report by the Nov. 2021 meeting. However, this work is expected to be included as part of the Quality of Call project, which is considering barriers faced by women, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ pastors in the ELCA.

Additionally, Portico Benefit Services has reported that they do not have ethnic background in its systems and therefore would not have any data to segment rostered ministers of color. The terms of Portico's privacy policy by which Portico gathers compensation information from membership precludes using that data for purposes other than providing benefits.

An update on this work is anticipated for the Spring 2022 meeting with a full report in Fall 2022.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the update from the Christian Community and Leadership unit and Portico Benefit Services on the research work related to the discriminatory treatment within the call process and the inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color; and

To request a progress report be presented at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with a final report at the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.

Responses to Synod Actions

1. Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers from the Roster of the ELCA

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2021]

Bishop Kurt Kusserow submitted a letter to the Church Council on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council seeking guidance 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.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06s]

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.

Response from Office of the Secretary (Nov. 2021)

Following the referral to the Office of the Secretary of the resolution from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council, Secretary Sue Rothmeyer conferred with Bishop Kurt Kusserow, whose letter had prompted the request. Bishop Kusserow has offered to serve on an *ad hoc* task force to consider guidelines for synods to use in conducting the status review of retired rostered ministers called for in the roster manual. He requested that a member of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops also serve on the task force, and Bishop Shelley Wickstrom of the Alaska Synod has agreed. The task force will submit a proposal to the Roster Committee and the Conference of Bishops for possible guidelines to be inserted in the roster manual. A final draft would then be submitted to the Church Council to approve for inclusion in the roster manual.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers for the Roster of the ELCA” from the Office of the Secretary;

To anticipate a progress report at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with possible updates to the roster manual; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

2. 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 four 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.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06r]

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.

Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2021]

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 statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (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, this church 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 the 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;"¹ and

WHEREAS, the 2019 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;"² 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 "can move us toward the pressing goal of reduced GHG emissions and just application of that [carbon] pricing or policy";³ and

WHEREAS, the "Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019"⁴ has received bipartisan support in the last two sessions in Congress and is broadly consistent with the following principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy's "Carbon Pricing Basics" primer:

- Any carbon tax must be structured to respect the jeopardy of vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Any carbon pricing mechanism must not be fiscally regressive but rather must respect vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Emissions targets should be consistent with credible science and with the IPCC special report's directive that global warming be kept at 1.5 degrees Celsius or less.
- An adjustment mechanism should be included in case the emissions targets are not being met.
- Federal agencies should not be prohibited from proposing new regulations on GHGs if such regulations are needed.
- An effective carbon tax must be applied to as many sectors as possible. Because of the global nature of the problem, border issues and trade policies must also be considered in designing the tax, so that problems are not remedied through workarounds.
- The process for identifying problems and implementing solutions in a carbon tax should be participatory and transparent for all stakeholders.
- The pricing mechanism itself should be transparent and accountable to government authority to ensure that goals are being met.
- Portions of the revenue collected should be used to invest in worker transition, community resilience and renewable energy, with priority given to helping all communities adapt and become more resilient.
- Transparency and accountability should be built into the pricing mechanism.
- The mechanism for awarding rebates to individuals/households should reach the most vulnerable, regardless of income or citizenship.
- Existing environmental and climate change protections should not be rolled back.

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 Southeastern 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 Southeastern Iowa Synod thanks the ELCA Church Council for receiving this resolution at its next meeting, and requests the Council or its Executive Committee to forward this resolution to ELCA Advocacy

¹ Climate Leadership Council, "[Economists Statement on Carbon Dividends.](#)" January 17, 2019.

² [Report of Actions of the Church Council \(November 12-14, 2020\).](#)

³ ELCA Advocacy, "[Carbon Pricing Basics.](#)" October 2019.

⁴ [H.R. 763, Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019.](#)

with encouragement to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod encourages congregations in our synod to utilize “Carbon Pricing Basics” in adult education offerings; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Synod rededicates itself to care for creation and to advocate for social and environmental justice, using the resources of Lutherans Restoring Creation (lutheransrestoringcreation.org) and other organizations.

Executive Committee action [EC21.08.15b]

To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Southeastern 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.

Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches, including carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards, and GHG mitigation technologies. Economists generally believe carbon pricing to be the best tool for having the most significant impact in the near term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax. This resolution’s focus is on an Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (Act).

Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2021 Status: H.R.2307 – The Act of 2021 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives (House) on April 1, 2021. The House of Representatives bill history record shows that the legislation was referred to the House Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs. On April 2, 2021, the Committee on Energy and Commerce referred the legislation to the Subcommittee on Energy, where it remains.

Overview of Carbon Tax Legislation: The probability of a stand-alone carbon tax legislation such as the Act coming to either the House or Senate floor for a vote is very slim. Despite the economics of the Act put forth by economists, or the lobbying efforts of such groups as the [Citizen Climate Lobby](#) (CCL) or the bipartisan [Climate Leadership Council](#), none of which proves to be sufficient to bridge the political divide existing in the current partisan environment.

The carbon tax impasse is not new. [CCL](#) has been advocating for carbon fee and dividend legislation since 2010. Over ten different carbon pricing bills were introduced in Congress over the past few years. A [New York Times](#) article (dated 10/13/2021) gives an overview of how the political dynamics hinder bringing forth bills like the Act. The Times states, “[a] tax on carbon dioxide pollution could be the single most effective policy to tackle climate change. But, unfortunately, it could also be politically explosive.” There is a fear that even with the dividends used as rebates to citizens, higher prices for electricity and some goods would be too much for people to handle. There have been rumors of including some type of carbon tax in the Build Back Better Act, which would if enacted, be the most significant climate legislation ever for the U.S., but the White House did not support this tax.

WIS Advocacy: In 2019, the Domestic Mission Unit (Advocacy) developed a primer covering [carbon pricing basics](#) and a [carbon pricing questions document](#) to analyze any carbon fee legislation.

Witnessing In Society (WIS, aka Advocacy) advocates for climate change legislation and collaborates with ecumenical, interfaith, and civil society working for climate justice and equity. WIS maintains leadership roles in organizations such as [America Is All In](#), and spearheads efforts to take

our message to the highest levels of government, such as creating the opportunity for the presiding bishop to participate in a high-level White House meeting on the Build Back Better Act.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

To receive the response on “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” from Service and Justice;

To commend the ELCA Advocacy staff for their overarching support of carbon tax legislation given the current impasse on such legislation, and their continued advocacy for climate justice and equity; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

3. Gender Representation and Inclusion (2021 memorial reclassified as a resolution)

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2021]

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to expand gender/sex language beyond using binary terms for church members representing groups, congregations, conferences and other subunits within synods, and synods at gatherings in any of the three expressions of the church by changing section 5.01. in order to expand the gender quota requirement therein, and explicitly grant access and inclusion of nonbinary and gender fluid individuals in full participation of church life and to expand the ELCA’s commitment to inclusiveness in Chapter 5 of the ELCA constitution to include a specifically stated commitment to inclusion of nonbinary and gender fluid persons in the business of the church, including as voting members.

Response from Office of the Secretary (Nov. 2021)

The Church Council will consider at this meeting a proposed continuing resolution, 5.01.H21., which specifies that, for the purposes of the representational principles, the percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men by 5.01.e. and f. may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, women, men, or other genders.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Gender Representation and Inclusion” from the Office of the Secretary;

To acknowledge the action taken on proposed continuing resolution 5.01.H21 as the response of the Church Council to this resolution from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

[Updated 11/8/21]

Proposed Amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA Continuing Resolutions for Church Council Consideration

Chapter 5: Principles of Organization

5.01.C00C21. The term, “persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English,” shall be understood to mean African American, African Descent, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting this church’s commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work.

~~5.01.H21.~~ For purposes of the representational principles set forth in 5.01.e. and f., the percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, women, men, or other genders.

Chapter 7: Ministry

7.74.A19A21. Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service

...

	Setting	Calling Body
b.	12.0 Independent Lutheran Organization	Church Council <u>upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</u>

Chapter 12: Churchwide Assembly

12.41.C04C21. Congregation Observers. Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31 in the year of a Churchwide Assembly.

- a. Provision shall be made for such an individual to have reserved seating in the observers section of the plenary hall. Such congregation observers will ~~receive~~ have access to a copy of the report of recommendations for assembly action and also materials distributed ~~on the plenary floor~~ to voting members, advisory members, and non-voting members during the assembly. Such observers shall have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly.

Chapter 15

15.12.B20B21. Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

- a. The presiding bishop shall appoint An an executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, who shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall:

...

15.12.C20C21. Responsibility for Human Resources People Solutions and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Responsibility for human resources people solutions and diversity, equity, and inclusion shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, which shall develop and manage the personnel policies and procedures for the churchwide organization, including policies and procedures regarding equal-employment opportunity; recruitment, interview, and selection of staff; compensation and benefits; employee-assistance programs; just and equitable employee-relations practices; performance evaluation; maintenance of personnel records; and training. In accordance with bylaw 14.21.06., the Church Council shall adopt personnel policies upon recommendation of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The presiding bishop shall appoint an executive for human resources who shall be responsible for people solutions and this church’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

[Updated 11/8/21]

15.12.D20D21. Responsibility for Theological Discernment

Responsibility shall be exercised in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for serving the Church's theological work by promoting, coordinating, and facilitating theological discernment of the Church's message and its theological foundations in collaboration with all who share in the responsibilities to be teachers of the faith in the Church, including the Conference of Bishops, the seminary faculties, the convocation of teaching theologians, networks such as Lutheran ethicists and women theologians, the editorial staff of the publishing ministry and publications, and all rostered ministers. This responsibility for serving the Church's theological work also shall encompass theological work in and commitment to discern, understand, and respond to racism, classism, and sexism and issues of justice for women in the Church and in society in order to advance full participation, equal opportunity, and justice for all. To fulfill these responsibilities, the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive ~~for theological discernment~~, who will assist the presiding bishop and coordinate the service of staff groups that provide theological resources and assistance in programmatic implementation.

15.12.E20E21. Responsibility for Development

Responsibility for planning, coordination, and management of the execution of this church's fundraising efforts and donor communications shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. To fulfill these responsibilities, the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive ~~for development~~, who, in collaboration with the Endowment Fund of the ELCA, shall:

15.14.B20B21. Responsibility for Information Technology

The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of the churchwide organization. The treasurer shall appoint an executive ~~for information technology~~, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.

Chapter 16: Units of the Churchwide Organization

16.11.A21. As it pertains to the churchwide organization, a unit may also be described as a home area.

16.12.A20A21. Responsibilities of the Christian Community and Leadership Unit

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.

This unit shall:

- a. create and revitalize congregations and ministries;
- b. enhance evangelism and discipleship;
- c. ~~support multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to become more ethnically diverse oversee the development of multicultural ministries and collaborate on the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity;~~
- d. support efforts to reach new people, young people, and to become more economically diverse;
- e. foster relationships with educational institutions, including participation in and support of the Network of Colleges and Universities of this church;
- f. recruit, train, and help to deploy lay and rostered leaders;
- g. support the candidacy and assignment processes;
- h. coordinate the work of Young Adults in Global Mission and the ELCA Youth Gathering;
- i. oversee the chaplaincies of this church in domestic specialized ministry settings as well as federal chaplaincies both the U.S. armed forces at home and abroad, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other federal agencies and institutions; and

16.12.D21D. Responsibilities of the Service and Justice Unit

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

[Updated 11/8/21]

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.

The Service and Justice unit shall support the freedom of Christians to love and serve their neighbor through the following areas:

a. Peoples and Communities: maintain global church-to-church relationships and mutual endeavors for evangelical witness and sharing of mission personnel; ~~support ethnic specific and multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity~~ oversee the work of the ethnic specific ministries and collaborate on multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity;

...

c. Witness in Society: empower members to engage with systems and processes to promote the well-being of the human community and creation in the public square, local and federal government, and the international community; equip and encourage members to seek dignity and peace; advance justice in response to human suffering, marginalization, and exclusion; and promote equality, justice, and respect for the value of every person to reduce the systemic injustices impacting communities and societies; to advance corporate social responsibility through environmental, social, and justice principles to create a just and sustainable society.

Chapter 17

17.20.A19A21. 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:

a. manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other non-profit organizations; ~~operated exclusively for religious purposes having a formal affiliation with a church or a religious organization~~, and ~~shall~~ invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts.

b. provide retirement, health, and other benefits for the benefit of eligible members working within the structure of this church and other non-profit organizations; ~~operated exclusively for religious purposes having a formal affiliation with a church or a religious organization.~~

...

j. 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.

17.30.A19A21. Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:

a. have primary responsibility for the development, administration, promotion, and sale of ~~Mission Investments~~ investment obligations;

b. develop and administer a loan program, including management responsibilities for the underwriting, legal, accounting, reporting, servicing, marketing, and other related functions;

c. provide expertise for management of real property and execute all necessary documents for the acquisition and disposition of such property;

d. relate to the Christian Community and Leadership ~~Domestic Mission~~ unit, which ~~shall may~~ request real estate acquisition for new and existing ministries within the limits of the capital funds available and within established criteria;

e. confer with the ~~Domestic Mission~~ Christian Community and Leadership unit on any loans to developing ministries;

~~f. offer building and architectural consultative services to new congregations entering first unit construction, to congregations relocating with synod approval, to other congregations, and to other organizations and institutions that are affiliated with this church;~~

~~g. offer building and property consultative services to congregations of this church; and~~

~~h. offer financial management and consulting services to synods including, for example, banking and treasury management services, accounting services, payroll management services, audit coordination, financial reporting services, and budgeting services.~~

[Updated 11/8/21]

Chapter 18: Regions

18.01.A08A21. *The regions shall be numbered 1 through 9 and ~~comprised~~ composed of the following synods (as designated in bylaw 10.01.01.):...*

Chapter 19: Nominations and Election Process

19.01.A18A21. *In a year when the vice president or secretary shall be elected, those who will serve as voting members of the upcoming Churchwide Assembly~~the voting members elected to serve at the Churchwide Assembly~~ shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons who might be considered for election as vice president or secretary. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall contact those persons identified and request biographical information. At least 60 days prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members.*

19.01.D19D21. Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot

a. *For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of ~~that~~ each synod. Unless an electronic or computerized voting system is being utilized, the bishops ~~of the synod~~, or ~~his or her~~ their designees, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from ~~their~~ synods. The Elections Committee will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each officer and member of the Church Council serving as an ex officio voting member of the assembly.*

...

i. *When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair of the assembly will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot.*

19.02.A11A21. *On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the year preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection as nominees by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit request that the nominee's synod provide a replacement name ~~from the same synod as the original nominee~~. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

19.03.A91A21. *With respect to committees that consider disciplinary cases or appeals:*

- a. *Any member of the churchwide Committee on Discipline who has been appointed to serve on a discipline hearing committee for a particular pending case shall continue to serve to discharge that appointment notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*
- b. *Any member of the synod Committee on Discipline who is serving at the time that the Executive Committee of the Church Council appoints members from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to a discipline hearing committee shall continue as a member of that discipline hearing committee for the particular pending case, notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Synod Assembly.*
- c. *Any member of the Committee on Appeals who is serving at the time that an appeal is made shall continue to serve to decide that appeal, notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

19.11.A16A21. Churchwide Assembly Nominations Desk and Nominations Form

a. *Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church.*

[Updated 11/8/21]

19.11.B19B21. Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations

- a. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other committee or board to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written documented support of at least 20 other voting members.

19.11.C05C21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Boards and Committees

- a. Nominations from the floor for positions on ~~churchwide~~ boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.

19.11.D16D21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Church Council

Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.

19.11.E98E21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee

- a. Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.

19.11.F19F21. Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot

- a. The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used.
b. Unless an electronic or computerized voting system is being utilized, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of ~~that~~ each synod. When instructed by the chair, the bishops ~~of the synod~~, or ~~his or her~~ their designees, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from ~~their~~ their synods. The vice president of this church will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each member of the Church Council serving as an ex officio voting member of the assembly. The Elections Committee will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each officer of this church.

19.11.G2198. Breaking Ties in Elections

- b. On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for ~~her or his~~ vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for ~~his or her~~ vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted.

Chapter 20: Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication

- 20.61.A20A21.** p. No member of the Committee on Appeals shall serve on any case if such a member is related (as defined in 19.06.07.) to the accused, the accuser(s), any witness who testified before the discipline hearing committee, or a member of the consultation or discipline hearing committee that considered the case, or where such member is a member or former member of a congregation that was an accuser or an accused. A member of the Committee on Appeals also may voluntarily disqualify themselves himself or herself.

**Proposed Amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*
Items for Ratification Relating to 4.02.c.**

Constitutional provision 4.02.c. [CA19.05.27.] and related provisions [CA19.05.28] were amended by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The adopted amendments must go to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for ratification.

- 4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity ~~and~~, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~powerless-oppressed~~ and committing itself to their needs.
- 7.31.02. Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world~~advocating dignity, justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- 7.61.02. Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- †S6.02.** To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:
- c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, ~~and~~ justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~oppressed powerless~~ and committing itself to their needs.
- †S14.12.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- †S14.32.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- *C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity ~~and~~, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~powerless-oppressed~~ and committing itself to their needs.

- *C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- *C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

[Updated 11/4/21]

Proposed Amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* General Amendments

Chapter 5: Principles of Organization

- 5.01. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church. This church recognizes that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. Therefore, all actions of this church by congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization shall be carried out under his rule and authority in accordance with the following principles:
- e. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the appropriate office or unit of the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men, and that, ~~where possible~~, the representation of rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament shall include both men and women. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Processes shall be developed that will assure that in selecting staff there will be a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and persons on the rosters of this church. This balance is to be evident in the selection of staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.
 - f. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, synods, through synod councils, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men, and that, ~~where possible~~, the representation of rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament shall include both women and men. Each synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of the membership of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

Chapter 7: Ministry

- 7.31.03. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.31.04., a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament shall have:
- b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee ~~for at least a year~~ before being approved for call;
 - c. satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America or completed a program of study for those accepted into the TEEM program (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries), including practical preparation, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, such as internship and supervised clinical work;
 - d. completed ~~at least one year of residency~~ the expectations and outcomes established for Lutheran learning and formation in a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
 - ...
 - g. been recommended to a congregation ~~or other entity~~ by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call ~~in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council~~; and
- 7.41.07. **Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Sacrament may retire upon ~~attainment~~ attaining the earlier of age 60, or ~~after~~ 30 years on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synod bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster.

- 7.46. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for **any of** the following reasons:
 - 4) **inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical**-disability or **mental** incapacity of the pastor;
 - b. When allegations of **physical**-disability or **mental**-incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - c. In case of alleged **physical**-disability or **mental**-incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ **resumption** of the **ability to conduct the office effectively**~~disability and restoration of the pastor to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- 7.61.03. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.61.04., a candidate who is to be called and received onto the roster as a minister of Word and Service shall have:
- b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee ~~for at least a year~~ before being approved for call;
 - ...
 - e. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod ~~to in~~ which the candidate ~~has been assigned is being considered~~ for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- 7.71.04. **Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Service may retire upon ~~attainment~~**attaining the earlier** of age 60; or ~~after~~ 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synod bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.
- 7.75. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or following consultation with the synod bishop for **any of** the following reasons:
 - 4) **inability to conduct the office effectively in view of physical**-disability or **mental**-incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
 - b. When allegations of **physical**-disability or **mental**-incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one non-rostered person, or
 - c. In case of alleged **physical**-disability or **mental**-incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ **resumption** of the **ability to conduct the office effectively**~~disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

Chapter 8: Relationships

- 8.14.** The churchwide organization shall implement the extended mission of the Church, developing churchwide policies in consultation with the synods and congregations, entering into relationship with institutions of higher education and with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions and/or in response to specific agreed-upon areas of responsibility.
- 8.21.04.** Each unincorporated seminary shall have an advisory council or ~~governing~~-board distinct from the board of directors of the college or university of which the seminary is a school, department, or unit. The seminary advisory council or ~~governing~~-board shall relate to the Church Council through the appropriate churchwide unit. The members of the unincorporated seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~-board shall be elected as specified in the governing documents of the related college or university, and shall consist of 12 to 30 members, as follows:
- at least one-fifth nominated by the Church Council upon recommendation of the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~-board;
 - two members nominated by the bishops of the supporting synods from among their number;
 - one member, who shall serve as chair of the advisory council or ~~governing~~ board and as a voting member of the board of directors of the college or university, nominated by the Church Council, upon recommendation of the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~-board; and
 - the remaining members to be from the supporting synods, nominated by the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~-board in consultation with the supporting synods.
- 8.21.06.** Each unincorporated seminary shall have a chief administrative officer, such as an academic dean, seminary provost, or vice president, who is on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church. In the appointment or election of the chief administrative officer of the seminary, the college or university shall consult with the seminary advisory council or ~~governing~~-board, the presiding bishop of this church, and the appropriate churchwide unit. The college or university board shall exercise all other normal governance functions, including the appointment of tenured faculty, in consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board, and shall have authority to recruit students throughout this church.
- 8.22.** ~~Colleges and Universities. This church shall express its responsibility for higher education through~~relate to its colleges and universities in their mission to educate students for vocations in the Church and the world. The churchwide organization, through the appropriate churchwide unit, shall support an association of this church's colleges and universities, the appropriate churchwide unit as determined by the Church Council, and its synods. While variation is possible in college or university relationships across this church, this church recognizes the desirability of some degree of uniformity of relationship for colleges and universities within the same region.
- ~~**8.22.01.** The relationship of this church to its colleges and universities shall be guided by policies fostering educational institutions dedicated to the Lutheran tradition wherein such institutions are an essential part of God's mission in the world; faithful to the will of God as institutions providing quality instruction in religion and a lively ministry of worship, outreach, and service; diligent in their preparation of leaders committed to truth, excellence, and ethical values; and pledged to the well-being of students in the development of mind, body, and spirit.~~
- 8.22.012.** ~~Colleges~~Each college and universities ~~university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~this church shall establish a ~~may relate to this church in various ways, including~~ relationship with: ~~the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council,~~
- ~~a synod~~ assembly or synods; ~~or~~
 - ~~a corporation whose voting members are, or have been elected or appointed by;~~ a synod or synods assemblies, other organizational units (conferences, clusters, etc.), or congregations; or. ~~Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not for profit~~
 - ~~a corporation~~
 - that has voting members, at least a majority of whom shall consist of members of the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council, and
 - that shall hold the meeting of such a corporation in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council for the purpose of approving amendments to the articles of incorporation, and

approving amendments to other governing documents which affect the relationship between the college or university and this church. A majority of the members of the governing board of a corporation that meets in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly or Church Council shall be members of this church or of a church body with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, but under no circumstances shall fewer than forty (40) percent of the members of such board be members of this church.

- 8.22.0302.** ~~Primary responsibility for the size and composition of a college or university's board of directors, including recruiting and electing board members, for its board~~ belongs to each college or university of this church. This responsibility ~~is best~~ shall be exercised congruent with the form of relationship, as provided in 8.22.01, established by the college or university with this church, when appropriate structures of this church are substantially involved. ~~The college or university and the appropriate synods shall determine how many of the college or university board members are to be elected or ratified by the approved form of relationship as provided in 8.22.02.~~
- 8.22.034.** ~~The~~ responsibility for initiating changes in constitutional governance and governance documents rests with each college or university of this church. ~~This responsibility shall be exercised congruent with the form of relationship as provided in 8.22.01., established by the college or university with this church. Each college or university will reach agreement with the appropriate structures of this church as identified in 8.22.02. regarding changes in constitutional documents. This church's participation may range from prior consultation to final approval.~~
- 8.22.05.** ~~Representation of members of this church on college or university boards, limitation of terms for board members, whether or not college or university presidents shall be members of this church, and representation of bishops of synods on college or university boards shall be determined by each institution and the appropriate synods.~~
- 8.22.046.** In addition to and consistent with the above provision 8.22 and bylaws 8.22.01 through 8.22.035, colleges and universities of this church where a school, department, or unit of that institution is a seminary of this church must comply with all requirements, policies, procedures, and standards specified in provision 8.21 and bylaws 8.21.01 through 8.21.08.
- 8.63.01.** A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church or a minister of Word and Service, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster—upon endorsement by the synod bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. A letter of call may be issued to a minister of Word and Service of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (7.74.A19A21.b.).
- 8.63.05.** The availability of a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in “yoked parish” settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.
- b. *Extended service:* A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of a congregation of this church for an extended period of time, yet remain a minister of Word and Sacrament of ~~his or her~~ the minister's present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in a congregation of this church in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synod bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of this church in a given situation.

Chapter 9: Congregations

- 9.21.02.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of the congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which ~~this church the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ officially has established a relationship of full communion by action of a Churchwide Assembly may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of a congregation of this church.
- 9.23.** In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and its accompanying bylaws ~~9.21.01.~~ and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that calls or otherwise maintains as its pastor a person who is neither:
- a. minister of Word and Sacrament who has resigned or been removed from this church's roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament; nor
 - b. or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and called pursuant to bylaw 9.21.01; nor
 - c. authorized as a minister pursuant to bylaw 7.31.10; nor
 - d. a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which this church has established a relationship of full communion and contracted with pursuant to bylaw 9.21.02;
- may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synod bishop.
- 9.24.** A recognized and received congregation that is part of this church shall, when legally possible, be incorporated and may, in its sole discretion:
- a. own property and be responsible for its care; and
 - b. call or employ staff.
- 9.27.** Each congregation, except those which are in partnerrelationship with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish a relationship with the synod in whose territory it is located.
- 9.62.** A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless ~~he or she is a~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of the congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - ...
 - d. If the congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless ~~he or she is a~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of the congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- 9.81.02.** A federated congregation may be formed by two or more separate congregations that shall continue to exist as separate but cooperating entities. The separate congregations in a federated congregation shall be related to their respective church bodies that have established a relationship of full communion in accord with 8.61. and 9.81. A federated congregation shall conduct its life and work under a plan of agreement approved by the two or more separate congregations upon recommendation of the synod in which the congregation is located, with the synod acting in concert with the comparable ecclesiastical entity of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists.

Chapter 10: Synods

10.01.01. Names and Boundaries. The names and boundaries of the synods shall be:

Synod 2.C—Pacifica. The counties of Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego in the state of CALIFORNIA; the congregations St. Andrew, Salem Evangelical, Shepherd of the Hills, Good Shepherd Evangelical, and Prince of Peace, Los Angeles County, in the state of CALIFORNIA; the state of HAWAII; the territories of the U.S. in the Pacific Ocean.

...

Synod 5.L—La Crosse Area. The counties of Adams, Buffalo (south), Crawford, Jackson (south), Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau (south), Vernon in the state of WISCONSIN; and parishescongregations in or near the towns of La Crescent, Caledonia, and Spring Grove in the state of MINNESOTA.

...

Synod 6.C—Indiana-Kentucky. The states of INDIANA and the commonwealth of KENTUCKY.

...

Synod 6.F—Southern Ohio. The counties of Adams, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Coshocton, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Knox, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Meigs, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Ross, Scioto, Shelby, Union, Vinton, Warren, Washington in the state of OHIO; the congregation St. Mark, Auglaize County, in the state of OHIO, and the congregation Bethel, Greenup County, in the state-commonwealth of KENTUCKY.

...

Synod 7.B—New England. The states of CONNECTICUT; MAINE; ~~MASSACHUSETTS;~~ NEW HAMPSHIRE; RHODE ISLAND; and VERMONT; the commonwealth of MASSACHUSETTS; and the counties of Clinton, Essex, and Franklin in the state of NEW YORK.

...

Synod 7.E—Northeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming in the state commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 7.F—Southeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

...

Synod 8.A—Northwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Armstrong (part), Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Indiana (part), Jefferson, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.B—Southwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Allegheny, Armstrong (part), Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana (part), Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.C—Allegheny. The counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Huntingdon, Somerset in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregation Christ, Garrett County, in the state of MARYLAND.

Synod 8.D—Lower Susquehanna. The counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregations St. Michael and Zion in Schuylkill County in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.E—Upper Susquehanna. The counties of Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Tioga, Union in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregation Trinity, Luzerne County, and the congregation Zion, Dauphin County, in the state commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.F—Delaware-Maryland. The state of DELAWARE; the city of Baltimore and the counties of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, Worcester in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation of Holy Trinity, Prince George's County, in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation of Mt. Joy, Adams County, in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the counties of Accomack, Northampton in the state-commonwealth of VIRGINIA.

Synod 8.G—Metropolitan Washington, D.C. The District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's in the state of MARYLAND; the counties of Arlington, Fairfax,

Loudoun, Prince William, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the ~~state~~ commonwealth of VIRGINIA; BERMUDA.

Synod 8.H—West Virginia-Western Maryland. The county of Garrett in the state of MARYLAND; the state of WEST VIRGINIA; the congregation Mount Calvary, Allegany County, the congregations Holy Trinity Memorial and Salem, Washington County in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation Fairview, Frederick County, in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of VIRGINIA.

Synod 9.A—Virginia. The counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buchanan, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dickenson, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Gloucester, Goochland, Grayson, Greene, Greensville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Highland, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Lee, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, Montgomery, Nelson, New Kent, Northumberland, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Richmond, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Westmoreland, Wise, Wythe, York, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of VIRGINIA; the congregation of Immanuel in Mercer County in the state of WEST VIRGINIA; the congregation Lakeside in Halifax County in the state of NORTH CAROLINA.

10.01.03. Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its synod relationship may do so upon approval of the synod assemblies of the synods concerned, which shall report any such change to the Churchwide Assembly through the Office of the Secretary.

10.31. **The officers of each synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.**
a. As the synod’s pastor, the bishop shall:

...

6) ~~Exercise supervision over~~ Direct and guide the work of the other officers.

10.32.01. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in 10.32.02. may require ~~his or her~~ the bishop’s determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in 10.32.03., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop’s synod.

10.41.01. Membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.

Chapter 11: Churchwide Organization—Definition and Purposes

11.41.01. A single treasury shall be maintained for the receipt and disbursement of unrestricted funds for the churchwide organization and its units receiving budgetary support, except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws or as approved by the Church Council. Restricted and designated funds are maintained separately.

Chapter 12: Churchwide Assembly

12.31.03. At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a ~~pre-assembly report~~ bulletin of reports. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the website of this church. Distribution to voting members-elect may be accomplished electronically to those who have provided email addresses. A written copy of the ~~Pre-Assembly Report~~ bulletin of reports will be mailed to any voting member-elect who does not provide an email address and to any congregation or voting member-elect who requests a written copy.

- 12.31.05. ~~Physical-Logistical~~ arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop.
- 12.41.15. Except as defined in 12.41.16., employees of the churchwide organization or of a separately incorporated ministry, including those serving under call, appointment, employment agreement, or contract, shall not be eligible for election and service as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.
- 12.51. The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, ~~and a Nominating Committee,~~ and an Elections Committee. The description of these committees shall be in the bylaws. The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary.
- 12.51.04. Elections Committee. An Elections Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall be responsible for the conduct and supervision of elections.

Chapter 13: Officers

- 13.21. The presiding bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop shall:
- c. ~~In collaboration with the leadership of each group, provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, and Conference of Bishops, and preside-Preside~~ at the Churchwide Assembly.
 - ...
 - e. Supervise-Oversee the work of the other officers.
 - ...
 - j. ~~Be responsible for~~ Relate, through the appropriate churchwide unit, to the chaplaincies of this church in federal agencies, institutions, and armed forces ~~and provide for the pastoral care of those called to these ministries.~~
- 13.41.01. The secretary, as the recording officer of this church, shall keep the minutes, have responsibility for rosters, records, and reporting of ~~parochial-congregation~~ statistics, oversee the archives, attest to all documents that require such signature, be the custodian of the seal, and perform other duties as prescribed by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- 13.41.02. The secretary shall:
- c. Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, ~~pre-assembly reports,-; assembly minutes,-; a directory of congregations, rostered persons~~ ministers, and entities of this church,-; and other informational and statistical material.
 - ...
 - h. In collaboration with the presiding bishop and the leadership of each group, provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, and Conference of Bishops.
 - i. Arrange for and manage churchwide meetings, including the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and others.
 - ji. Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents.
- 13.41.04. The secretary shall prepare interpretations, as necessary, of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If a board (including a board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or synod disagrees with the interpretations, as rendered, the objecting entity may appeal the secretary's interpretation to the Church Council.
- 13.41.05. The secretary may, upon two successive unexcused absences of a member of the Church Council, board, or committee of the churchwide organization, declare that member's position vacant.

- 13.41.0506.** The secretary shall provide staff services to the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly and the nomination process of the Church Council; shall be responsible for declaring an interim vacancy resulting from the resignation, death, removal, disqualification, or disability of a member of a board (including a board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or council; and shall arrange for an election by the Church Council to fill the vacancy consistent with Chapter 14.
- 13.51.01.** The treasurer shall propose policy for review and action by the Church Council and provide for the implementation, within such policies, of the financial, accounting, ~~insurance, property management~~, investment, and money management systems, and related services for the units of the churchwide organization.

Chapter 14: Church Council

- 14.15.** The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove for cause a voting member of the Church Council, other than an officer or the chair of the Conference of Bishops, at a duly held regular meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Church Council, provided that at least 30 days written notice shall be given to each voting member of the Church Council that removal of a specific member of the Church Council will be on the agenda for such a meeting. The Church Council may remove an advisory member for cause, provided notice has been given as specified in this provision, by a majority vote of the voting members of the council.
- 14.22.** The Church Council shall fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and, in the event that a vacancy on the council or on a board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry) or committee of the churchwide organization is declared by the secretary, the Church Council shall elect an individual to serve the balance of the term.
- 14.22.01.** Before electing an individual to fill a vacancy on a board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry) or committee, the Church Council shall consult with the board or committee.
- 14.32.03.** Any Church Council members appointed to fill a vacancy of less than three years in a Church Council position not restricted to a specific synod shall not be deemed to have served a term and ~~is~~ are eligible for election to a full term if ~~she or he~~ they otherwise satisfy ~~ies~~ the criteria for election.
- 14.41.01. Executive Committee.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and seven members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:
- f. demonstrate concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the ~~full-time-salaried~~ officers of this church; and

Chapter 15: Churchwide ~~Offices and Administration~~ and Offices

- 15.10. OFFICES AND ADMINISTRATION**
- 15.11.02. Administrative Team.** The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration, along with the executive directors of the churchwide units, shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop may appoint up to two additional members to the administrative team for terms of one year with the possibility of reappointment. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in providing leadership, planning, oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.
- 15.21.03.** In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units and offices will ensure that staff include a balance of genders, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and rostered ministers.

Chapter 16: Units of the Churchwide Organization

- 16.11.01.** ~~In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units and offices will assure that staff include a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and rostered ministers.~~

Chapter 17: Separately Incorporated Ministries

~~17.10. SEPARATELY INCORPORATED MINISTRIES~~

~~17.11.0. This church may fulfill some of its purposes, as described in Chapter 4, through separately incorporated ministries.~~

~~17.11. Each member of the board of directors of a separately incorporated ministry described in this chapter shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church, unless otherwise specified in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.~~

~~17.11.01. A board of a separately incorporated ministry described in this chapter may remove a director or trustee from the board, if done in accordance with the governing documents of such corporation after at least 30 days' prior notice to the secretary of this church. The decision to remove a director or trustee shall be reported to the Church Council by the secretary, who shall then declare a vacancy.~~

~~17.11.02. The nominations and elections processes for separately incorporated ministries shall be more fully specified in Chapter 19.~~

~~17.11.03. When used in Chapters 17 and 19, the term "board" shall include the boards of separately incorporated ministries unless expressly excluded. When used other than in Chapters 17 and 19, the term "board" shall not include the boards of separately incorporated ministries unless expressly included.~~

17.20.01. The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve amendments to the documents governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program ELCA Philosophy of Benefits that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program ELCA Philosophy of Benefits 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.

17.20.02. The Church Council shall:

- d. approve any changes to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits.
- ed. refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program ELCA Philosophy of Benefits to the Churchwide Assembly for final action. Provisions a., b., and c. of this bylaw do not apply to benefit programs offered by the Board of Pensions to entities other than the ELCA, its separately incorporated ministries, its synods, and its congregations.

17.20.03. 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 two consecutive re-elections. 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.

- a. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. The board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance, and retirement plans, and at least four persons who are members of the plan, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be a rostered minister of Word and Sacrament who is a plan member. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.

17.20.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.

17.20.07. The specific responsibilities of the Board of Pensions shall be enumerated in continuing resolutions. ~~Such continuing resolutions may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~

- 17.30.** This church shall have a separately incorporated ministry, known as the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to provide investment opportunities to individuals, congregations, synods, institutions, agencies, and organizations, and administer loans to congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other organizations and institutions that are related to this church. ~~The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.~~
- 17.30.01.** The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees composed of 9–12 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly ~~to one for three~~ six-year terms ~~with and shall not the possibility of be eligible for two~~ consecutive re-elections. 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. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.
- a. ~~The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop’s representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.~~
- b. ~~The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.~~
- 17.30.03.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., 14.21.06., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.30.04.** The specific responsibilities of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions.
- 17.40.01.** This publishing house shall have a board of trustees composed of 11–15 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly for three-year terms with the possibility of two consecutive re-elections. 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.
- a. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. Laypersons on the board of trustees shall include persons with expertise in publishing, education, business management, finance and investment. ~~Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include persons with expertise in rural, urban, and suburban ~~parish~~ ministry in small and large congregations and in advanced theological study. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.
- 17.40.02.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.40.04.** The specific responsibilities of this publishing house shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions. ~~The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or a two thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~
- 17.50.03.** Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and 14.21.06. shall apply to this organization. Bylaw ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the women’s organization with the exception of the balance provisions for women and men and for laypersons and rostered ministers.
- 17.50.04.** This organization shall have a board of ~~21~~ 15 members elected by the assembly of this organization for one three-year term with eligibility for one consecutive re-election. At least 10 percent of the members of this board shall be persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English. No more than one elected board member shall be from any one synod. Board members are to serve with the perspective of the interdependence of all units of this church. In the event of a vacancy, the board shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of this organization with voice but not vote.

- 17.50.07. The specific responsibilities of the women's organization shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions. ~~The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority of the Churchwide Assembly or two-thirds of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~
- 17.60. **This church shall have a separately incorporated ministry, the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to hold and manage endowment assets, to offer pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its related congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, and to provide planned giving programs that support this church's mission and ministry. The Endowment Fund shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.**
- 17.60.02. The advisory members of the board of trustees of the Endowment Fund shall have voice but not vote and shall include: the treasurer of this church, a synod bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and such other persons as may be designated by the board of trustees.
- 17.60.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., 14.21.06., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.60.06. The specific responsibilities of the Endowment Fund shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions.

Chapter 18: Regions

- 18.01.03. Additional programs or services may be ~~developed inoffered by~~ each region upon the request of two or more synods, or upon the request of the churchwide organization and one or more synods, providing that each requesting synod and the churchwide organization supply the necessary financial support for the services requested.
- ~~18.01.04. The funding of the region shall be shared by the participating synods and the churchwide organization according to a cost allocation as decided jointly by the synods and the churchwide organization.~~

Chapter 19: Nominations and Elections Process

- 19.01.02. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for presiding bishop does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary required for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receiverceiving the greatest number of votes on the third previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election elect. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.
- 19.01.03. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.

- 19.01.04.** The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be ~~necessary-required~~ for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.
- 19.02.** **The members of the Church Council, except the chair of the Conference of Bishops and the treasurer of this church, shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly.**
- a.** **In preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council shall determine how this church’s commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. For 32 of the council members, the Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. With respect to the other nominees, the Church Council shall review its size and composition and take into consideration the experience and expertise of existing members and synod nominees as well as the needs of the council in seeking to fulfill its duties and responsibilities. Based upon this analysis, the Church Council shall instruct the Nominating Committee to provide nominations in specific categories for the remaining positions up to 13.**
- b.** **Excluding the churchwide officers and the chair of the Conference of Bishops, there shall not be more than two members of the Church Council from a synod. The Church Council shall have at least two members from each region.**
- c.** **No synod bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.**
- d.** **The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected.**
- 19.04.01.** Each voting member of the Church Council, board, or committee of the churchwide organization shall cease to be a member of the Church Council, board, or committee if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. ~~Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Church Council, board, or committee, a member’s position may be declared vacant by the secretary of this church, who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term.~~
- 19.04.02.** For purposes of nomination to and service on the Church Council, a committee of the churchwide organization, or a board of a separately incorporated ministry, “synod membership” shall be defined as follows:
- a. A layperson shall be recorded in the synod that includes the congregation in which such a person holds voting membership, with the recognition that such a person shall reside within the territory of the synod or in an area immediately adjacent to the territory in the case of border areas.
- b. A rostered minister ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a minister’s name is maintained.
- ~~c. A minister of Word and Service shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a minister’s name is maintained.~~
- 19.04.03.** ~~A board of directors or trustees of a separately incorporated ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove a director or trustee from the board, if done in accordance with the governing documents of such corporation after at least 30 days’ prior notice to the secretary of this church. The decision to remove a director or trustee shall be reported to the Church Council by the secretary.~~
- 19.05.** **Further procedures for elections and qualifications for office may be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions, provided that such provisions do not conflict with any other provisions in this constitution.**

- ~~19.05.03.~~ Each triennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board of a separately incorporated ministry and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synod bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.
- ~~19.05.04.~~ The Church Council shall from time to time, by continuing resolution, establish committees and procedures for the conduct of elections at the Churchwide Assembly.
- 19.05.0503.** No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, or committee of the churchwide organization shall receive emolument for such service. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment of salaries and benefits of the officers of this church, nor to prohibit the payment of the costs of insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not the churchwide organization would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise.
- ~~19.05.0604.~~ No employee of the churchwide organization of this church or its regions, nor any individual under contract to any unit of the churchwide organization or a region shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, an advisory committee, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, or the churchwide Nominating Committee during the period of employment or service under contract, except the full-time salaried officers as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. (The phrase “under contract” shall not mean short-term contracts for specific, limited purposes, usually not to exceed six months.)
- ~~19.05.0705.~~ No person related to a staff member of the churchwide organization shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council or a committee that advises the unit in which the person’s relative is employed. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the churchwide employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
- 19.11.** **There shall be a Nominating Committee. Further procedures relating to nominations may be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.**
- 19.11.01.** The Nominating Committee shall consist of 12–18 members elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Each member shall be elected to one six-year term and shall serve until a successor is elected. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be eligible for consecutive re-election. The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.
- 19.11.02.** Except as otherwise provided, the Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council ~~board,~~ or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. ~~In the case of re-election, if authorized, or for nominees from church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, only one person need be nominated.~~ Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.
- 19.11.03.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each position on the board of trustees of each of the separately incorporated ministries identified in Chapter 17 of this constitution, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. In the case of re-election, if authorized, or for nominees from church bodies with which this church is in a

relationship of full communion, only one person need be nominated. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

Chapter 20: Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication

20.20. There shall be a Committee on Appeals to which may be referred appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer as described in this chapter, as well as petitions for recall of synod officers as described in chapter 8 of the Constitution for Synods. The Committee on Appeals shall be ~~comprised~~ comprised of six rostered ministers, at least one of whom shall be a minister of Word and Service, and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election. The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.

20.21.01. The churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of 24–36 members, half of whom shall ~~be~~ be rostered ministers (including at least two ministers of Word and Service) and half of whom shall ~~be~~ be laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years. Each member will serve until a successor is elected, without consecutive re-election, and will serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.

20.22.02. The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
c. removal from the roster of Ministersy of Word and Sacrament

20.22.03. Charges against a minister of Word and Sacrament which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
a. at least two-thirds of the members of the ~~e~~ Congregation's e Council of a congregation the congregation in which served by the minister of Word and Sacrament is serving, submitted to the synod bishop;
b. at least one-third of the voting members of ~~the a~~ the a congregation ~~in which the served by the minister of Word and Sacrament is serving,~~ submitted to the synod bishop;
...
d. at least 10 rostered ~~of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of the synod on whose roster the accused minister of Word and Sacrament is listed, submitted to the synod bishop;

20.22.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:
a. When requested by the synod bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three rostered ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synod bishop, or, at the request of the synod bishop, by the Synod Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
b. When requested by the synod bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three rostered ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed by the synod bishop shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.

20.23.02. The disciplinary actions that may be imposed are:
b. suspension from the role and functions of a minister of Word and Service in this church for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or

20.23.03. Charges against a minister of Word and Service of this church that could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
a. at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council of ~~the a~~ the a congregation ~~in which served by~~ in which served by the minister of Word and Service ~~is serving,~~ is serving, submitted to the synod bishop;
b. at least one-third of the voting members of ~~the a~~ the a congregation ~~in which the served by the~~ in which the served by the minister of Word and Service ~~is serving,~~ is serving, submitted to the synod bishop;

...

- d. at least 10 ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service~~ on the rosters of the synod on whose roster the accused minister of Word and Service is listed, submitted to the synod bishop; or
- 20.24.01.** Where the written charges specify that the accuser(s) will not seek the rostered minister's removal from the ministry of this church or suspension from the office/role and functions of the ministry of this church for a period not exceeding three months, 20.24.01. through 20.24.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.22.08. through 20.22.24. and 20.23.05. through 20.23.07.
- 20.31.02.** The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
- b. suspension from this church for a designated period, the consequences of such suspension being the loss of voting rights of any member (including ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service) of the congregation at synod or churchwide assemblies, the loss of the right to petition, and the forfeiture of eligibility by any member of the congregation to serve on any council, board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or other group of this church, any of its synods, or any other subdivision thereof;
- 20.72.** **When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between or among churchwide units and offices of the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the presiding bishop, or ~~his or her~~the presiding bishop's designee, for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting a resolution of the matter.**

CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

Chapter 6: Statement of Purpose

†S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
 - 1) approving candidates for ~~rostered ministry~~ ~~the ministry of Word and Sacrament~~ in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ on behalf of this church;
 - 3) ~~approving candidates for the ministry~~ ~~of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;~~
 - 4) ~~authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church;~~ and
 - 3) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

~~†S6.04.01. It is the goal of this synod that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.~~

†S6.04.0201. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

Chapter 7: Synod Assembly

S7.14. ~~One-half~~ One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

†S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. All rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ under call on the roster of this synod ~~in attendance at the Synod Assembly~~ shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- b. ~~All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.~~
- c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.
- d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

- †S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at the opening of~~ the next regular Synod Assembly.
- †S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that such processes may not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of ~~consistent with~~ †S7.21.e. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. ~~Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~
- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
- S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly ~~of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

Chapter 8: Officers

- †S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:
- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
 - 4) ~~exercise supervision over~~ direct and guide the work of the other officers;
 - 5) ~~coordinate~~ exercise supervision over the work of all synod staff members;
 - ...
 - 12) appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the ~~parochial~~ reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.
- †S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:
- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require ~~his or her~~ the bishop's determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
 - b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions 7.46. and 7.75. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. and †S14.43), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.

~~†S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.~~

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for ~~the printing and~~ distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.

S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

- c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.

...

- ~~f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of _____ years and may be re-elected. The officer shall serve until his or her a successor takes office.
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a term of _____-years term and may be [re-elected] ~~or~~ [reappointed]. The treasurer shall serve until his or her a successor takes office.

[Becomes required]

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the _____ month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:

- 2) the Committee on Appeals, exclusive of any members other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.

†S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period not to exceed 90 days, the bishop, after consultation with the presiding bishop and with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

Chapter 11: Committees (names of other organizational units)

†S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.

†S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

S11.10. — General Provisions

[Becomes required]

†S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

Chapter 13: Congregations

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to elect~~choose~~ from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

Chapter 14: Rostered Ministers

S14.13. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.15. Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

†S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon removal-resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively~~disability and restoration of the pastor to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

†S14.21. The ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- †S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the ~~congregation~~ ~~parochial~~ records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.
- S14.34. Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 4) ~~inability to conduct the office effectively in view of physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
 - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal-resumption~~ of the ~~ability to conduct the office effectively~~ ~~disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

Chapter 15: Financial Matters

- †S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church; thus the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:...
- †S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. ~~The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.~~

Chapter 16: Indemnification

- †S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of ~~section~~ †S16.02.
- †S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in ~~section~~ †S16.01. or ~~section~~ †S16.02.

†S16.04. When written charges against a rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney-s fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be ~~made~~ decided by the Synod Council.

Chapter 18: Amendments, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions

†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of ~~the~~ Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

**MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Chapter 6: Church Affiliation

***C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless ~~he or she~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees ~~is-are a~~ voting members of this congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
...
- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless ~~he or she is~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees ~~are~~ voting members of this congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.

Chapter 9: Rostered Minister

***C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor;
...
- b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her~~ who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
...
- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal-resumption~~ of the ~~disability and the restoration of the pastor to health,~~ ability to conduct the office effectively the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

***C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

- a. shall keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;

***C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

***C9.14.** The ~~parochial~~ records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in ~~his or her~~ the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.

- *C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of physical disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon;
 - ...
 - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - ...
 - c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon removal-resumption of the ~~disability and the restoration of the deacon to health~~ ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting

[New footnote]

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the [senior] pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president¹ of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this congregation upon the written request of ___[number][percent] of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

C10.08. This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

C10.09. "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 12: Congregation Council

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod ~~treasurer~~.

[New footnote]

C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president², and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent, ~~and, to~~ the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

¹ If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.

² If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.

Chapter 13: Congregation Committees

[New footnote]

C13.08. The [senior] pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation. [The president⁴ [vice president] of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation, except the Nominating Committee.]

Chapter 15: Discipline of Members and Adjudication

***C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to *C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.

***C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president [vice president] of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 16: Amendments

***C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:

- a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
- b. be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation held pursuant to C10.01. by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and.
- ~~c. have the effective date included in the resolution⁵ and noted in the constitution.~~

***C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's a vote of approval.

⁴ If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider selecting the vice president.

⁵ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for the synod's review of the amendment.

Chapter 20: Parish Authorization

***C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

***C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

BYLAWS
OF
MISSION INVESTMENT FUND
OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

As amended October ~~2020~~2021

ARTICLE 1
Purpose

This corporation is established in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the "ELCA") to carry out the purposes and perform the functions specified in this corporation's Articles of Incorporation. This corporation shall be governed by its Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws and by the provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA that are expressly made applicable to this corporation.

ARTICLE 2
Location

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 the offices of this corporation at 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631 or such other place as shall be fixed from time to time by duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 3
Meetings of Members

The Articles of Incorporation of this corporation provide that this corporation has no members with voting rights. Accordingly, there shall be no meetings of the members of this corporation.

ARTICLE 4
Board of Trustees

SECTION 4.1 Composition. The Board of Trustees of this Corporation shall be between nine and twelve in number, who shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA for three year terms with the possibility of up to two additional three year terms.

SECTION 4.2 Officers. The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson, elected by the Board of Trustees, to serve for one-~~2~~-year terms or until their successors are chosen and qualified.

(a) Chairperson. The Chairperson of this corporation shall preside at meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Executive Committee if one is appointed. The Chairperson shall have such further specific powers and duties as are conferred upon or assigned to him or her by the Board of Trustees and/or by these Bylaws.

(b) Vice Chairperson. During the absence or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson.

SECTION 4.3 Removal of Trustee. A Trustee may be removed from the Board upon recommendation of the Executive Committee to the full Board of Trustees. A two-thirds vote of the members present shall be required for the Trustee to be removed. Notice of the Executive Committee's recommendation shall be delivered to the Trustee recommended for removal at least two weeks in advance of the Board meeting at which the recommendation will be acted upon. Notice shall be delivered by mail, courier service, or by any form of electronic communication as to which the Trustee has consented to receive notices directed to the Trustee.

ARTICLE 5

Meetings of the Board of Trustees

SECTION 5.1 Annual meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held each year at the principal office of the corporation ~~at 10 AM on the last Friday of each Spring March~~; provided that the Board of Trustees by resolution may fix a different time, place or location for such meeting.

SECTION 5.2 Other regular meetings. A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held each Fall at the principal office of the corporation at such time and date as fixed by resolution of the Board of Trustees; provided that the Board of Trustees by resolution may also designate a different location for such Fall meeting. Other regular meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held at such times and places as established by the Board or Trustees.

SECTION 5.3 Special meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called at any time (a) by the Chairperson, (b) by the President, or (c) by action or upon written request of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees, ~~or (d) upon the written request of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees~~. Anyone entitled to call a special meeting of the Board of Trustees may make a written request to the ~~Secretary-Chairperson~~ to call the meeting, and the ~~Secretary-Chairperson~~ 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-Chairperson~~ 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 time and place of the meeting and give notice in the manner hereinafter provided.

SECTION 5.4 Notice of meetings. Notice of each annual, regular and special meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be given by mail or by courier service to each Trustee at

the Trustee's address according to the last available records of this corporation, or by any form of electronic communication as to which the Trustee has consented to receive such notices directed to the Trustee. Notices of meetings shall be given not less than five ~~or more than thirty~~ days before the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. A notice of an annual or regular meeting shall include the time and place of the meeting. A notice of a special meeting shall include the time, place and purpose of the meeting. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting other than the business specified in the notice of the meeting. Any trustee may waive notice before, at or after a meeting in writing or by ~~authenticated~~ electronic communication. The waiver shall be filed with the ~~person who has been designated to act as Secretary of the meeting,~~ Chairperson, 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 5.5 Quorum and voting. At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, each trustee shall be entitled to cast one vote on any question coming before the meeting. The presence of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum at any meeting thereof, but the trustees present at any meeting, although less than a quorum, may adjourn the meeting from time to time. A majority vote of the trustees present at any meeting, if there be a quorum, shall be sufficient to transact any business. A trustee shall not appoint a proxy or vote by proxy at a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5.6 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 the announcement at the meeting at which adjournment is taken.

SECTION 5.7 Written action. Any action that could be taken at a meeting of the Board of Trustees may be taken without a meeting when the action is authorized by all of the Trustees in writing or by authenticated electronic communication.

SECTION 5.8 Meetings - remote communication.

(a) Meetings solely by means of remote communication. Any meeting of the Board of Trustees may be conducted solely by one or more means of remote communication through which all of the Trustees may participate in the meeting, if the same notice is given of the meeting as provided by these Bylaws, and if the number of Trustees participating in the meeting is sufficient to constitute a quorum at a meeting. Participation in a meeting by that means constitutes presence at the meeting.

(b) Participation in meetings by means of remote communication. A Trustee may participate in a Board -meeting by means of ~~conference~~ telephone conference or video conference ~~phone~~ or, if authorized by the Board of Trustees, by such other means of remote communication, provided that their each ease through which that Trustee participating remotely, other members so participating, and all Trustees -physically present at the meeting may are able to participate with each other during the meeting. Participation in a meeting by ~~that remote~~ means constitutes presence at the meeting.

ARTICLE 6 Officers of the Corporation

SECTION 6.1 (a) Officers. The officers of this corporation shall be a President, one or more Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Chief Financial Officer, and such other officers as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate.

(b) Election of President. The President of the Mission Investment Fund corporation shall be elected by the Board of Trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a four-year term, in consultation with and with the approval of the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA. Nomination of a candidate for President of this corporation shall be made jointly by the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and a search committee of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, together with the Presiding Bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the President. The President shall be eligible for reelection.

(c) Election of other officers. 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. Any officer except the President may at any time be removed by the Board of Trustees, in consultation with and with the agreement of the President, with or without cause. The same person may hold more than one office at the same time, except the offices of (a) President and Vice President and (b) President and Secretary. The officers ~~need~~ shall not be trustees of this corporation.

~~SECTION 6.2 Chairperson. The Chairperson of this corporation shall preside at meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Executive Committee if one is appointed. The Chairperson shall have such further specific powers and duties as are conferred upon or assigned to him or her by the Board of Trustees and/or by these Bylaws.~~

~~SECTION 6.3 Vice Chairperson. During the absence or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson.~~

SECTION 6.4 President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of this corporation. The President shall have lead and manage the corporation and provide general supervision, direction and active management of the affairs of this corporation. The President shall 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 the corporation, and shall have the power to designate those with authority to execute such documents on the President's behalf. The Board or Trustees, together with the Presiding Bishop, shall arrange for an annual review regarding the President's performance. The term of the President may be terminated jointly by the Board of Trustees and the Presiding Bishop, following a recommendation by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 6.5- Vice Presidents. Any one or more of the corporation's Vice Presidents may be designated by the President Board of Trustees as Executive Vice President or Senior Vice Presidents. During the absence or disability of the President, it shall be the duty of the highest ranking Executive Vice President, and, in the absence of any such Executive Vice President, the Chief Financial Officer, to perform the duties of the president. In the absence or unavailability of all of the preceding officers, the -it shall be the duty of the highest ranking Senior Vice President or other Vice President, who shall be present at the time and able to act, to perform the duties of the President. ~~The~~ determination of who is the highest ranking ~~of two or more persons holding the same office~~ Vice President who is present at the time and able to act to perform the duties of the President shall, in the absence of specific designation or order of rank by the Board of Trustees, be made by the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the Chairperson.

SECTION 6.6. Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall have and may exercise such duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The Chief Financial Officer shall present to the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting a report as Chief Financial Officer of this corporation and shall from time to time make such other reports to the Board of Trustees as it may require.

SECTION 6.~~7~~6 Secretary. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings and shall be custodian of the records, documents and papers of this corporation. The Secretary shall provide for the keeping of proper records of all transactions of this corporation. The Secretary 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. The Secretary shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 6.~~7-8~~ 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 President.

~~SECTION 6.8 Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall have and may exercise such duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The Chief Financial Officer shall present to the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting a report as Chief Financial Officer of this corporation, and shall from time to time make such other reports to the Board of Trustees as it may require.~~

SECTION 6.9 Additional powers. Any officer of this corporation, in addition to the powers conferred 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 7 Committees

SECTION 7.1 Authority. The Board of Trustees may act by and through such committees as may be specified in resolutions adopted by the 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. Each such committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.2 Executive Committee. The Board of Trustees may ~~designate~~ elect an Executive Committee composed of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson and at least one other trustee 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 7.3 Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall be a standing committee of the corporation and shall consist of from three to five members, the exact number to be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The members of the Committee shall be ~~appointed~~ elected by the Board of Trustees. At least three members shall be members of the Board of Trustees. Board of Trustee members shall be ~~appointed~~ elected for two-year terms and may be ~~reappointed~~ reelected to terms continuing so long as they serve on the Board of Trustees. Non-Trustee members shall be appointed for two-year terms, renewable for two additional terms. Appointments shall be so arranged that members' terms will be staggered to the extent possible. The chair of the committee shall be a member of the Board of Trustees and shall be ~~appointed~~ elected by the ~~Chair of the~~ Board of Trustees. At least one member shall have accounting or related financial management experience. Between meetings of the Board of Trustees, the President may appoint a person to fill any vacancy on the Committee in the event any appointed member ceases to serve, and any person so appointed by the President shall serve until the next meeting of the Board of Trustees, when the Board of Trustees shall continue such appointment or ~~name~~ elect a successor. The primary purpose of the Committee is to assist the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its general oversight of the corporation's accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and audit functions. The Committee shall develop its own rules and procedures for carrying out the foregoing responsibilities, subject to review and direction by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.4 Governance Committee. The Board of Trustees may designate a Governance Committee composed of three to five members elected by the Board of Trustees, all of whom shall be members of the Board of Trustees. The Governance Committee shall meet as necessary between or in conjunction with Board of Trustee meetings, and the Governance Committee shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 7.5 Limitation on Committee Membership. A Trustee may not serve on all committees concurrently.

SECTION 7.4-6 Meetings and voting. Each committee of this corporation may establish the time for its regular meetings and may change that time as it from time to time deems advisable. Special meetings of any committee of this corporation may be called by the chairperson of that committee, or by the President. Two days' notice by mail or ~~, if consented to by the member,~~ by electronic communication shall be given for any special meeting of a committee. 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 meeting. 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 the 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.

SECTION 7.57. Meetings - remote communication.

(a) Meetings solely by means of remote communication. Any meeting of committee members may be conducted solely by one or more means of remote communication through which all of the members may participate in the meeting, if the same notice is given of the meeting as provided by these Bylaws, and if the number of committee members participating in the meeting is sufficient to constitute a quorum at a meeting. Participation in a meeting by that means constitutes presence at the meeting.

(b) Participation in meetings by means of remote communication. A committee member may participate in a committee meeting by means of conference telephone or, if authorized by the Board of Trustees, by such other means of remote communication, in each case through which that member, other members so participating, and all members physically present at the meeting may participate with each other during the meeting. Participation in a meeting by that means constitutes presence at the meeting.

SECTION 7.8 Written action. Any action that could be taken at a meeting of a committee may be taken without a meeting when the action is authorized by all of the committee members in writing or by electronic communication.

**ARTICLE 8
Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of this corporation shall be January 1 to the last day of December.

**ARTICLE 9
Miscellaneous**

SECTION 9.1 Corporate seal. This corporation shall have a seal showing the name of this corporation, the state of incorporation and the year of incorporation.

SECTION 9.2 Amendments. Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, and the Articles of Incorporation of this corporation, these Bylaws may be amended from time to time in the manner prescribed by law.

SECTION 9.3 Indemnification. To the full extent permitted by any applicable law, this corporation shall indemnify each 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 is or was a trustee, officer, employee, agent or member of a committee of this corporation or, while a trustee, officer, employee or agent of this corporation, was serving as director, officer, partner, trustee or agent of another organization or employee benefit plan at the request of this corporation or pursuant to that individual's duties as a trustee, officer, employee or agent of this corporation, against expenses, including attorney's 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 trustee, officer, employee, agent 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 trustee, officer, employee, agent 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.

SECTION 9.4 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 any Vice President, or by such other person or persons as may be designated from time to time by the ~~Board of Trustees~~President. If a document must be executed by persons holding different offices or functions and one person holds such offices or exercises such functions, that person may execute the document in more than one capacity if the document indicates each such capacity.

SECTION 9.5 Authority to borrow, encumber assets. No 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 9.6 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~~President may approve or designate, and all such funds shall be withdrawn only in the manner or manners authorized by the ~~Board of Trustees~~President from time to time.

ELCA Committee on Appeals

To: Executive Committee, Church Council
From: Murray G. Sagsveen, Chair, Committee on Appeals
Copy: Committee on Appeals, Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, and General Counsel Thomas Cunniff
Subject: Definition of “Promiscuity”
Date: October 20, 2021

On April 17, 2021, the Church Council approved amendments to *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* and asked the Committee on Appeals to define one additional word: “promiscuity.”

On September 15, the Committee on Appeals met and unanimously agreed to this definition:

“Promiscuity” means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.”

On September 30, the Committee on Appeals submitted the draft definition to the Conference of Bishops (*see page 2*) for review and comment. Two bishops commented:

- “If we are defining promiscuity for purposes of discipline then I believe we need marriage in the definition.”
- “I think the definition of promiscuity ... would be stronger if it read: ‘Promiscuity’ means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations outside of a monogamous relationship which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.”

After committee officers (Rev. Fritz Fowler, Rev. Cheryl Meinschein, and I) reviewed the comments, we decided not to call a special committee meeting to consider amending the proposed definition. The Church Council, on April 17, had already addressed the marriage issue in section B.5. (and the accompanying footnote) of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, and we decided it would be inappropriate to raise the issue again (directly or indirectly) in the proposed definition.

Accordingly, the Committee on Appeals plans to submit the proposed definition quoted above to the Church Council.

Adopted by the Church Council on April 17, 2021 [CC21.04.09; CC21.04.10]

B.5. Sexuality and public ministry: 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

Footnote 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).

Current Definitions:

- "Adultery" means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than that person's current spouse.
- "Infidelity" means the act or fact of having a romantic or sexual relationship with someone other than one's spouse or partner.
- "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.

Proposed Definition – to be Submitted to the Church Council

"Promiscuity" means having casual or indiscriminate sexual relations which do not proceed from or contribute to mutual respect, intimacy, commitment to, and care of others.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PREFACE

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is both the board of directors of a Minnesota nonprofit corporation and the interim legislative authority of the churchwide organization, one of the three “expressions” of ~~an~~ **Evangelical Lutheran** denomination with deep roots in the U.S. But these phrases and the dichotomy between corporation and church do not adequately explain the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council nor answer the profound Lutheran question “What does this mean?” To understand the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council requires a more careful examination of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (hereafter “CBCR”), as well as a clearer understanding of governance principles in the context of a church.

From a church polity or organizational perspective, the ELCA is unique because it is neither congregational nor hierarchal. In terms of polity, CBCR provision 8.11 states: “This church shall seek to function as people of God through congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, all of which shall be interdependent.” Further, each of the expressions, while fully the church, also “recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in an interdependent relationship with the others.” In accordance with CBCR provision 5.01, the three parts or “expressions” constitute one church, which recognizes that all power and authority belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. Although each of the three parts has distinctive (but overlapping) responsibilities, as described in CBCR Chapters 5 and 8 and elsewhere in the governing documents, all share common statements of purpose regarding the foundational ministry. All share a common commitment to act in accordance with the Confession of Faith in Chapter 2 of the CBCR and with the Statement of Purpose set forth in Chapter 4. Thus, the common starting points for ministry and the foundational touchstones for identifying the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council are enumerated as follows in ELCA constitutional provision 4.02, which describes God’s mission for this entire church in all its expressions:

To participate in God’s mission, this church [the ELCA] shall:

- a. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.

- b. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
- c. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs.
- d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

For more than 30 years, these purposes have defined the mission of this church as an instrument of God in the world and provided a unifying vision in all its expressions regarding our collective work.

From a governance perspective, the Church Council has two discrete roles in addressing these missional objectives, but there are many responsibilities that flow from them and from the CBCR. Addressing these numerous responsibilities requires applying governance principles and best practices. The two roles are identified in CBCR provision 14.11, which provides: “The Church Council shall exercise interim legislative authority and shall serve as the board of directors of the churchwide organization.” Thus, the Church Council is the board of directors of the Minnesota nonprofit corporation known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. It is *not* the board of directors of any synod or congregation or the denomination of the same name. As the interim legislative authority, it acts in lieu of the Churchwide Assembly, and it functions as the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization between the assembly’s triennial meetings. As such, it has responsibilities assigned to the Churchwide Assembly under CBCR Chapter 12, as well as responsibilities assigned to the Church Council under Chapter 14. Significantly, in addition to legislative authority for the churchwide organization between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, these responsibilities also include providing advice and encouragement to synods, congregations, and others regarding “all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church,” in accordance with CBCR provisions 12.11 and 14.11. Moreover, many other provisions in the CBCR allocate discrete responsibilities to the Church Council in one or both of its roles.

In order to understand the application of governance principles to the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council, it is important to begin with a common

understanding of an underlying philosophy of governance. In fulfilling its dual constitutional roles, the Church Council exercises fiduciary, strategic, and generative responsibilities to govern the ELCA churchwide organization. From a fiduciary perspective, this means ensuring (1) that the organization operates consistent with its Articles of Incorporation, the CBCR, and policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and/or the Church Council; (2) that Church Council members individually and the Church Council acting collectively exercise due care in its work; and (3) that members of the Church Council act with loyalty in the best interests of the organization. With respect to strategic leadership, the Church Council must focus on developing and implementing a strategic plan and priorities, on evaluating their implementation, and on prioritizing and allocating resources for their accomplishment. In terms of generative leadership, the Church Council must devote time and reflection to issues emerging in both this church and in society that could impact the mission of this church. In addressing all of its governance responsibilities, the Church Council must focus prospectively and be forward-thinking about moving this church toward its preferred future.

Leadership of the Church Council also must align with this church’s strategic plan and approved mission, vision, and values. Of course, these will change or evolve periodically. In 2016, such a strategic plan, along with its attendant mission, vision and values, was adopted by the Church Council. This process began in 2015, in anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, when the presiding bishop and the leadership of this church embarked on a strategic planning process at the request of the Church Council. This process resulted in *Future Directions 2025*, which addressed telling the story of the church we are becoming. ~~It articulated our shared purpose—the purpose of the whole ELCA—as follows:~~

- ~~• Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.~~

~~—The church’s vision was expressed this way:~~

- ~~• A world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation.~~

~~—With this background, t~~The following goals were identified and approved for this church:

- **Goal 1:** A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people.

- **Goal 2:** A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church.
- **Goal 3:** An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings.
- **Goal 4:** A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace, and reconciliation in communities around the world.
- **Goal 5:** A well-governed, connected, and sustainable church.

~~*Future Directions 2025* also identified underlying values. It states: “Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together.” The values identified are:~~

- ~~—forgiveness and reconciliation,~~
- ~~—dignity, compassion and justice,~~
- ~~—inclusivity and diversity,~~
- ~~—courage and openness to change, and~~
- ~~—faithful stewardship of God’s creation and gifts.~~

In 2017, the churchwide organization began reassessment of its structure. After multiple consultations and additional strategic planning work with leaders throughout this church, the presiding bishop appointed a Future Church design team in April 2020 whose work resulted in a proposed new organizational design. The design team provided opportunities for churchwide staff to share their thoughts and ideas.

~~Based on this work, the design team concluded that this church has the potential to activate each of us so more people might know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love, in response to the good news of the Gospel. The Church Council affirmed ~~this~~ the new design in November 2020 and the following purpose statement became the new shared purpose—the purpose of the whole ELCA:~~

- Activate all ELCA members in order that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.

The design team also concluded that three of the five *Future Directions 2025* goals continue to be relevant for ~~the~~ future church efforts:

- **Goal 1:** A Welcoming Church: Engaging new, young, and diverse people

- Goal 2: A Thriving Church: Rooted in tradition and radically relevant
- Goal 3: A Connected, Sustainable Church: Raising the bar—together

~~In addition, dual priorities were identified that undergird each goal. These are congregational vitality and leadership.~~

These goals ~~and priorities~~ inform and frame the fiduciary, strategic, and generative responsibilities of the Church Council. They ~~were developed and approved in collaboration with leaders throughout this church and~~ reflect a thoughtful integration of the missional imperatives contained in the governing documents of congregations and synods as well as the churchwide organization. Striving for the collective implementation of these goals ~~and priorities~~ would reflect interdependence and strengthen all the ministry partners of this church. ~~Indeed, ELCA members, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization must work together to share a powerful witness of the Gospel in the world,; inviting more new, young, and diverse people to experience God’s grace in action. Future Directions 2025 calls upon congregations to strengthen their relationship with God, nurture relationships and be a strong presence in the community.~~

~~Future Directions 2025 also identifies underlying values. It states: “Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together.” The values identified are:~~

- ~~forgiveness and reconciliation,~~
- ~~dignity, compassion and justice,~~
- ~~inclusivity and diversity,~~
- ~~courage and openness to change, and~~
- ~~faithful stewardship of God’s creation and gifts.~~

Taken together, the CBCR, the renewed purpose, and focused goals and Future Directions 2025 articulate the mission, vision, and values of the ELCA and provide a framework for moving this whole church toward the future to which God is calling us. They provide lenses to address the work of the Church Council.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PART 1

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Church Council

1. Introduction

The Church Council exists both as an integral part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in the fullness of its denominational self as a community of faith in the Lutheran tradition, and as a governing body, with responsibilities as a board of directors and interim legislative authority of the churchwide organization, one of three interdependent expressions of the ELCA. From the former perspective, it must always recognize that all power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head, and all actions of the ELCA are to be carried out under his rule and authority. From a governance perspective, the Church Council must comply with the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (“CBCR”) and policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and/or the Church Council. It must recognize that it is an interdependent partner with synods and congregations in the mission of this church.¹ In this regard, it must act consistent with its constitutional legislative authority, but it also must ensure that advice and encouragement are provided to other expressions of this church, as well as to ministry partners and others, in all matters that are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church (CBCR 12.11.). In fulfilling these responsibilities, it also must organize itself and act consistent with best practices for nonprofit organizations and appropriately exercise fiduciary, strategic, and generative leadership to fulfill this church’s mission. In all governance roles, the Church Council must be forward-looking and shepherd this church into the future. In an effort to better fulfill the mission of this church, to move forward in implementing its vision and values, to be a more effective partner with other interdependent expressions and ministry partners, and to clarify its governance responsibilities, this Governance Policy Manual describes the responsibilities of the Church Council.

¹ In addressing the differences between a church board of directors and a corporate board, Dan Hotchkiss makes the provocative point that a church board does not have shareholders like a corporate board, but the church’s “owner” is its *mission*. Although his observation is made in the context of congregational governance, it is profoundly applicable to all of the expressions of this church. See Dan Hotchkiss, *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership* (2009).

2. Overarching responsibilities

In order to integrate the multiple roles of the Church Council as the interim legislative authority and the board of directors of the churchwide organization and to provide a framework for considering discrete responsibilities, it is important to identify preliminarily overarching responsibilities, recognizing that leadership in governance encompasses fiduciary, strategic, and generative aspects.²

In the exercise of fiduciary leadership, the Church Council shall ensure that the churchwide organization complies with applicable provisions of the CBCR, policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and/or the Church Council, and applicable law, and that it provide oversight and accountability for the mission of this church. In doing so, the Church Council shall periodically evaluate which issues require Church Council action, which issues can be delegated, and/or what, if any, follow-up action(s) may be required in the exercise of its fiduciary responsibility.

- In the exercise of strategic leadership, the Church Council shall collaborate with the churchwide organization in strategic thinking, including periodically initiating a strategic planning process and participating in the development of a strategic plan and strategic goals and priorities. As part of this process, it shall monitor progress in achieving the strategic plan and strategic goals and priorities, as well as provide oversight to the churchwide organization to ensure that resources are prioritized and allocated optimally and in a manner that facilitates their achievement. In addition, between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council also must provide leadership in identifying matters that are necessary to fulfill the purposes and functions of this whole church, and ensure that appropriate advice and encouragement are provided to synods, congregations, ministry partners and others. In fulfilling its strategic leadership responsibilities, the Church Council shall continually inquire and assess what are the most urgent and important issues confronting this church at that time. In all its roles and activities, the Church Council shall look to the future and think strategically.
- In the exercise of generative leadership, the Church Council shall engage proactively in discussion and analysis, in collaboration with leaders in this church and others, of trends (both within the church and in society) in an effort to ensure that this church is equipped to accomplish the mission of God’s church in the world. In doing so, it also shall devote adequate time to frame and discuss “big picture” issues that could impact the future of this church and to assess potential opportunities and risks to the churchwide organization and to this church.

² The three aspects or modes of governance — fiduciary, strategic, and generative — are based upon and described in *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards* by Richard P. Chait, William P. Ryan and Barbara E. Taylor (2005).

- In the exercise of ~~all of~~ its roles and responsibilities, the Church Council shall demonstrate servant leadership, sensitivity to interdependence, and agreed-upon values as foundational principles of this church. At the same time, it shall remain focused on shepherding this church into the future and on strengthening congregational vitality and leadership working together to share a powerful witness of the Gospel in the world. In addressing all its roles and responsibilities, the Church Council must proactively seek to build and nurture cultures of trust in all that it does.³

In fulfilling these aspects of leadership in governance, the Church Council acknowledges the importance of distinguishing its oversight responsibilities from the management responsibilities of the presiding bishop and the churchwide staff, recognizes the importance of focusing on strategic leadership instead of administrative detail, and affirms the importance of engaging in generative discussions about moving this church into the future to which God is calling it.

3. Specific responsibilities of the Church Council

Informed by the Church Council's overarching responsibilities and cognizant of its dual roles within the polity of the ELCA, the following are specific responsibilities of the Church Council.

A. Oversight and coordination

- Establish ~~and ensure~~ lines of communication and ensure that they exist and are effectively utilized with the Conference of Bishops, other leadership tables in this church, synods, congregations, ecumenical and other ministry partners, and others, as appropriate, for the purpose of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and collaborating in ministry.
- Review and assess periodically the work of the churchwide organization to ensure that it is addressing and complying with the purposes and principles specified in CBCR Chapters 4, 5, and 8.
- Ensure on an ongoing basis that the work of the churchwide organization is aligned with, prioritizes, and effectively moves toward implementation of the strategic plan and its goals and priorities, as well as the mission, vision, and values of this church. In so doing, periodically evaluate whether resources are allocated optimally for accomplishing the strategic plan and its goals and priorities, and reallocate resources as appropriate.

³ Theologian Martin Marty has written about the importance of constructive engagement and the importance of building trust. See Martin E. Marty, *Building Cultures of Trust* (2010).

- Work proactively to become an inclusive and diverse church, develop and implement policies and goals to meet diversity and inclusion objectives in governance, and monitor implementation (5.01.b., 5.01.f., [5.01.E19.](#), [5.01.F19.](#), 19.05.01.).
- Address on an ongoing basis the sustainability of ministries and structures of this church.
- Engage periodically in generative conversations—both within the Church Council and among other leadership tables—to identify and evaluate opportunities and risks and ways to enhance the ministry of this church in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and in serving our neighbors.

B. Policy development and approval

- Develop, adopt, and periodically review and update ministry standards, policies, criteria, and procedures in accordance with CBCR Chapter 7; take steps to ensure that the standards are uniformly applied throughout this church.
- Adopt policies and procedures that establish and implement relationships with other Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies (8.41.); periodically review their effectiveness and how they can be strengthened.
- Adopt policies and procedures to implement church-to-church relationships of full communion established by action of the Churchwide Assembly, as well as support ecumenical relationships (8.19.; 8.62.; 9.81.); periodically review their effectiveness and how they can be strengthened.
- Approve criteria, policies, and procedures for acknowledging authorized worshiping communities and developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels (10.01.04.); periodically review their effectiveness and revise as appropriate.
- Establish fiscal policies and authorize expenditures of the churchwide organization within limits established by the Churchwide Assembly and the CBCR (~~8.21.07.~~ 11.40. and [its](#) following bylaws); periodically review their effectiveness and how they can be strengthened.
- Engage periodically in generative conversations—both within the Church Council and among other leadership tables—to evaluate whether existing policies enhance the mission and ministry of this church and its strategic plan, goals, and priorities. In doing so, identify what revisions and/or new policies would be necessary or desirable to enhance the ministry of this church in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and in serving our neighbors.

C. Relationships

- Develop policies in consultation with synods and congregations and provide oversight for implementing the extended mission of the Church in entering into relationships with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions or in response to agreed-upon areas of responsibility (8.14.).
- Between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, provide leadership in identifying matters that are necessary to fulfill the purposes and functions of this whole church, and provide appropriate advice and encouragement to synods, congregations, ministry partners, and others regarding such matters (12.11., 14.11).
- Monitor and nurture relationships with the Lutheran World Federation; seminaries, colleges, and universities; social ministry organizations; other Lutheran organizations; other churches with which relationships have been established; and other organizations and agencies identified in CBCR Chapter 8. Periodically assess how such relationships enhance the mission and ministry of this church and how they align with and move toward implementation of the strategic plan and priorities.
- Engage periodically in generative conversations—both within the Church Council and among other leadership tables—to discuss how relationships with other organizations and entities identified in CBCR Chapter 8 impact the ministry of this church in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and in serving our neighbors, and what could be done to enhance such relationships and their impact on ministry.

D. Governance

- Participate in the planning for and evaluation of Church Council meetings (including the preparation of the agenda, utilizing meeting evaluations, and making process observations) to ensure that they timely address fiduciary, strategic, and generative leadership responsibilities.
- Provide ongoing support for, periodically evaluate, and perform designated responsibilities regarding officers, in accordance with CBCR Chapter 13.
- Oversee the scheduling of and providing notice for the Churchwide Assembly, appoint committees of the Churchwide Assembly, oversee the nomination and election processes, and review and recommend actions for consideration, in accordance with CBCR Chapters 12, 14 and 19.
- Periodically review the CBCR, consider proposed amendments and make recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly, and oversee their implementation once adopted. As appropriate, revise and adopt continuing resolutions.

- Consider and ratify amendments to synod articles of incorporation and provisions to synod constitutions, other than those that conform to model provisions (10.11., 10.11.01., 10.12.).
- Consider and act upon, as appropriate, petitions from congregations forwarded by synods (9.53.08.), requests from synods, and referrals from the Conference of Bishops (10.81.01.).
- Conduct elections and oversee election processes in accordance with the CBCR (14.21.22., 14.22).
- Review and provide support for the work of separately incorporated ministries in accordance with CBCR Chapter 17.
- Approve ~~d~~“Definitions and ~~g~~Guidelines for ~~d~~Discipline” (20.21.); periodically review their effectiveness.
- Engage periodically in generative conversations—both within the Church Council and among other leadership tables—to discuss how governance processes could be enhanced to positively impact the ministry of this church in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and in serving our neighbors.

4. Responsibilities of individual Church Council members

Given the polity of the ELCA and the collective responsibilities of the Church Council in terms of governance, it is important that Church Council members understand their individual responsibilities as directors of the churchwide organization and members of its interim legislative authority. Translating concepts of fiduciary, strategic, and generative leadership from the collective to individual responsibilities requires ongoing reflection on both the structure and polity of this church and best practices in terms of governance.

The starting point is that Church Council members must understand and act as representatives and fiduciaries of the churchwide organization. They are not delegates from a particular congregation, synod, or geographical area or constituency. Although the method of nomination may be based on geography and/or other criteria, Church Council members do not function as a House of Representatives in which they have a home constituency. This does not mean that members of the Church Council should forget the geographical area from which they come and the issues and concerns of the congregation they attend and the synod in which they reside, but their role is to represent the interests of this whole church. Embedded in that understanding is the reality that every churchwide representative has an inherent potential conflict of interest because actions taken in furtherance of the fiduciary responsibility to the churchwide organization may not always be consistent with the best interest of a particular synod or congregation.

In this context, it is important that individual Church Council members covenant with one another and the leadership of this church that, in fulfilling their fiduciary duties, they understand and accept the following individual responsibilities.

A. Preparation

- Become familiar with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this Governance Policy Manual, and other policies and documents relevant to the governance of this church.
- Review pre-meeting materials and conscientiously prepare for Church Council and committee meetings, as well as retreats and other Church Council events.

B. Participation and decision-making

- Attend and actively participate in Church Council and committee meetings, as well as retreats and other Church Council events.
- Exercise loyalty, discretion, and best judgment in making informed decisions, consistent with applicable governing documents and policies, following open discussion; in participating in meetings, always treat fellow members, staff, and visitors with dignity and respect.
- Participate in evaluation, process observation, and providing constructive feedback of the Church Council and its structures; always assist in improving its effectiveness and fulfilling its missional responsibilities.
- Communicate clearly, support the actions and decisions of the Church Council, and preserve the confidentiality of decisions and discussions held in executive and closed sessions.
- [Abstain from voting on a matter in which the council member has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other council members.](#)

C. Collegiality and relationships

- Facilitate and assist in mentoring new members and help establish an atmosphere of collegiality and mutual support among Church Council members.
- Assist in identifying and recruiting talented and committed individuals to serve on committees, boards, and task forces and in leadership positions in this church, including future members of the Church Council.
- Foster effective teamwork with the churchwide organization staff and be sensitive to their responsibilities in management and implementation of churchwide ministries and policies; in so doing, bring to the attention of the vice president potentially inappropriate or harmful behavior of a fellow member.

D. Commitment to the ELCA

- Serve as an ambassador of and be willing to be an advocate for the ministries and priorities of the ELCA in congregations, synods, and other settings.
- Be a faithful steward and support financially the ministries of this church.
- Remember in prayer the leaders of this church and the members and activities of the Church Council.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PART 2

1. Organization and structures of the Church Council

In accordance with provisions in Chapter 14 of the CBCR, the voting members of the Church Council are the four officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops and 32—45 individuals elected by the Churchwide Assembly. There also are nine liaison synod bishops, one from each region, who serve as advisory members with voice but not vote (14.32.01.). In addition, representatives of ecumenical partners, ethnic ministries, separately incorporated ministries, and others attend Church Council meetings as guests.

In the exercise of its governance responsibilities and in furtherance of its fiduciary, strategic, and generative leadership of this church, the Church Council shall organize itself consistent with provisions of CBCR Chapter 14. The Church Council shall authorize or establish standing committees, other committees, boards, task forces, and other groups necessary to assist the Church Council in carrying out its work. The responsibilities of each such committee, board, task force, and group shall be specified in CBCR provisions, charters, policies, and/or authorizing actions of the Church Council. In all cases, the enabling documents must include: (a) specific descriptions of the responsibilities and authority of the committee, board, task force, or group; (b) its composition and leadership and (c) requirements for reporting to the Executive Committee and/or Church Council. In fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities with respect to governance, the Executive Committee shall answer questions, provide clarification, as necessary, and make recommendations to the Church Council regarding the roles and responsibilities of committees, boards, task forces and groups.

A. Standing committees

—The standing committees of the Church Council are described in the bylaw and continuing resolutions following CBCR provision 14.40. Additional responsibilities, procedures and requirements are described in charters, prepared by the committees and approved by the Church Council or the Executive Committee.

B. Temporary committees, boards, task forces and *ad hoc* groups

—In addition to standing committees, the Church Council or the Executive Committee also may establish temporary committees, boards, task forces, and/or *ad hoc* groups to facilitate and assist in the work of the Church Council and to communicate with and to serve as liaison to others in this church. Such committees, boards, task forces and *ad hoc* groups may contain individuals in addition to Church Council members, bishops and

staff, who may be appointed by the Church Council or Executive Committee to serve as advisory members. The Church Council or Executive Committee shall describe the authority for and responsibilities of such committees, boards, task forces and *ad hoc* groups, as well as their composition, their leadership and a timetable for reporting. Actions taken, recommendations for action and requested reports shall be communicated in a timely manner or within the timeline set by the Church Council and/or Executive Committee.

C. Meetings of committees, boards, task forces and *ad hoc* groups

—Committees, boards, task forces and *ad hoc* groups must meet often enough to fulfill their responsibilities under the applicable governing and policy documents and the instructions provided by the Church Council and/or Executive Committee. Committees, boards, task forces, and *ad hoc* groups are encouraged to use technology to meet in advance of scheduled in-person meetings in order to facilitate identification of issues and streamlining of agenda time for the Executive Committee and Church Council. When reports to the Executive Committee or Church Council are required, meetings or conferences of committees, boards, task forces, and *ad hoc* groups (whether in person or electronically) should take place sufficiently in advance to raise agenda matters according to the timetable specified below. In particular, standing committees should meet electronically before a regularly scheduled meeting of the Church Council, as necessary, in addition to during the in-person meeting.

D. Evaluation of organization and structures

—During each triennium, the Church Council shall evaluate its committees, boards, task forces, and *ad hoc* groups. The evaluation shall include how their activities meet the criteria specified in the relevant governing document provision(s) and applicable policies, as well as how they align with the strategic plan and goals of the churchwide organization.

2. Meetings of the Church Council

A. Types of meetings, scheduling and attendance

—In accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 14.12., the Church Council shall meet at least two times a year. In addition, in the year of a Churchwide Assembly, a one-day meeting precedes the assembly. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop. If feasible, during each triennium, a portion of at least one meeting or a separate meeting will be devoted to a retreat, and a portion of one Church Council meeting will be scheduled with a meeting of the Conference of Bishops.

In accordance with this church’s Open Meetings policy and because the Church Council is an elected decision-making body, its business shall be conducted in open

session, except when executive sessions or closed sessions are authorized by the policy. Thus, meetings are public sessions and open to guests and visitors, unless otherwise indicated in the meeting agenda or unless the Church Council votes to enter executive or closed session.

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.

The Open Meetings policy also provides for two types of closed sessions: “background” and “off the record” sessions. The policy prescribes the purposes of these sessions, the authorized participants in addition to Church Council members, steps to be taken prior to entering closed sessions, and reporting requirements.

Voting members and advisory members are expected to attend Church Council meetings; they should not miss more than one full day of a meeting or two consecutive meetings. If a member needs to be excused, electronic notification should be sent to the secretary.

The Office of the [Presiding Bishop Secretary](#) shall be advised by voting members if [they know of persons interested in attending or if](#) invitations have been extended to attend a Church Council meeting to persons other than those identified in the meeting materials.

B. Calendars

—A calendar of Church Council meetings shall be prepared to schedule meetings at least three years in advance. In addition to identifying prospective meeting dates, the triennial calendar will identify subjects that should be addressed at each meeting, including scheduling follow-up consideration of Churchwide Assembly actions and reports on matters previously delegated by Church Council action. Scheduling of Church Council meetings and matters to be addressed shall be coordinated with meetings of the Conference of Bishops. The Office of the [Presiding Bishop Secretary](#) in consultation with the Executive Committee will regularly review and update the triennial calendar.

C. Agendas and meeting materials

The Office of the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the [Office of the](#)

Secretary and the Executive Committee shall prepare agendas for all Church Council meetings. At least 60 days before the commencement of a Church Council meeting, chairpersons of standing committees of the Church Council shall advise the Office of the ~~Presiding Bishop~~Secretary and the Executive Committee of matters that the committees intend to bring to the Church Council, including anticipated recommendations and an estimate of the amount of time required for report and consideration in a plenary session. In addition, at least 45 days before the commencement of a Church Council meeting, members of the Church Council and liaison bishops will be invited to request matters for inclusion on the Church Council agenda. Such requests should include a brief explanation of the topic to be addressed, its importance and relevance to the responsibilities of the Church Council, and an estimate of the amount of time required. (In exigent circumstances, these deadlines may be waived.)

A provisional schedule will be distributed at least 30 days prior to Church Council meetings. Draft agendas will be distributed to Church Council members, liaison bishops, invited guests and appropriate churchwide staff at least 14 days before meetings.

Meeting agendas must include issues of governance, including addressing implementation of actions of the Churchwide Assembly, evaluation of implementation of the strategic plan, and fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities and missional imperatives identified in the CBCR. Either prior to or during every meeting, the agenda should include a component of training on some aspect(s) of the ministry of this church and/or governance responsibilities of the Church Council. In addition, portions of every meeting should include time for generative discussions about where God is leading and how this church can live into the future to which God is calling it. In addressing the agenda components and time requirements of a meeting, it is imperative to allocate time based on priorities at the meeting, including sufficient time to consider matters requiring action.⁴

Agendas also must include focus on the spiritual aspects of servant leadership. Worship and prayer also must be incorporated into the fabric of Church Council meetings, as well as in committee meetings and in all activities that take place during the times that a Church Council meeting is scheduled. Balancing these multiple imperatives is challenging but must be accomplished in a proactive manner.

⁴ BoardSource describes the challenge of balancing the need for efficient decision-making while maintaining a focus on teamwork and collegiality in furtherance of an organization's mission as follows: "The most effective boards plan their meetings to focus on the important matters of governance while preserving the sense of community and mission that brings the organization together." C.F. Dambeck, M. Davis and R.L. Gale, *Structures and Practices of Nonprofit Boards* (second edition) (2009).

In order to enhance efficiency, meetings may include *en bloc* agendas.⁵ Any Church Council member may request that a matter or matters on the *en bloc* agenda be considered separately; a request may be made to the secretary ~~with notification to the Office of the Presiding Bishop~~ to do so. ~~The request should be made before the meeting begins.~~ Notification to the Office of the Secretary of a council member’s intent to remove a matter or matters from the *en bloc* agenda is appropriate and encouraged. Once the meeting has begun, the request should be made to the secretary prior to the established deadline. In addition, in order to further enhance meeting efficiency, agendas also may include special orders and time estimates for discussion/action in order to inform members in advance of the meeting.⁶

Fulfilling the responsibilities of the Church Council—including all modes of leadership (fiduciary, strategic, and generative)—necessarily requires dissemination of relevant materials on a timely basis before meetings. A delicate balance must be maintained between an overwhelming “information dump” and providing necessary materials addressing only proposed actions. To the extent reasonably possible, the presiding bishop, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, shall provide an executive summary of key issues to be addressed at Church Council meetings at least 30 days before the meeting. In addition, to the extent reasonably possible, reports should include dashboards reflecting progress in implementing the strategic plan and other goals.

To the extent reasonably possible, meeting materials will be distributed at least 14 days before the meeting or earlier if reasonably possible.⁷

D. Meeting process

Pursuant to bylaw 14.12.02, “[T]he Church Council shall use parliamentary procedure in accordance with *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the council.” Bylaw 14.12.03 also prohibits proxy and absentee voting. The Church Council may adopt standing rules or rules of organization and procedure to provide additional procedural rules or processes to facilitate its work. Notwithstanding these rules, it is very important for the Church Council to set aside meeting time for generative discussions, prayer and reflection, and other nonlegislative purposes.

⁵ “*En bloc*” agendas are analogous to “consent calendars” or “consent agendas.” See *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), pp. 361–6241:32.

⁶ A “special order” is a matter scheduled for a particular time that takes precedence over what is being addressed when the time occurs. See *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), pp. 364–6541:53–54. In addition, agendas may contain estimates of discussion time for planning purposes, but they are not binding unless they are special orders.

⁷ Distribution of materials may be accomplished by electronic transmission or posting on a dedicated portal or website, as approved by the Church Council and consented to by members. The late distribution of materials does not preclude consideration of a matter.

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.

E. Meeting evaluations

—An integral governance aspect of the work of the Church Council is self-evaluation. The purpose of evaluation is to provide feedback on both its effectiveness in addressing the substantive matters on the agenda and the process by which discussion and actions are addressed. With respect to the former, a meeting evaluation form, developed by the Board Development Committee and approved by the Executive Committee, will be distributed at or shortly following the conclusion of every meeting. The evaluations will be reviewed by the Board Development Committee and the Executive Committee, and a summary will be distributed to all Church Council members before the next meeting. In addition, ~~each year~~ at the end of every triennium the Church Council shall conduct a more thorough evaluation of its work; the evaluation template will be developed by the Board Development Committee and approved by the Executive Committee. The results of the evaluation will be analyzed by the Board Development Committee and the Executive Committee, and a summary will be distributed to all Church Council members. (In addition to elected members of the Church Council, liaison bishops also will be asked to provide input to all evaluations of the Church Council. Others also may be invited by the vice president to complete evaluations.)

In addition to substantive evaluations, a process observation team ~~shall~~ may be identified for each meeting of the Church Council by the Board Development Committee. The process observation team will monitor the conduct of business and the manner of discussion and debate and report during the meetings on issues such as whether agenda matters have been fully addressed, whether multiple viewpoints and voices have been heard, whether discussion has been respectful, and whether there has been clarity in decision-making and delineation of follow-up, if any. The process observation team is authorized to make suggestions to the vice president, the Board Development Committee,

and/or the Executive Committee to improve the work of the Church Council.

F. Minutes

—Minutes constitute the official record of the proceedings of the Church Council, and their preparation and maintenance are the ~~responsibilities~~ responsibility of the Office of the Secretary (13.41.01.). Draft minutes of open sessions will be distributed with meeting materials in advance of meetings. Church Council members are encouraged to advise the Office of the Secretary of additions or corrections to the minutes at least 14 days in advance of meetings so that plenary time is not spent addressing such issues and approval of the minutes may be included in the *en bloc* agenda.

Minutes of executive sessions will not be included in minutes distributed as part of meeting materials. If minutes of executive sessions are taken, they must be distributed and approved in executive session. The Office of the Secretary shall keep a separate file of minutes of Church Council executive sessions.

G. Updates and training between meetings

—To the extent reasonably possible, the Office of the ~~Presiding Bishop~~ Secretary, with input from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Committee, will provide periodic updates between meetings regarding the work of the Church Council and the churchwide organization and anticipated issues on the horizon.

In addition, the Board Development Committee, in consultation with the Office of the ~~Presiding Bishop~~ Secretary and the Executive Committee, may schedule a primer or other educational session(s) to be conducted electronically between regular meetings of the Church Council.

4. Relationships and communications

As the board of directors and the interim legislative authority of the churchwide organization, the Church Council interacts with many entities, organizations, and individuals both within and outside of the denomination. These relationships are essential to the ministry of the ELCA, to practicing interdependence and to developing synergistic leadership.

The starting point in analyzing interrelationships is Chapter 8 of the CBCR. It both addresses the polity of the ELCA and defines the interrelationships among the expressions of this church, as well as with agencies and institutions. With respect to congregations and synods, the churchwide organization shares a relationship of interdependence: “Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in an interdependent relationship with the others” (8.11.). Chapter 8 continues by describing relationships and defining responsibilities of this

church with respect to institutions and agencies, other Lutheran organizations, interchurch agencies, institutions and councils, church-to-church relationships and others. Within the polity of the ELCA, it is the churchwide organization that “shall implement the extended mission of the Church, developing churchwide policies in consultation with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions and/or in response to specific agreed-upon areas of responsibility” (8.14.). In the exercise of its fiduciary responsibilities, the Church Council must endeavor to nurture and strengthen these relationships, but the Church Council must remember that its role is governance and not management.

A. Church Council relationships with churchwide organization and staff

—As a general proposition and principle of governance, the Church Council is responsible for exercising fiduciary, strategic, and generative leadership of the churchwide organization. The Church Council has tools to ensure that the churchwide organization is fulfilling its role within the mission of this church. Consistent with actions of the Churchwide Assembly and provisions of the CBCR, the Church Council develops and oversees the implementation of a strategic plan, develops and oversees the implementation of policies consistent with the plan and the applicable governing documents, approves a budget and authorizes expenditures consistent with fiscal policies and the budget, and periodically reviews the work of the offices and units of the churchwide organization. (These collective responsibilities are described in Part 1.) It does not manage the offices and units of the churchwide organization or supervise staff. Implementation of policies and programs and personnel management are responsibilities of the churchwide staff under the supervision of the presiding bishop.

Translating these concepts and the provisions of the CBCR into effective governance that recognizes different roles and appropriate limitations can be complicated. As a preliminary matter, clear communications and transparency are important to maintaining constructive relationships between the churchwide organization and the Church Council. In addition, a number of general principles should guide communications between Church Council members and churchwide officers and staff:

- As a general proposition, communications between a Church Council member and churchwide officers and staff should be channeled through the Office of the [Presiding Bishop Secretary](#),⁸; except as otherwise authorized by the CBCR, by approved policies, or with the permission of the presiding bishop. ~~(For example, questions about CBCR interpretation should be directed to the Office of the Secretary; budgetary issues may be directed to the Office of the Treasurer.)~~ When in doubt, a Church Council member should advise the Office of the [Presiding Bishop Secretary](#) through the

⁸ [The responsibility for governance is situated in the Office of the Secretary \(15.13.C20.\)](#)

appropriate executive that communication is taking place with a staff person. Thus, it is not appropriate to telephone or to email a staff person in a unit or office without the knowledge of the Office of the [Presiding Bishop Secretary](#) or other relevant officer. As a matter of practice, such communication should take place with the consent of the relevant officer or, in the case of email or correspondence, by providing a copy of the communication to the relevant officer.

- In the event that a Church Council member learns of an issue or problematic action on the part of a churchwide staff person, the member should communicate the issue immediately to the appropriate officer or executive.
- When a policy of this church is under consideration for revision or for development and the policy is one that will be subject to adoption by the Church Council, the Church Council shall set out a roadmap for the process for development, review, and adoption that includes a timeline.

B. Relationships and communications with the Conference of Bishops

—The relationship between the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops is important and unique because each synod bishop is the chief executive officer and pastor of a synod with specific responsibilities in relation to congregations and the churchwide organization. Synod bishops, Church Council members, and leaders in the churchwide organization also are interconnected and unified by common purposes and principles of organization in this church (CBCR Chapters 4, 5 and 8). Collectively, the Conference of Bishops has defined responsibilities with respect to the Church Council.

The Conference of Bishops is a unique asset to the Church Council and this church as a whole. The Church Council is encouraged to work proactively to engage the Conference of Bishops in consultation and in providing advice and recommendations on numerous issues that warrant generative discussion and thoughtful advice.

With these interconnections, it is important to maintain effective lines of communication between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council. Official communications between the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops should be limited to written communications between the officers and the chair of the Conference of Bishops. Informational communications between individual bishops and the appropriate churchwide staff and/or Church Council members are encouraged, but they are not intended to officially transmit referrals or respond to actions by the Conference of Bishops. Recommendations from the Conference of Bishops to the Church Council shall be transmitted through the chair of the Conference of Bishops.

If the Conference of Bishops is required to review an existing or proposed policy that the Church Council must approve in accordance with the CBCR, the Church Council

shall refer the policy to the Conference of Bishops for review. The referral shall describe the scope of the requested review, as well as sufficient background to provide a roadmap of the issues to address and a timetable for reporting to the Church Council.

C. Relationships and communications with synods and congregations

In the exercise of interdependence, it is important for the Church Council to interact with and provide mutual support to synods and congregations. Nothing in this Governance Policy Manual should be interpreted to inhibit interdependence and mutual support, but clarity is required with respect to “official” communications and the role of individual Church Council members when interacting with synods and congregations. Notification to synods and congregations of official ELCA policy is the responsibility of the presiding bishop and/or secretary, and care must be exercised in the interpretation of that policy.

As indicated in the listing of their responsibilities, all Church Council members are encouraged to serve as ambassadors of the Church Council and this church outside of meetings. In this regard, if a Church Council member will speak at a synod event or in a congregation of the synod as a representative of the Church Council, the synod bishop should be notified in advance. In such situations, Church Council members should clearly articulate when they are attending a meeting or speaking as a representative of this church. If potential disputes or problematic issues are anticipated, Church Council members are encouraged to confer in advance with the appropriate executive in the Office of the Presiding Bishop and/or Office of the Secretary, as well as with the synod bishop.

5. Related policies

The CBCR identifies many policies of the churchwide organization for which the Church Council has governance responsibility, and the Church Council has a fiduciary responsibility for ensuring that these policies are up-to-date and that the churchwide organization is faithfully implementing them. A number of other policies are necessary for the Church Council to consider in the exercise of its fiduciary responsibility. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Policies for the churchwide organization:
 - Personnel policies
 - Open ~~meetings~~Meetings policy
- Policies called for in the CBCR:
 - Policies for addressing social concerns
 - Policies addressing standards for ministry
 - Policies addressing discipline
 - Financial policies

6. Review and amendment

At least triennially, provisions of this Church Council Governance Policy Manual

shall be reviewed and amended, as necessary. Proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary in advance of presentation for action to the Church Council. Any Church Council member, liaison bishop, or churchwide staff member may suggest amendments by submitting proposals to the Executive Committee. Amendments will be adopted by majority vote of the Church Council and become effective immediately upon adoption.

APPENDIX

In evaluating the appropriate responsibilities of the Church Council, it is useful to inventory all the discrete allocations made in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* (CBCR). The following list identifies all such responsibilities as of ~~August 2019~~November 2021. In accordance with the CBCR, the Church Council shall:

- Establish triennial percentage goals for this church to meet ethnic and racial diversity commitments (5.01.E19.).
- Develop, adopt, and periodically review and update ministry standards, policies, criteria, and procedures in accordance with CBCR Chapter 7.
- Develop policies in consultation with synods and congregations and provide oversight for implementing the extended mission of the Church in entering into relationship with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions or in response to agreed-upon areas of responsibility (8.14.).
- Develop, implement, and oversee policies related to seminaries, approve governing document amendments, elect people to seminary boards or advisory councils, and approve providing financial support in accordance with CBCR Chapter 8.
- Oversee this church's relationships with colleges and universities, in accordance with CBCR Chapter 8.
- Adopt policies and procedures that establish and implement relationships with other Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies (8.41.).
- Adopt policies and procedures to implement church-to-church relationships of full communion established by action of the Churchwide Assembly (8.62.).
- Consider resolutions from congregations forwarded by synods (9.53.08.).
- Approve criteria, policies, and procedures for acknowledging authorized worshiping communities and developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels (10.01.04.).
- Consider and ratify amendments to synod articles of incorporation and provisions to synod constitutions, other than those that conform to model provisions (10.11., 10.11.01., 10.12.).
- Consider and provide indemnification, when appropriate, to this church or any synod, for claims against a predecessor church body (10.22.).
- Receive report regarding each synod's percentage or amount of Mission Support determined by consultation (10.71.02.).
- Consider, advise, and act upon recommendations and respond to concerns and proposals from the Conference of Bishops (10.81.01.).

- Establish fiscal policies and authorize expenditures of the churchwide organization, within limits established by the Churchwide Assembly and the CBCR (11.40. and following bylaws).
- Approve a policy for the development of social statements and review and recommend for approval by the Churchwide Assembly social statements prepared in accordance with the policy (12.12.01.).
- Establish the time and place of meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, appoint and allocate to synods up to 10 additional voting members, [designate other persons as advisory members](#), and appoint committees in accordance with CBCR Chapter 12.
- [Serve as *ex officio* voting members of the Churchwide Assembly \(12.41.16\).](#)
- Elect the treasurer (14.14.).
- Exercise discretion, as necessary, to remove a voting member of the Church Council for cause (14.15.).
- Act on policies proposed by churchwide units, subject to review by the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.01.).
- Review procedures and programs of churchwide units to assure that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled; approve policies of churchwide units (14.21.02.).
- Review all recommendations from the churchwide organization for consideration at the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.03.).
- Report to the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.07.).
- Adopt policies for the churchwide organization in accordance with [the CBCR](#) (14.21.04.). In addition to fiscal policies (11.41.), these include personnel policies ([15.12.C20.](#), 15.21.01., 16.12.~~B19.bD20.~~), salary structure for the staff and ranges for salaries of the officers (14.21.06., 14.21.13.).
- Consult with and refer matters to the Conference of Bishops and receive reports from it (14.21.11.).
- Act on resolutions from ~~Synod-synod Councils-councils~~ (14.21.11.).
- Provide for the installation of churchwide officers (14.21.12.).
- Consider issues of corporate social responsibility and, as appropriate, direct the churchwide organization to file shareholder resolutions, cast proxy ballots, and take other actions (14.21.14.).
- Establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between the churchwide organization and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations, and determine which unit of the churchwide organization shall relate to each (14.21.15.).
- ~~Elect executive for administration upon nomination of the presiding bishop (15.12.A10.).~~
- Arrange processes for all elections specified in the CBCR (14.21.22.).

- Fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the CBCR, including electing individuals to serve the balance of unexpired terms when a vacancy has been declared by the secretary (14.22.).
- Establish Church Council committees, determine their responsibilities, nominate people to serve on them, and receive reports and recommendations from them (14.41.). Ensure that their oversight responsibilities include aligning the work of churchwide units with strategic priorities.
- Elect the executive for administration upon nomination of the presiding bishop (15.12.A1020.).
- Act upon recommendations, as appropriate, from the presiding bishop on proposed policies relating to ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious relations (15.12.B20.).
- ~~Act upon recommendations, as appropriate, from the presiding bishop on proposed policies relating to worship and sacramental practices and adopt a policy providing for liturgical review (15.12.H19.).~~
- Establish financial policies, authorize the creation of funds, define limits, make recommendations, and hold elections related to activities of the Office of the Treasurer (15.14.A17.).
- Receive reports from units of the churchwide organization (16.12.).
- Act upon recommendations, as appropriate, from the presiding bishop on proposed policies relating to worship and sacramental practices (16.12.A20.).
- Establish policies for required reporting and other items related to research, data collection, analysis, and evaluation (16.12.B20.).
- Receive reports from separately incorporated ministries identified in Chapter 17, provide governance oversight to ensure that their ministries conform to the provisions of the CBCR, and review and approve or forward to the Churchwide Assembly for approval proposed changes to their governing documents.
- Oversee and implement nomination and election processes described in CBCR Chapter 19.
- Approve definitions and guidelines for discipline, rules of procedure for hearing officers and discipline hearing committees, make appointments, address petitions for recall, participate in consultation and adjudication processes, and address other matters as described in CBCR Chapter 20.
- Establish a process to determine when a person is entitled to indemnification in accordance with CBCR Chapter 21.
- Consider proposed amendments to the CBCR and make recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly in the case of constitutional provisions and bylaws; consider and act upon or refer to the Churchwide Assembly amendments to or new continuing resolutions in accordance with CBCR Chapter 22.

2022 Budget Proposal Highlights

At the 2019 Churchwide Assembly (CWA), income estimates were approved for 2020 – 2022 along with a Spending Authorization for 2020. The detailed budget report from the 2019 triennial assembly has been posted in the Budget and Finance Committee Teams folder; however, as it relates to 2022, it only includes an income budget. Due to the Future Church reorganization, the units no longer exist in the same way. Having said that, much of the historical work continues – perhaps in different areas. This document is helpful in understanding some of the baseline expenditures.

In addition to this memo, there are three schedules which support the FY 2022 budget:

- 1) Exhibit 9 - 2022 Revised Income Estimates – This document provides a summary of 2020 Current Fund (Unrestricted) actual revenues, 2021 Approved Budget and Projected Revenues, and a requested changes from the 2022 Revenues approved by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to the Revised Revenue Budget for 2022. This will come first to the Budget and Finance Committee for approval and then, if approved, to Church Council. Also included is the revenue budget for the same periods for ELCA World Hunger.
- 2) Exhibit 10 - 2022 Spending Authorization Proposal – This document includes a comparison of the Approved 2021 Spending Authorization and the Requested Spending Authorization for 2022 for both Current Fund and ELCA World Hunger.
- 3) Exhibit 10a – 2022 Proposed Spending Authorization Detail

The detail of the budget work occurs after the Spending Authorization is approved by the Church Council in November and before the fiscal year begins on February 1, 2022. Should conditions change materially between now and then or the detailed buildup of the budget indicates changes are warranted, staff will bring an updated request to BFC/CC in April 2022. Generally speaking, the churchwide organization operates on a breakeven budget, that is, budgeted expenses equal budgeted revenues. For the proposed 2022 budget, this is the case; however, the churchwide organization is also planning to spend some resources from the Mission Development Fund to invest in new initiatives related to Future Church. Here is an excerpt from the Church Council action taken when this fund was established.

From November 2006 Budget and Finance Committee:

a.) Mission Development Fund

The recommended action calls for the establishment of a new temporarily restricted fund to reside in the ELCA Foundation. The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount, after covering any shortfall in other current income categories, in any fiscal year. Additional consideration will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies. The transfer of such income shall be authorized by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer. The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and the ELCA Foundation.

BF ACTION

Recommended:

To approve the establishment of the Mission Development Fund, a temporarily restricted fund in the ELCA Foundation, for the purpose of providing seed money for new and innovative ministries and support for churchwide priorities.

Current Fund Revenue Projections

The churchwide organization is requesting a decrease of \$2.7 million in Total Current Fund revenues approved by the Churchwide Assembly from \$68.5 million to \$65.8 million. Of the total \$2.7 million, the portion related to “operating revenues” is only \$1.5 million. This will be addressed later in this overview.

- ***Proposed Mission Support*** – Given the impact of the pandemic, churchwide staff is grateful for the continued support from synods that have enabled the churchwide organization to project Mission Support at \$40,000,000. This represents a 2.4% decrease from the amount approved at the CWA and a 1.8% decrease from our projected 2021 mission support. The year-over-year decline over the last 5 years has averaged 2.0%, even including Covid-impacted 2020. The estimate was built up by the accumulation of synod intents (included as Exhibit 14); the proposed budget represents 97% of the intents.
- ***Direct Gifts*** – This category reflects unrestricted gifts received through work by the development team or gifts sent directly by individuals. It also includes special gifts from synods, for example, a portion of the net proceeds from the sale of a congregation’s property, upon closure. From a fundraising perspective, attracting donors to give to “Where Needed Most” has become increasingly difficult. The projection of \$5,275,000 represents a decrease of \$2.4 million from the churchwide assembly budget. This number was derived by accumulation of development team goals. As you will hear in the Resource Development Committee update, “Where Needed Most” is an area where the development team plans to engage a consultant to assist in identifying strategies, messaging, etc., with the goal of increasing the appeal of unrestricted giving to donors.
- ***Investment Income*** – Investment performance has been well ahead of plan in 2021. The investment policies of the ELCA require a conservative portfolio, which is less impacted by market volatility. The budget has been increased over 2020 actual and slightly over the CWA budget, based on 2021 results and the fact that the churchwide organization will be moving the investment portfolio to a new manager (the current provider is in the process of being sold). Churchwide staff is hopeful that deeper engagement with the new manager will yield ideas for better investment of excess cash and therefore, generate additional earnings, despite the expected low interest rate market. In addition, changes in internal staffing resources should allow for greater focus on the daily cash management.
- ***Bequest Income*** – While historical trends are not necessarily predictive of future bequest income, this is slightly lower than the five-year average. The proposed 2022 budget is \$336K or 16% higher than the CWA amount but is supportable based on recent trends.

- **Endowment Income** – This represents distributions from endowments held by the ELCA Foundation, for which the churchwide organization is the beneficiary. This estimate represents a 12% increase over the CWA amount but is based on 2021 quarterly distributions. The distribution rate from the Endowment Fund Pool Trust will remain at 4% in 2022.
- **Rent** – Rent was budgeted flat at the time of the churchwide assembly. This increase is reflective of the current rent rolls. While the churchwide organization (churchwide organization owns the Higgins Road building) has had tenants that are looking to downsize, based on current agreements, churchwide staff does not expect a significant downward impact in 2022.
- **Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM)** – These areas were significantly impacted in 2020 and 2021 as programs had to be suspended or substantially reduced. This church’s global work resonates with the constituency, and based on the development team goals, staff believes they can resume to pre-Covid levels of income generation. In reviewing the expenditure budget, you will see a significant increase in expense related to the YAGM program – this increase is fully offset by fundraising as YAGMs are also expected to participate in fund raising for the program.
- **Other Temporarily Restricted Gifts** – This line represents other restricted gifts which are attributable to work funded by the current fund (unrestricted) budget. To the extent that the actual program costs satisfy the donor intent and are equal to or greater than the gifts received in the current year, these funds can be used to support the unrestricted budget. The budget of \$978K represents an increase over the CWA amount and partially offsets the \$2.4 million decrease in Direct Gifts (Where Needed Most).
- **Mission Investment Fund** – The Mission Investment Fund, a separately incorporated ministry of the ELCA, has again generously committed \$1.5 million in funding to support new and developing congregations in the ELCA. This funding is consistent with the amount included in the CWA approved budget.
- **Designated and Restricted Funds Released income** – This is the other area of significant decrease in income (\$1.2 million) from the CWA approved budget, but the decrease should not be perceived negatively. The proposed budget includes a \$1.9 million release of designated funds to balance proposed expenses which exceed revenues by this amount – the CWA amount was projected to be \$3.0 million, therefore releasing less of this designated fund is a positive. This budgeted shortfall will be funded by monies from prior year favorability, which was designed by Church Council for this purpose. In addition, there is \$933K of releases from restricted funds to support the Current Fund expenditures in 2022 in satisfaction of the donor restrictions for International Women Leaders and missionary work in Japan.

ELCA World Hunger Income

Direct giving related to ELCA World Hunger has been increased from the approved triennial budget by \$500K. This represents a 2.6% increase and is reflective of a historical spike in ELCA World Hunger giving during a Youth Gathering year. The estimate was supported by the development team planning and is also relatively consistent with the projected 2021 giving. Endowment income has been increased from the CWA approved budget based on recent trends.

From a financial perspective, the goal in ELCA World Hunger is to distribute what is received in any given year, maintaining a small fund balance to support the monthly volatility associated with this fund. In 2019, a new policy was established for ELCA World Hunger bequests, which provides that should the bequest income received in any one year exceed the budget, the excess will be deferred to support a future year. This allows ELCA World Hunger to have sufficient funding to make longer term commitments to programmatic work. The proposed spending authorization includes a release of bequest income, which was in support of multi-year international projects that were committed to earlier in 2021.

2022 Proposed Spending Authorization Assumptions

The spending authorization was prepared using the 2021 budget as the starting point, adjusting for expected changes in 2022. Exhibit 10a – Proposed Spending Authorization Detail highlights the changes by Home Area for the Current Fund.

- ***Payroll & Benefits*** – The total increase of \$980,000 reflects the following:
 - 2% compensation increase
 - 3.5% increase in medical insurance costs
 - Impact of compensation increase on other benefits (e.g., retirement contribution)
 - Implementation of 50% of remaining recommended increase for select staff based on compensation study conducted in 2021. The study was focused on racial, gender, and years of service equity. Approximately 55% of the recommended increase was made effective in 2021. The 2022 proposed budget contemplates spreading the remaining 45% over 2022 and 2023.
- ***Travel*** – Travel was budgeted for approximately half of 2021 in light of travel restrictions related to the pandemic. As travel is expected to resume in 2022, the \$697K increase in travel reflects a return of approximately 70% of the travel reductions from 2021. Churchwide organization expects that travel costs in general will decrease based on learnings from the pandemic. These reductions will help offset the inflationary impact.
- ***Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM)*** – No YAGM volunteers were sent in 2021. Churchwide staff plans to send 75 volunteers in 2022 with a program cost of \$1.1 million. The \$800K addition to the budget reflects the difference in what was allocated in 2021 for the program and the projected costs for 2022. The cost for the program is fully funded by gifts (reflected in the revenue section).
- ***Previously MDF*** – These items were previously funded by the Mission Development Fund, discussed on pages 1 – 2. Because they no longer fit the definition for spending from MDF but are expenses that continue to be a priority for the organization, they will be incorporated into the appropriate Home Area budgets. These items include:
 - Christian Community & Leadership – Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta
 - Service & Justice – Peace not Walls
 - Office of the Secretary – ELCA Systems Academy
 - Office of the Treasurer – IT Optimization, Grantmaker Administrator position

Churchwide staff expects to draw from the Mission Development Fund endowment to invest up to \$1 million in activities which align with the three strategic priorities (to be a welcoming church, to be a thriving church, and to be a connected, sustainable church) and to support this church's goal of engaging one million new, young, and diverse people.

- ***Innovation Home Area*** – The Planning, Research & Evaluation team was eliminated from this home area during 2021. All severance will be expensed in 2021. These reductions are not included in the budget as staff will likely need to outsource portions of this work. The churchwide organization will review the needs and capacity of existing staff to do this work and future needs in the detailed planning and will adjust the budget as appropriate.
- ***Reductions @ 5%*** – The three-year average spending for the Home Areas and the Offices was 95%. Currently in 2021, the year-to-date operations are at 81% of the spending authorization through September. While this is expected to increase, total spending is not projected to finish above 95%. Our normal budgeting process assumes the organization will be fully staffed for the entire year and that all grant requests planned will be completed in the year. Churchwide staff know that this level of precision is often not attainable. Furthermore, additional strategic work is needed to assess whether certain costs should be eliminated. Accordingly, rather than budgeting at 100% of planned expenses and funding the gap (expenses greater than revenues), staff have reduced the budgets by 5%. At a time when revenues are declining and costs are rising, staff believe these steps will provide a framework to ensure the spending remains focused on those programs and costs which support the strategic direction. Should a home area/office need additional funds, staff request the option to allocate additional resources from the Church Council designated fund established for this purpose.

ELCA World Hunger Spending Authorization

The proposed spending authorization for 2022 is equal to the projected revenue. Due to a 40% increase in the 3-year average of bequest income designated for ELCA World Hunger (2018–20 compared to 2015–17), the fund balance has grown. The ELCA World Hunger team will evaluate new opportunities to support hunger, both domestically and internationally. A detailed allocation will be completed and presented at the Spring 2022 meeting and a new spending authorization will be proposed, if applicable.

Summary

In summary, the requested budget for the Current Fund plus ELCA World Hunger represents a combined decrease of \$1.5 million in revenue and spending authorization from what was approved at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

The actions requested are as follows:

BF/CC ACTION

Recommended:

To approve and forward to the Church Council for their action:

To revise the 2022 fiscal year current fund income proposal from \$68,507,018 to \$65,816,150;

To approve a 2022 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$65,816,150;

To revise the 2022 fiscal year World Hunger income proposal from \$21,500,000 to \$22,665,000; and

To approve a 2022 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$22,665,000.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2022 Proposed Budget						
	2020	2021		2022		
	Actual	Budget	Projection	Per CWA	Adjustments	Proposed Budget
Current Fund Budget						
Mission Support	\$ 40,739,221	\$ 40,250,000	\$ 40,750,000	\$ 41,000,000	\$ (1,000,000)	\$ 40,000,000
Direct Gifts	5,355,499	6,510,000	7,100,000	7,630,000	(2,355,000)	5,275,000
Investment Income	1,100,091	1,475,380	2,000,000	1,975,380	100,000	2,075,380
Bequests & Trusts	2,258,643	2,064,000	2,500,000	2,064,000	336,000	2,400,000
Endowment	3,349,445	3,449,169	3,700,000	3,314,152	400,000	3,714,152
Rent	1,849,989	1,744,855	1,850,000	1,744,855	100,000	1,844,855
Service Level Agreements/Other	2,896,653	2,103,519	1,800,000	1,803,519		1,803,519
Total Unrestricted	\$ 57,549,541	\$ 57,596,923	\$ 59,700,000	\$ 59,531,906	\$ (2,419,000)	\$ 57,112,906
Global Mission Missionaries	577,768	2,005,000	1,000,000	2,200,000	90,000	2,290,000
Global Mission - YAGM's	177,902	575,000	135,000	1,300,000	(165,000)	1,135,000
Other Temp Restr Direct Gifts		150,000		-	978,000	978,000
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000		1,500,000
Other Gifts	\$ 2,255,670	\$ 4,230,000	\$ 1,135,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 903,000	\$ 5,903,000
Total Unrestricted	\$ 59,805,211	\$ 61,826,923	\$ 60,835,000	\$ 64,531,906	\$ (1,516,000)	\$ 63,015,906
Designated Funds Released	\$ 750,000	\$ 3,087,077	\$ -	\$ 3,042,111	\$ (1,174,867)	\$ 1,867,244
Restricted Funds Released: Japan/Int'l Women Leaders	937,533	933,000	933,000	933,000	-	933,000
Total Revenues	\$ 61,492,744	\$ 65,847,000	\$ 61,768,000	\$ 68,507,017	\$ (2,690,867)	\$ 65,816,150
ELCA WORLD HUNGER						
Direct Gifts	\$ 19,144,151	\$ 18,510,000	\$ 20,300,000	\$ 19,500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 20,000,000
Endowment	881,417	750,000	825,000	500,000	250,000	750,000
Bequests and Miscellaneous	4,167,021	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000
Release - Covid-19 Appeal	248,000			-		-
Release of Bequest income		2,740,000		-	415,000	415,000
Total ELCA World Hunger	\$ 24,440,589	\$ 23,500,000	\$ 22,625,000	\$ 21,500,000	\$ 1,165,000	\$ 22,665,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 85,933,333	\$ 89,347,000	\$ 84,393,000	\$ 90,007,017	\$ (1,525,867)	\$ 88,481,150

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2022 Home Area Allocations**

	Current Fund			ELCA World Hunger			Total FY 22
	FY 21 Approved Spending Authorization	Proposed Revision	FY 22 Requested Spending Authorization	FY 21 Approved Spending Authorization	Proposed Revision	FY 22 Requested Spending Authorizatio	
Christian Community & Leadership Innovation	\$ 22,268,376	\$ 422,088	\$ 22,690,464				\$ 22,690,464
Service & Justice	2,111,697	(80,337)	2,031,360				2,031,360
<i>WH Domestic Program (part of S & J)</i>	12,560,316	(275,940)	12,284,376	23,300,000	(635,000)	\$ 22,665,000	34,949,376
<i>WH International Program (part of S & J)</i>				3,882,707			
<i>WH Witnessing in Society (part of S & J)</i>				15,692,063			
<i>WH Fundraising (part of S & J)</i>				1,547,980			
Office of the Presiding Bishop	\$ 11,962,108	(181,678)	\$ 11,780,430				\$ 11,780,430
Office of the Secretary	5,061,939	(48,474)	5,013,465				5,013,465
Office of the Treasurer	8,732,564	333,490	9,066,054				9,066,054
General Treasury	\$ 151,200	(1,200)	\$ 150,000				\$ 150,000
Depreciation	3,000,000	(200,000)	2,800,000				2,800,000
Total Requested Spending Authorization	\$ 65,848,200	\$ (32,051)	\$ 65,816,149	\$ 46,600,000	\$ (635,000)	\$ 22,665,000	\$ 88,481,149

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Detail of Budget Adjustments

Current Fund Home Areas	FY 21 Budget Unrestricted	Increase				FY 22 Budget Unrestricted	Reduction @ 5%	Proposed FY22 Budget
		Payroll and Benefits	Travel	YAGMs	Previously MDF			
Christian Community and Leadership	\$ 22,268,376	296,506	376,000	800,000	63,000	\$ 23,803,882	\$ (1,113,419)	\$ 22,690,464
Innovation	2,111,697	25,248				2,136,945	(105,585)	2,031,360
Service and Justice	12,560,316	87,076	200,000		65,000	12,912,392	(628,016)	12,284,376
Operations						-		
Office of the Presiding Bishop	11,962,108	295,428	121,000			12,378,536	(598,105)	11,780,430
Office of the Secretary	5,061,939	74,623			130,000	5,266,562	(253,097)	5,013,465
Office of the Treasurer	8,732,564	201,119			569,000	9,502,683	(436,628)	9,066,054
						-		
General Treasury	150,000					150,000		150,000
Depreciation	3,000,000					3,000,000	(200,000)	2,800,000
Total Spending Auth Requested	\$ 65,847,000	980,000	697,000	800,000	827,000	\$ 69,151,000	\$ (3,134,850)	\$ 65,816,150

SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
For the Period Ending September 30, 2021

	2021 ACTUAL	2021 BUDGET	2020 ACTUAL	Year-to-Date Variance	
				ACTUAL vs. BUDGET Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	25,247,599	25,056,777	25,478,303	190,821	(230,704)
Other	13,995,801	12,762,325	10,363,937	1,233,476	3,631,865
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED	39,243,400	37,819,102	35,842,239	1,424,298	3,401,161
TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds Released	622,000	2,561,218	1,951,551	(1,939,218)	(1,329,551)
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT	39,865,400	40,380,320	37,793,790	(514,920)	2,071,610
LESS TOTAL EXPENSES	35,355,432	43,767,283	37,877,873	(8,411,850)	(2,522,441)
NET REVENUE OVER (UNDER) EXPENSES	4,509,968	(3,386,962)	(84,083)	7,896,930	4,594,051

REVENUE SUMMARY
For the Period Ending September 30, 2021

	2021	2021	2020	Year-to-Date Variance	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL vs. BUDGET Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	25,247,599	25,056,777	25,478,303	190,821	(230,704)
Direct Gifts	2,674,365	2,879,412	2,503,317	(205,047)	171,048
Investment Income	2,180,924	1,003,587	343,632	1,177,338	1,837,293
Bequests and Trusts	1,743,674	1,376,000	834,590	367,674	909,084
Endowment	2,955,357	2,586,877	2,661,307	368,481	294,050
Rent	1,230,846	1,163,237	1,225,958	67,610	4,889
Service Level Agreements/Other	1,353,816	1,402,346	1,143,321	(48,530)	210,495
Missionaries	773,164	1,072,088	473,909	(298,924)	299,255
YAGM	83,654	278,778	177,902	(195,125)	(94,249)
Mission Investment Fund	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	39,243,400	37,819,102	35,842,239	1,424,298	3,401,161
TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds Released	622,000	2,561,218	1,951,551	(1,939,218)	(1,329,551)
Net Operating Revenue and Support	39,865,400	40,380,320	37,793,790	(514,920)	2,071,610
	-	-			

PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION
For the Period Ending September 30, 2021

	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Spending Authorization</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	<u>Percent of Budget</u>
Home Areas				
Christian Community & Leadership	11,007,538	14,939,336	3,931,798	73.68%
Service and Justice	5,565,076	8,613,682	3,048,606	64.61%
Innovation	1,024,397	1,457,870	433,473	70.27%
Operations	15,750,055	16,655,594	905,539	94.56%
Presiding Bishop	7,066,962	7,511,089	444,127	94.09%
Treasurer	5,415,136	5,835,635	420,498	92.79%
Secretary	3,267,957	3,308,871	40,914	98.76%
OTHER				
General Treasury	348,464	367,467	19,002	94.83%
Depreciation	1,659,902	1,733,333	73,432	95.76%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>35,355,432</u>	<u>43,767,283</u>	<u>8,411,850</u>	<u>80.78%</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA ELCA WORLD HUNGER
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE
For the Period Ending September 30, 2021**

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL VS. BUDGET</u>	<u>FY21 TOTAL BUDGET</u>
BEGINNING BALANCE	10,164,521			
Income				
Direct Giving	8,424,268	8,974,424	(550,156)	18,510,000
Endowments and Donor Requested Payments	639,321	562,500	76,821	750,000
Bequests & Trusts/Misc *	661,205	1,000,000	(338,795)	1,500,000
Release of Bequest Income	-	370,000	(370,000)	740,000
Total Income	9,724,794	10,906,924	(1,182,130)	21,500,000
Expense				
Service and Justice:				
Domestic Program	2,142,329	2,922,158	(779,829)	3,882,707
International Program	5,811,724	11,524,718	(5,712,994)	15,692,063
Witnessing in Society	1,096,228	1,034,420	61,808	1,547,980
Fundraising Allocation Expense	842,283	897,442	(55,159)	2,177,250
Total Expense	9,892,564	16,378,738	(6,486,174)	23,300,000
NET	(167,770)	(5,471,814)	5,304,044	(1,800,000)
ENDING BALANCE	9,996,751			

* Bequest and trusts income will be recognized as received; however, spending of Bequest and trusts income will be deferred until the following fiscal year, beginning with FY19. Over \$5.2 million of the beginning balance for the year is attributable to cumulative bequests income in excess of the budgeted amount. This will allow us to increase spending in future years.

PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

AREA: Climate Change
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
REVISION DATE: 7/13/21

MARKER DATES:

- RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 5, 2003
- ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, October 24, 2003
- APPROVED by Church Council, November 2003
- UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 28, 2007
- APPROVED by Church Council, November 2007
- UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 10, 2010
- APPROVED by Church Council, November 2010
- APPROVED by Church Council, November 2015 [CC15.11.52j]
- APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2021 [anticipated]

Caring for Creation Climate Change

BACKGROUND

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global; most stem directly from human activity (“Caring for Creation,” 2.B-1,¹ 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment²).

As Christians, we understand human beings as fundamentally responsible before God. With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future itself. Central to that question is the threat posed by climate change. In 2015 the member states of the United Nations issued [Agenda 2030](#), a shared blueprint for “peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.” Central to the blueprint are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³, which include SDG 13, calling for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.⁴

Also in 2015, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change members adopted a global agreement that went into force in November 2016 — the Paris Agreement.⁵ The countries agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and agreed to a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs.

¹ *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (ELCA social statement, 1993), p. 4, <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation> .

² See USGCRP, 2018: *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, Reidmiller, D.R., and C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock and B.C. Stewart (eds.), U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, D.C., USA, pp. 33–71. doi: 10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH1, <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/1> .

³ Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> .

⁴ SDG-13 Climate Action, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13> .

⁵ Paris Agreement, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement> .

23 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)^{6,7,8} and the National Aeronautics and Space
24 Administration⁹ scientists documented the realities of climate change. Climate change results in the earth
25 experiencing more frequent severe and intensified weather patterns and temperature extremes. These
26 extreme weather patterns result in floods, droughts, wildfires and rising sea levels that lead to the
27 degradation of the earth. All of this negatively impacts the earth's inhabitants at unprecedented rates.
28 Some global consequences include forced migration, exacerbation of poverty, national security concerns,
29 negative impacts on agriculture resulting in food insecurity, and threats to ecosystems that could lead to
30 the extinction of some species.

31
32 The marginalized and vulnerable are most affected by climate change impacts. This failure to protect
33 God's creation ultimately mirrors and deepens existing racial, gender and economic inequalities. Caring
34 for creation means respecting environmental limits while pursuing economic growth that provides
35 sufficient and sustainable lifestyles for all people. The ELCA social statement *Genetics, Faith and*
36 *Responsibility* (2011) describes the importance of understanding the need for participation and the
37 interconnectedness of all living beings (p. 16). The well-being of future generations depends on our
38 ecosystem to support it.

39
40 Investors have a significant role and responsibility in addressing climate change. For example, Ceres —a
41 network of investors, environmental organizations and other public-interest groups working with
42 companies to integrate sustainability into capital markets for the health of the planet and its people —
43 publishes reports calling for the corporate world to address issues of climate change and sustainability.¹⁰
44 “Investor strategies to tackle the growing threat of climate change must include a just transition by
45 incorporating the full range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) dimensions of responsible
46 investment.”¹¹ Global climate investors such as [Climate Action 100+](#) are driving business transition via
47 such mechanisms as the [Net Zero Benchmark](#).

50 ELCA SOCIAL POLICY

51
52 *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (1993): The social statement develops this church's vision
53 of creation while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through principles of participation,
54 solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically, this social statement calls the church to gather
55 information and engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote justice for creation (5.E.1-1).
56 Dialogues include implementing comprehensive environmental principles, promoting healthy
57 environments, and cooperation between the public and private sector regarding sustainability. Per ELCA
58 social teaching, all people have a right to equal access and participation in decisions that affect them.

59
60 The 1995 Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution “Environment — Energy Audits” ([CA95.05.26b](#)).
61 The 1999 Churchwide Assembly ([CA99.06.30](#)) expressed great concern about the destructive practice of
62 mountaintop-removal coal mining and urged our church to advocate ending it. The 2001 Churchwide
63 Assembly ([CA01.07.57](#)) reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the care of creation, including
64 climate change, as part of the web of complex, interwoven environmental concerns.

⁶ IPCC, “Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5oC,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>.

⁷ IPCC, “Special Report: Climate Change and Land,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/srcl/download/>.

⁸ IPCC, “Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/srocc/>.

⁹ “Climate Change: How Do We Know?,” <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>.

¹⁰ See <http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports>.

¹¹ “Climate Change and the Just Transition: A Guide for Investor Action,”
<https://www.unpri.org/download?ac=9452>.

65
66 In 2005 the Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution “Caring for Creation” ([CA05.07.39](#)),
67 encouraging our church to renew the commitment to caring for creation. This was followed in 2007 by the
68 churchwide assembly memorial “Energy Efficiency” ([CA07.06.33g](#)) and in 2009 by the Genesis
69 Covenant ([CA09.03.09](#)).

70
71 In 2013 the Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on hydraulic fracking and fossil fuels,¹²
72 encouraging all ELCA synods, congregations and members to inform and educate themselves through the
73 lens of the social statements — *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*
74 (1999) and *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (2011) — about the issues pertaining to hydraulic
75 fracturing by engaging in 1) grassroots conversation, 2) the sharing of pertinent stories, and 3) workshops
76 and study. The Corporate Social Responsibility team was asked to evaluate the feasibility of developing
77 revised or additional investment screens. The team determined that no additional investment screens were
78 needed but recommended revision to the [Environment Social Criteria Investment Screen](#). The
79 environment screen was revised and approved by the ELCA Church Council in November 2017
80 ([CC17.11.33k](#)).¹³

81
82 In 2016, the Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution “[Toward a Responsible Energy Future](#),” calling
83 upon the ELCA churchwide organization to review ELCA social teachings and applicable Corporate
84 Social Responsibility policies and procedures with the goal of not investing in, and removing from its
85 portfolio, the largest fossil fuel companies, as identified by Carbon Tracker, and investing in corporations
86 that are taking a positive step toward a sustainable environment.

87
88 In 2019 the Churchwide Assembly¹⁴ passed a resolution on the Carbon Fee and Dividend for the
89 development of a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in
90 forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy.

91
92 In 2019 the Churchwide Assembly endorsed the [Earth Charter](#).

93 94 95 **RESPONSES**

96
97 It has become accepted practice for a company to begin this work by evaluating and reporting on
98 greenhouse gas emissions and its total “footprint.” Corporate reporting includes the amount of
99 greenhouse gases from production and use of the corporation’s products, the delivery process for its
100 products, and their suppliers’ emissions. Setting targets for decreasing their emissions and
101 moving toward renewable technologies is often included in reports. In addition, the company can
102 review its probable risk exposure to the financial and competitive consequences of climate
103 change, ensure that it has sufficient expertise to make informed and responsible decisions,
104 and set benchmarks. Climate change strategies and strategic alliances can be built into an overall
105 business plan.

106
107

¹² “Section VII: Report of the Memorials Committee,” <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Churchwide-Assembly#2013>.

¹³ 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Section_VII-Report_of_Memorials_Committee.pdf.

¹⁴ ELCA Churchwide Assembly, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Section_VII-Report_of_Memorials_Committee.pdf.

108 **SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS**

109

110 A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company's activities are
111 evaluated. The [Environment Social Criteria Investment Screen](#), approved by the ELCA in 1990 and
112 updated in 2007, 2014, and 2017, responds to this issue.

113

114

115 **RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC¹⁵**

116

- 117 1. We support reports on greenhouse gas footprints, as well as the establishment of targets (such as
118 science-based targets) for their reduction, including requests that a company complete the CDP¹⁶
119 reporting process and adhere to the [Global Reporting Initiatives](#) standards.
- 120 2. We support disclosure of the economic risks associated with past, present and future emissions
121 and/or impacts on climate change.
- 122 3. We support reports on the economic benefits of committing to a substantial reduction of
123 greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction of product emissions.
- 124 4. We support reports on public policies that enable and assist with the achievement of emission
125 targets, including policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures. We
126 support adoption of public policy principles on climate change and reports on how these
127 principles are implemented. Principles may include reduction of greenhouse gas emissions,
128 promoting energy efficiency, investing in clean energy and supporting international action on the
129 issue. We support reports on the plan for just transition.
- 130 5. We support reports on economic risks associated with a company's exposure to the myriad of
131 pending and adopted legislation from state, regional and international bodies as it relates to
132 reduction of greenhouse gases, attainment of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and the
133 adequacy of such legislation to protect human health, the environment and the company's
134 reputation.
- 135 6. We support reports on goals and benchmarks achieved to increase usage of renewable energy and
136 adopt other measures in order to take practical steps to reduce its contribution to climate change,
137 including increasing energy efficiency and conservation.
- 138 7. We support requests to adopt quantitative goals to reduce future emissions of carbon dioxide,
139 sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and heavy metals such as mercury.
- 140 8. We support reports and assessments of steps a company is taking to meet new fuel economy and
141 greenhouse gas emissions standards for its transportation fleet.
- 142 9. We support adoption of policies for safe, low-carbon energy research, development and
143 production.
- 144 10. We support reports on strategic plans reviewing the scenario of demand for significantly
145 lowering fossil fuel use in the future. Scenarios might include pricing of carbon, preparation for
146 physical impacts of climate change and strategies for reducing the risk of unburnable carbon or
147 stranded assets.¹⁷
- 148 11. We support amendments to a company's greenhouse gas emissions policies to observe a
149 moratorium on and/or cease all financing, investment and further involvement in activities that
150 support mountaintop-removal coal mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants
151 that emit carbon dioxide.

¹⁵ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

¹⁶ Formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project, now known as CDP, <https://www.cdp.net/en>.

¹⁷ See <https://carbontracker.org/resources/>.

- 152 12. We support reports on a company's exposure to climate-change-related costs and risks from the
 153 use and or production of coal, and steps taken to reduce those risks.
- 154 13. We support reports that publicly disclose a company's current and projected water withdrawals at
 155 each thermoelectric power plant.
- 156 14. We support requests to measure, mitigate, disclose and adopt quantitative goals to reduce
 157 methane emissions and flaring, and reports on such efforts.
- 158 15. We support requests to reduce all forms of pollution in operations, productions and use of its
 159 primary product, including reducing refrigerant-related emissions from its operations.
- 160 16. We support resolutions calling for board candidates with environmental expertise relevant to
 161 hydrocarbon exploration and production to be recommended by the nominations committee.
- 162 17. We support requests that the board's compensation committee include metrics for reduction of
 163 carbon emissions as part of the company's incentive plan for senior executives.
- 164 18. We support reports assessing a financial institution's programs to address greenhouse gas
 165 emissions from its lending portfolio, which includes how it intends to reduce the GHG emissions
 166 associated with its financing activities in alignment with the Paris Agreement and goal of limiting
 167 temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Centigrade goal, requiring net-zero emissions, and its exposure to
 168 climate-change risk in its lending, investing and financing activities.
- 169 19. We support requests to financial institutions to adopt company-wide, quantitative, time-bound
 170 targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the company's
 171 underwriting and lending activities, and to issue annual reports discussing its plans and progress
 172 toward achieving these targets. The report will include how the company will measure and
 173 disclose, across its banking and investment portfolios, the greenhouse gas footprint of its
 174 financing activities, as well as its efforts to reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts
 175 on natural ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 176 20. We support reports on lobbying activities (direct and through trade and other associations)
 177 regarding alignment with the goal of limiting average global warming to well below 2 degrees
 178 Celsius per the Paris Climate Agreement and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
 179 (IPCC) reports, and other expressed goals in stockholders' best interests.
- 180 21. We support requests for corporations to adopt corporate-wide targets to achieve net-zero
 181 greenhouse gas emissions associated with its lending and investment activities, as defined by
 182 best-practice carbon-accounting standards, by 2050.
- 183 22. We support reports exploring options as to whether and how the company could reduce its total
 184 contribution to climate change by encouraging electrification in its operations.
- 185 23. We support reports assessing the public health risks of expanding petrochemical operations and
 186 investments in areas increasingly prone to climate-change-induced storms, flooding and sea level
 187 rise.

190 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL

192 We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- 193 • A company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
- 194 • Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct
 195 and indirect) made with corporate funds.
- 196 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization
 197 that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
- 198 • Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures.
- 199 • Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹⁸

¹⁸ See "Non-discrimination in Business Activities" [issue paper](#).



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

~~EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA~~

AREA: Climate Change

DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council

REVISION DATE: 7/13/21

MARKER DATES:

RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility—, September 5, 2003

ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, October 24, 2003

APPROVED by Church Council, November 2003

UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 28, 2007

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UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 10, 2010

APPROVED by Church Council, November 2010

APPROVED by Church Council, November 2015 [CC15.11.52]

APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2021 [anticipated]

Caring for Creation Climate Change ~~Issue Paper~~

Background

BACKGROUND

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global; ~~Most~~, most stem directly from human activity (“Caring for Creation,” 2.B-1);¹, 2 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment³.

As Christians, we understand human beings as fundamentally responsible before God. With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future itself. Central to that question is the threat posed by climate change. In 2015 the member states of the United Nations issued Agenda 2030, a shared blueprint for “peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.” Central to the blueprint are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁴, which include SDG 13, calling for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.⁵

~~These threats and changes were first summarized~~

Also in 2015, the findings of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change members adopted a global agreement that went into force in November 2016 — the Paris Agreement.⁶ The countries agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and agreed to a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2001: Synthesis Report⁷. “Warming of the (IPCC)^{7,8,9} and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration¹⁰ scientists documented the realities of climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are change. Climate change results in the earth experiencing more frequent severe and intensified weather patterns and temperature extremes. These extreme weather patterns result in floods, droughts, wildfires and rising sea levels that lead to the degradation of the earth. All of this negatively impacts the earth’s inhabitants at unprecedented over-decades to millennia. The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, and sea level has risen. Human influence on the rates. Some global consequences include forced migration, exacerbation of poverty, national security concerns, negative impacts on agriculture resulting in food insecurity, and threats to ecosystems that could lead to the extinction of some species.

¹ <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation>²

http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data_reports.shtml

² *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (ELCA social statement, 1993), p. 4, <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation>.

³ See USGCRP, 2018: *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, Reidmiller, D.R., and C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock and B.C. Stewart (eds.), U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, D.C., USA, pp. 33–71. doi: 10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH1, <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/1>.

⁴ Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

⁵ SDG-13 Climate Action, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13>.

⁶ Paris Agreement, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>.

⁷ IPCC, “Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5oC,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>.

⁸ IPCC, “Special Report: Climate Change and Land,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/srcl/download/>.

⁹ IPCC, “Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate,” <https://www.ipcc.ch/srocc/>.

¹⁰ “Climate Change: How Do We Know?,” <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



36 The marginalized and vulnerable are most affected by climate system is clear, and recent anthropogenic
37 emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history. Recent change impacts. This failure to protect God's
38 creation ultimately mirrors and deepens existing racial, gender and economic inequalities. Caring for
39 creation means respecting environmental limits while pursuing economic growth that provides sufficient
40 and sustainable lifestyles for all people. The ELCA social statement *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility*
41 (2011) describes the importance of understanding the need for participation and the interconnectedness of
42 all living beings (p. 16). The well-being of future generations depends on our ecosystem to support it.

43
44 Investors have a significant role and responsibility in addressing climate changes have had widespread
45 impacts on human and natural systems.”¹¹.

46 -
47 change. For example, Ceres is a network of investors, environmental organizations and other public-
48 interest groups working with companies to integrate sustainability into capital markets for the health of
49 the planet and its people. Numerous reports are published by Ceres calling the corporate world to address issues
50 of climate change and sustainability.¹² publishes reports calling for the corporate world to address issues
51 of climate change and sustainability.¹³ “Investor strategies to tackle the growing threat of climate change
52 must include a just transition by incorporating the full range of environmental, social and governance
53 (ESG) dimensions of responsible investment.”¹⁴ Global climate investors such as Climate Action 100+
54 are driving business transition via such mechanisms as the Net Zero Benchmark.

ELCA Social Policy SOCIAL POLICY

57 “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice” (ELCA,
58 *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (1993): The social statement develops this church’s vision
59 of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through principles of participation,
60 solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically, this social statement calls the church to gather
61 information and engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote justice for creation (5.E.1-1).
62 Dialogues include implementing comprehensive environmental principles, promoting healthy
63 environments, and cooperation between the public and private sector regarding sustainability. Per ELCA
64 social teaching, all people have a right to equal access and participation in decisions that affect them.

65 -
66
67 The 1995 Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution on “Environment — Energy Audits-
68 (CA95.05.26b).”¹⁵ (CA95.05.26b).

69 The 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)¹⁶ (CA99.06.30) expressed great concern about the
70 destructive practice of mountaintop-removal coal mining and urged our church to advocate ending it. The
71 2001 Churchwide Assembly (CA01.07.57)¹⁷ (CA01.07.57) reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the
72 care of creation, including {climate change}, as part of the web of complex, interwoven environmental
73 concerns.-

74 -

¹¹ <http://ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/>

¹² <http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports>

¹³ See <http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports>.

¹⁴ “Climate Change and the Just Transition: A Guide for Investor Action,”

<https://www.unpri.org/download?ac=9452>.

¹⁵ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Energy_AuditsSPR95.pdf

¹⁶ <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf>

¹⁷ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

75 In 2005 the Churchwide Assembly passed a ~~the~~ resolution on ~~“Caring for Creation (CA05.07.39)”~~¹⁸
76 (CA05.07.39),
77 encouraging our church to renew the commitment to caring for creation. This was followed by a 2007
78 Churchwide Assembly by the churchwide assembly memorial on ~~“Energy Efficiency (CA07.06.33g)”~~
79 (CA07.06.33g) and in 2009 by the Genesis
80 Covenant (CA09.03.09). ~~(CA09.03.09)~~.

81 -

I. Responses

82

83
84 In 2013 the Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on hydraulic fracking and fossil fuels,¹⁹
85 encouraging all ELCA synods, congregations and members to inform and educate themselves through the
86 lens of the social statements — *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*
87 (1999) and *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (2011) — about the issues pertaining to hydraulic
88 fracturing by engaging in 1) grassroots conversation, 2) the sharing of pertinent stories, and 3) workshops
89 and study. The Corporate Social Responsibility team was asked to evaluate the feasibility of developing
90 revised or additional investment screens. The team determined that no additional investment screens were
91 needed but recommended revision to the Environment Social Criteria Investment Screen. The
92 environment screen was revised and approved by the ELCA Church Council in November 2017
93 (CC17.11.33k).²⁰

94

95 In 2016, the Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution “Toward a Responsible Energy Future,” calling
96 upon the ELCA churchwide organization to review ELCA social teachings and applicable Corporate
97 Social Responsibility policies and procedures with the goal of not investing in, and removing from its
98 portfolio, the largest fossil fuel companies, as identified by Carbon Tracker, and investing in corporations
99 that are taking a positive step toward a sustainable environment.

100 -

101 In 2019 the Churchwide Assembly²¹ passed a resolution on the Carbon Fee and Dividend for the
102 development of a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in
103 forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy.

104 -

105 In 2019 the Churchwide Assembly endorsed the Earth Charter.

106

107

RESPONSES

108

109
110 It has become accepted practice for a company to begin this work by evaluating and reporting on
111 greenhouse gas emissions and its total “footprint.” Corporate reporting includes the amount of
112 greenhouse gases from production and use of ~~the~~ the corporation’s products, the delivery process for
113 ~~their~~ its

114 products, and their suppliers’ emissions. Setting targets for decreasing their emissions and
115 moving toward renewable technologies is often included in reports. In addition, the company can

¹⁸ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Caring_For_CreationSPR05.pdf

¹⁹ “Section VII: Report of the Memorials Committee,” <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Churchwide-Assembly#2013>.

²⁰ 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Section_VII-Report_of_Memorials_Committee.pdf.

²¹ ELCA Churchwide Assembly, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Section_VII-Report_of_Memorials_Committee.pdf.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



116 review their its probable risk exposure to the financial and competitive consequences of climate
117 change, ensure that they have it has sufficient expertise to make informed and responsible decisions,
118 and set benchmarks. Climate change strategies and strategic alliances can be built into an overall
119 business plan.–

120 -

~~II. Social Criteria Investment Screens~~

122

123

SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

125

126 A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company's activities are
127 evaluated. The ~~environmental social criteria investment screen~~ The Environment Social Criteria Investment
128 Screen, approved by the ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007 ~~and~~, 2014, and 2017, responds to this issue.²²

129 -

~~III. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA²³~~

131 -

132

133

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC²⁴

135

- 136 1. We support reports on greenhouse gas footprints, as well as the establishment of targets (such as
137 science-based targets) for their reduction, including requests that a company complete the ~~Carbon~~
138 ~~Disclosure Project~~ CDP²⁵ reporting process– and adhere to the Global Reporting Initiatives
139 standards.
- 140 2. We support disclosure of the economic risks associated with past, present and future emissions
141 and/or impacts on climate change.
- 142 3. We support reports on the economic benefits of committing to a substantial reduction of
143 greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction of product emissions.
- 144 4. We support reports on public policies that enable and assist with the achievement of emission
145 targets, including policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures. We
146 support adoption of public policy principles on climate change and reports on how these
147 principles are implemented. Principles may include reduction of greenhouse gas emissions,
148 promoting energy efficiency, investing in clean energy and supporting international action on the
149 issue. -We support reports on the plan for just transition.
- 150 5. We support reports on economic risks associated with a company's exposure to the myriad of
151 pending and adopted legislation from state, regional and international bodies as it relates to
152 reduction of greenhouse gases, attainment of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and the
153 adequacy of such legislation to protect human health, the environment and the company's

²² http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen.pdf

²³ ~~These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.–~~

-

²⁴ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

²⁵ ~~<https://www.cdproject.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx>~~ Formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project, now known as CDP, <https://www.cdp.net/en>.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 154 reputation.
- 155 6. ~~We support reports on increased~~ We support reports on goals and benchmarks achieved to increase
156 usage of renewable energy and adopt other measures in order to take practical steps to reduce its
157 contribution to climate change, including increasing energy efficiency and conservation.
- 158 7. We support requests to adopt quantitative goals to reduce future emissions of carbon dioxide,
159 sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and heavy metals such as mercury.
- 160 8. We support reports and assessments of steps a company is taking to meet new fuel economy and
161 greenhouse gas emissions standards for its transportation fleet.
- 162 9. We support adoption of policies for safe, low-carbon energy research, development and
163 production.
- 164 10. We support reports on strategic plans reviewing the scenario of demand for significantly
165 lowering fossil fuel use in the future. Scenarios might include pricing of carbon, preparation for
166 physical impacts of climate change and strategies for reducing the risk of unburnable carbon or
167 stranded assets.²⁶
- 168 11. We support amendments ~~of~~ to a company's greenhouse gas emissions policies to observe a
169 moratorium on and/or cease all financing, investment and further involvement in activities that
170 support mountaintop-removal coal mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants
171 that emit carbon dioxide.
- 172 12. We support reports on a company's exposure to climate-~~change-~~related costs and risks from the
173 use and or production of coal, and steps taken to reduce those risks.
- 174 13. We support reports that publicly disclose a company's current and projected water withdrawals at
175 each thermoelectric power plant. -
- 176 14. We support requests to measure, mitigate, disclose and adopt quantitative goals to reduce
177 methane emissions and flaring, and reports on such efforts.
- 178 15. We support requests to reduce all forms of pollution in operations, productions and use of its
179 primary product-, including reducing refrigerant-related emissions from its operations.
- 180 16. We support resolutions calling for board candidates with environmental expertise relevant to
181 hydrocarbon exploration and production to be recommended by the nominations committee.
- 182 17. We support requests that the board's compensation committee include metrics for reduction of
183 carbon emissions as ~~one part~~ of the metrics for senior executives under the company's executive
184 incentive plan- for senior executives.
- 185 18. We support reports assessing a financial institution's programs to address greenhouse gas
186 emissions from its lending portfolio, which includes how it intends to reduce the GHG emissions
187 associated with its financing activities in alignment with the Paris Agreement and goal of limiting
188 temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Centigrade goal, requiring net-zero emissions, and its exposure to
189 climate-~~change~~ risk in its lending, investing and financing activities.-

~~IV. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – General~~

- 192 19. We support requests to financial institutions to adopt company-wide, quantitative, time-bound
193 targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the company's
194 underwriting and lending activities, and to issue annual reports discussing its plans and progress
195 toward achieving these targets. The report will include how the company will measure and
196 disclose, across its banking and investment portfolios, the greenhouse gas footprint of its
197 financing activities, as well as its efforts to reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts
198 on natural ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 199 20. We support reports on lobbying activities (direct and through trade and other associations)
200 regarding alignment with the goal of limiting average global warming to well below 2 degrees

²⁶ ~~<http://www.carbontracker.org/resources/>~~ See <https://carbontracker.org/resources/>.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Celsius per the Paris Climate Agreement and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, and other expressed goals in stockholders' best interests.

21. We support requests for corporations to adopt corporate-wide targets to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions associated with its lending and investment activities, as defined by best-practice carbon-accounting standards, by 2050.
22. We support reports exploring options as to whether and how the company could reduce its total contribution to climate change by encouraging electrification in its operations.
23. We support reports assessing the public health risks of expanding petrochemical operations and investments in areas increasingly prone to climate-change-induced storms, flooding and sea level rise.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL

We support practices of good governance, specifically: -

- ~~a~~ A company having an independent chair or independent lead director;~~;~~
- ~~reports~~ Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds;~~;~~
- ~~121~~ ~~reports~~ Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-
exempt
~~122~~ organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
- ~~political;~~
- ~~123~~ ~~guidelines~~ Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions
and
- ~~expenditures;~~ and
- ~~124~~ ~~reports~~ Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.²⁷

~~128~~

~~129~~

~~130~~

~~131~~

~~Recommended by Advisory
Committee on Corporate Social
Responsibility, Sept. 5, 2003~~

~~132~~

~~Endorsed by Division for Church in
Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003~~

~~133~~

~~Approved by Church Council,
November 2003~~

~~134~~

~~Updated by Advisory Committee on
Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.
28, 2007~~

²⁷

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820 See "Non-discrimination in Business Activities" issue paper.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

241	135	Approved by Church Council,
242		November 2007
243	136	Updated by Advisory Committee on
244		Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.
245		10, 2010
246	137	Approved by Church Council,
247		November 2010
248	<u>•</u>	Approved by Church Council CC15.11.52j, November 2015

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Caring for Creation: Environmental Topics

BACKGROUND

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global. Most stem directly from human activity, leading to environmental degradation of the earth and yielding a crisis situation. The resulting damages to environmental systems are frightening: depletion of nonrenewable resources; loss of biodiversity and related habitats; erosion of topsoil through unsustainable agriculture and forestry practices; pollution of air by toxic emissions from industries and vehicles, and pollution of water by wastes; increasing volumes of wastes; and prevalence of impacts of global warming that result in accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, damaging oceans. All of which impact social, political and economic systems, with the most vulnerable being disproportionately impacted. This environmental crisis in turn exacerbates racial, gender and class discrimination.¹

The collective effects mean human beings increasingly bear the moral burden for the shape of nature and the very existence of future generations.² With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future itself. We address environmental issues in a manner consistent with the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability.³

Failure to adhere to these principles can be detrimental to environmental, social and economic systems, leaving far too many in poverty: “Impoverished citizens have no access to clean water and live in

¹ *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (ELCA social statement, 1993), <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation> .

² “Genetics, Faith and Responsibility” (ELCA social message, 2011), <http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics> .

³ *Caring for Creation*.

25 environmental degradation.”⁴ The United Nations Environment Programme connects human rights with
26 the environment: “Human rights and the environment are intrinsically intertwined: a safe, clean, healthy
27 and sustainable environment reinforces our human rights; whilst polluted, hazardous and otherwise
28 unhealthy environments potentially violate our human rights. Governments must protect, businesses must
29 respect, and people must exercise environmental rights if we wish to tackle environmental challenges.”⁵
30

31 The faith-based investment community for many years has been addressing environmental issues. One
32 way of evaluating environmental and sustainability reporting is found in the Global Reporting Initiative’s
33 [Reporting Framework](#). Environmental and sustainability reporting, along with the extensive set of Ceres
34 [comparative reports](#) and reports from the [Investor Environmental Health Network](#), set the framework for
35 the environmental dimension of sustainability concerns that an organization’s impact has on living and
36 nonliving systems.
37

38 Companies are challenged to analyze their actions with a view toward minimizing local and global
39 environmental damage. Clean-up is sought when damage has occurred, and stakeholder consultation is
40 desirable at every step along the way. The United Nations’ Principles for Responsible Investment (2012)
41 state that considering environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in compensation can help
42 protect long-term shareholder value.⁶
43

44 ELCA SOCIAL POLICY

45
46
47 [Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice](#) (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops the
48 church’s vision of creation while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through principles of
49 participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically, this social statement (Section 5.E.1-1)
50 calls on the church to engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote justice for creation. This
51 includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive environmental principles, healthy environments,
52 and cooperation between the public and private sector regarding sustainability. The social statement
53 [Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture](#) states, “The Church that pursues justice will face and
54 address difficult social, political, and economic problems such as: how racism must be confronted in
55 order to build a society where diversity is truly valued; how race and ethnicity figure in political decisions
56 on ... environmental pollution.”
57

58 The 2001 Churchwide Assembly ([CA01.07.57](#)) reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the care of
59 creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex interwoven environmental concerns.
60 Previously, the 1999 Churchwide Assembly ([CA99.06.30](#)) expressed great concern about the destructive
61 practice of mountaintop-removal coal mining and urged our church to advocate ending it.
62

63 The 2013 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution ([CA13.03.07e](#)) on hydraulic fracking and fossil fuels
64 and encouraged all ELCA synods, congregations and members to inform and educate themselves through
65 the lens of the social statements [Caring for Creation](#) (1993), [Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All](#)
66 (1999), and “[Genetics, Faith and Responsibility](#)” (2011) about the issues pertaining to hydraulic
67 fracturing.

⁴ “Human Rights” (ELCA social message, 2017),

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Human_Rights_SM.pdf .

⁵ United Nations Environment Programme, “Linking Human Rights and the Environment: Illustrations,”

<https://www.unep.org/resources/infographic/linking-human-rights-and-environment-illustrations> .

⁶ Principles for Responsible Investment, “Integrating ESG Issues Into Executive Pay: A 2012 Report,”

<https://www.unpri.org/governance-issues/integrating-esg-issues-into-executive-pay-a-2012-report/606.article> .

68
69 The 2016 Churchwide Assembly directed ([CA16.06.31](#)) the ELCA's Corporate Social Responsibility
70 Review team to develop a human rights social criteria investment screen based on the social teachings of
71 this church.

72
73 The 2016 Churchwide Assembly passed "Resolution Urging Stewardship of the Gift of Water"
74 ([CA16.05.26](#)), calling for the Church Council to direct the churchwide unit to provide resources to
75 provide to congregations and individual members to encourage and support conservation and prayerful
76 stewardship of water resources.

77
78 The [Environment Social Criteria Investment Screen](#) was revised and approved by the ELCA Church
79 Council in November 2017.

80
81 The 2019 Churchwide Assembly endorsed ([CA19.02.06c](#)) the [Earth Charter](#).

82
83 The social statements supporting this issue paper:

- 84 • [Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor](#) (ELCA, 2003).
- 85 • [Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All](#) (ELCA, 1999).
- 86 • [Genetics, Faith and Responsibility](#) (ELCA, 2011).

87
88 The social policy resolution "[Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply](#)" (CC04.11.57) and the
89 social message "[Human Rights](#)" also support this issue paper.

90 91 92 **RESPONSES**

93
94 Good corporate environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting. This
95 reporting would include articulating a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing methods and
96 benchmarks to measure environmental performance. Companies must move from being compliance-
97 oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management. In addition, companies can review
98 their probable risk exposure to financial and competitive consequences of environmental changes to
99 ensure that they have sufficient additional expertise to make informed decisions and set responsible
100 benchmarks.

101
102 Over the past few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to issue statements about their
103 environmental policies and practices. One could even say that a shift has been occurring where companies
104 no longer see environmental stewardship as an externally imposed burden but rather as a market-driven
105 opportunity that enhances productivity, corporate image and shareholder value. The key questions for
106 investors then become: 1) whether these policies and practices genuinely result in reducing negative
107 environmental impact and 2) whether one can glean from a company's report enough meaningful
108 information about its environmental performance and sustainable development strategies.

109 110 111 **SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS**

112
113 A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's activities are evaluated.
114 The Environmental Social Criteria Investment Screen, approved by the ELCA in 1990 and updated in
115 2007, in 2014, and in 2017, addresses this issue.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC**A. Energy**

1. We support reports for the gas and oil industry, including: environmental impact assessments detailing legal risks, regulatory risks and plans to mitigate these risks; the assumptions made in deciding to proceed; the possible long-term risks to the company's finances and operations; the financial impact of accidents and spills; and the likely and/or actual impact of hydraulic fracturing operations, including air, water and soil hazards.
2. We support reports that ask for risk assessments and propose measures to reduce risks of nuclear storage.
3. We support reports assessing (a) the impact on the environment of mountaintop-removal coal mining by a company's clients and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning future financing of companies engaged in such mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants that emit carbon dioxide.
4. We support reports on a company's efforts, above and beyond legal compliance, to reduce environmental and health hazards associated with coal-combustion waste ponds, impoundments and mines, and how those efforts reduce the company's financial and operational risks.
5. We support requests for reporting on the development of renewable energy sources with quantitative targets.
6. We support reports on the effects of power-generation facilities on water supplies.

B. Environmental Reporting

7. We support proposals asking for endorsement of the Ceres Principles;⁷ the CDP water, carbon, forest and supply chain guidelines;⁸ and their use in preparation of sustainability reports.
8. We support reports identifying environmental hazards, including waste facilities and their impact on their communities as well as reports on the development of a company's policy about such hazards and its work in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, including land procurement.
9. We support reports on accident reduction and mitigation, including a company's progress in implementing the reforms required under a settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the commitments stated in a company's corporate social responsibility report.
10. We support reports on the effects of a company's marketing on the purchasing practices of people living in poverty and what might be done to mitigate harm.
11. We support reports on the policies and procedures that guide a company's assessment of host country laws and regulations with respect to their adequacy to protect human health, the environment and the company's reputation.
12. We support reports on chemical footprints⁹ of operations and the responsible reduction of pollution from both their operations and the use of their products.
13. We support reports on actions of the company's board of directors nominations committee to ensure that there is environmental expertise on the company's board of directors, including calling for a director with environmental expertise.
14. We support requests that the board compensation committee, when setting senior executive compensation, include environmental metrics and performance in executive incentive plans.

C. Food/Water

15. We support reports regarding antibiotic use in the food-supply chain and labeling foods treated with antibiotics.

⁷ Ceres, "About Us," <http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles> .

⁸ CDP, "Who We Are," <https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx> .

⁹ See the Chemical Footprint Project, <http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/> .

- 164 16. We support reports regarding long-term sustainability in the growing, procurement and delivery
165 of food, including seafood and organic products. We also support reports on consideration of and
166 reporting on efforts to source 100% certified sustainable palm oil.
- 167 17. We support reports on the company's policies on water stewardship assessing if and how the
168 company plans to increase the scale, pace and rigor of its efforts to reduce water pollution from
169 its supply chain.
- 170 18. We support reports on the company's water stewardship and the human right to water.¹⁰
- 171 19. We support reports evaluating the impact of a company's operations on land, water usage, water
172 resources and waste management, including the potential environmental and public health
173 impacts of each of its company-owned plants, those of its affiliates, as well as proposed ventures
174 that extract water from water-scarce areas.
- 175 20. We support reports on the impact of a company's hydraulic fracturing operations, including
176 reduction or elimination of hazards to air, water and soil quality from such fracturing.
- 177 21. We support reports on policy options to respond to public concerns regarding bottled water,
178 including, but not limited to, providing additional information to consumers or further modifying
179 the production, delivery or sale of bottled water so as to minimize environmental and energy
180 impacts.
- 181 22. We support reports on a company's food product supply chain, including:
- 182 a) Strategies to significantly reduce waste, energy and water use throughout the supply chain.
- 183 b) The feasibility of reducing the environmental and social impacts of food waste.
- 184 c) Resource conservation programs and pollution prevention measures for the full product life
185 cycle.
- 186 d) Labeling products with country of origin.
- 187 e) Internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically engineered
188 organisms.
- 189 f) Safety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from production to
190 consumption.
- 191 g) Respect for and adherence to seed-saving rights of traditional agricultural communities;
192 systems adequate to monitor use of genetically modified organisms; and plans to provide
193 alternatives should the situation merit.
- 194 h) Reporting to shareholders on the feasibility of reducing the environmental and social impacts
195 of food waste generated by the company's operations, given the significant impact of food
196 waste on societal risk from climate change and hunger.

198 D. Forests

- 199 23. We support reports studying ways for a company to take leadership on the environmental aspects
200 of paper procurement, including strengthening national paper-recovery goals, setting goals for
201 recycled content in its magazines and books, setting goals for a majority of its supply chain to
202 adopt strong forest-management certification procedures, and developing a sustainable paper-
203 purchasing policy. This might include reports on costs and benefits, greenhouse gas impact and
204 implementation.
- 205 24. We support reports on how a company and its supply chain contribute to deforestation, how it
206 plans to mitigate these impacts, and how it could increase the scale, pace and rigor of its efforts to
207 eliminate deforestation and native vegetation conversion in its supply chains.

209 E. Product Safety

- 210 25. We support requests for reports or policies on exposure to, reduction of and/or elimination of
211 toxins, pesticides and/or radioactive materials in the environment, including product safety or

¹⁰ As defined by the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (general comment 15, paragraph 2).

- 212 toxicity.
- 213 26. We support reports on product stewardship policies, including recycling strategies.
- 214 27. We support reports on the implications of a policy for reducing the potential harm and the number
- 215 of people in danger from potential catastrophic chemical releases by increasing the inherent
- 216 security of a company’s facilities through steps including reducing the use, storage and
- 217 transportation of extremely hazardous substances; reengineering processes; and locating facilities
- 218 outside high-population areas.
- 219 28. We support reports on a company’s policies on the use of nanomaterials and neonicotinoids in its
- 220 product packaging and product use and educational efforts around these issues.
- 221 29. We support reports on policy options to reduce consumer exposure to and increase consumer
- 222 awareness of mercury, Biphenyl A (BpA), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and any other toxins
- 223 contained in a company’s products and/or packaging. We support reports on a company’s plan to
- 224 move to safer alternative substitutes for the presence of toxic chemicals in its products.
- 225 30. We support development of policy and reports asking for mechanisms to recycle electronics
- 226 safely and prevent the improper export of hazardous e-waste.
- 227 31. We support reports on plastic packaging, estimating the amount of plastics released to the
- 228 environment due to plastic packaging attributable to all operations, and beginning with the
- 229 manufacture of the plastic source materials, through disposal or recycling, and describing any
- 230 company strategies or goals to decrease the use of plastic packaging to reduce these impacts.
- 231 32. We support reports that include discussion of loss prevention, cleanup and containment for all
- 232 relevant categories of plastic materials released, regardless of whether they are pellets, powder,
- 233 flake, granules or other particles.

F. Sustainability

- 235
- 236 33. We support reports assessing the feasibility of integrating sustainability metrics into performance
- 237 measures and performance goals into senior executive pay and incentive guidelines.
- 238 34. We support reports describing the company’s environmental, social and governance (ESG)
- 239 policies, performance, improvement targets and quantitative metrics.

G. Environmental Justice

- 241
- 242 35. We support reports on how the corporation’s policies and practices and the impacts of its business
- 243 perpetuate racial injustice and inflict harm on communities of color domestically and
- 244 internationally.
- 245 36. We support requests for reports and policies that are responsive to the regulatory and reputational
- 246 pressure related to including Indigenous people and people of color, such as internal programs or
- 247 policies on relations with Indigenous people and people of color, recruitment of employees who
- 248 are Indigenous people or people of color, and procurement from businesses owned by Indigenous
- 249 people or people of color.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL

We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- 251
- 252
- 253
- 254 • A company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
- 255 • Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct
- 256 and indirect) made with corporate funds.
- 257 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization
- 258 that are used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
- 259 • Guidelines or policies governing the company’s political contributions and expenditures.
- 260

- Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹¹

Working Document

¹¹ See “Nondiscrimination in Business Activities” [issue paper](#).



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

~~EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA~~

AREA: Environmental Topics

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~~Caring for Creation: Environmental Topics Issue Paper~~

~~I. Background~~

BACKGROUND

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global: ~~Most stem directly from human activity.¹ “The collective effects of these new [technological] powers.~~ Most stem directly from human activity, leading to environmental degradation of the earth and yielding a crisis situation. The resulting damages to environmental systems are frightening: depletion of nonrenewable resources; loss of biodiversity and related habitats; erosion of topsoil through unsustainable agriculture and forestry practices; pollution of air by toxic emissions from industries and vehicles, and pollution of water by wastes; increasing volumes of wastes; and prevalence of impacts of global warming that result in accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, damaging oceans. All of which impact social, political and economic systems, with the most vulnerable being disproportionately impacted. This environmental crisis in turn exacerbates racial, gender and class discrimination.²

The collective effects mean human beings increasingly bear the moral burden for the shape of nature and the very existence of future generations.³ With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the

¹ ~~<http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation>~~

² [Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice \(ELCA social statement, 1993\), http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation)

³ ~~<http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics>~~ [“Genetics, Faith and Responsibility” \(ELCA social message, 2011\), http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics](http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics)

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22 global future itself. We address environmental issues in a manner consistent with the principles of
23 participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability.⁴

24
25 ~~Caring for a global future includes a range of issues from health to environment to biotechnology. Over the past~~
26 ~~few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to issue statements about their environmental policies~~
27 ~~and practices. One could even say that a shift has been occurring where companies no longer see~~
28 ~~environmental stewardship as an externally imposed burden but rather as a market driven opportunity that~~
29 ~~enhances productivity, corporate image and shareholder value.~~ The key questions for investors then become:
30 1) whether these policies and practices genuinely result in reducing negative environmental impact, and 2)
31 whether one can glean from a company's report enough meaningful information about the environmental
32 performance and sustainable development strategies.

33 -Failure to adhere to these principles can be detrimental to environmental, social and economic systems,
34 leaving far too many in poverty: "Impoverished citizens have no access to clean water and live in
35 environmental degradation."⁵ The United Nations Environment Programme connects human rights with
36 the environment: "Human rights and the environment are intrinsically intertwined: a safe, clean, healthy
37 and sustainable environment reinforces our human rights; whilst polluted, hazardous and otherwise
38 unhealthy environments potentially violate our human rights. Governments must protect, businesses must
39 respect, and people must exercise environmental rights if we wish to tackle environmental challenges."⁶

40
41 The faith-based investment community for many years has been addressing environmental issues. A One
42 way of evaluating environmental and sustainability reporting is found in the Global Reporting Initiative's
43 Reporting Framework.⁷ These Reporting Framework. Environmental and sustainability reporting, along with
44 the extensive set of Ceres comparative reports⁸ comparative reports and reports from the Investor
45 Environmental Health Network⁹ Investor Environmental Health Network, set the framework for the
46 environmental dimension of sustainability concerns that an organization's impact has on living and
47 nonliving systems.

48
49 Companies are challenged to analyze their actions with a view toward minimizing local and global
50 environmental damage. Clean-up is sought when damage has occurred, and stakeholder consultation is
51 desirable at every step along the way. -The United Nations' Principles for Responsible Investment (2012)
52 state that considering environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in compensation can help
53 protect long-term shareholder value.¹⁰

54 -
55 #-
56

⁴ Caring for Creation.

⁵ "Human Rights" (ELCA social message, 2017),
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Human_Rights_SM.pdf.

⁶ United Nations Environment Programme, "Linking Human Rights and the Environment: Illustrations,"
<https://www.unep.org/resources/infographic/linking-human-rights-and-environment-illustrations>.

⁷ <https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx>

⁸ <http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports>

⁹ <http://iehn.org/publications/reports.php>

¹⁰ Principles for Responsible Investment, "Integrating ESG Issues Into Executive Pay: A 2012 Report,"
<https://www.unpri.org/governance-issues/integrating-esg-issues-into-executive-pay-a-2012-report/606.article>.

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57 ELCA Social Policy—SOCIAL POLICY

58 “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice”

59 Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops the
60 church’s vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through principles of
61 participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically, this social statement ~~calls~~
62 ~~(section~~ (Section 5.E.1-1) calls on the church to engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote
63 justice for creation. This includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive environmental
64 principles, healthy environments, and cooperation between the public and private sector regarding
65 sustainability. The social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* states, “The Church that
66 pursues justice will face and address difficult social, political, and economic problems such as: how
67 racism must be confronted in order to build a society where diversity is truly valued; how race and
68 ethnicity figure in political decisions on ... environmental pollution.”

69
70 The 2001 Churchwide Assembly (~~CA01.07.57~~)¹¹ (CA01.07.57) reaffirmed the commitment of this church to
71 the care of creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex interwoven environmental
72 concerns. Previously, the 1999 Churchwide Assembly (~~CA99.06.30~~)¹² (CA99.06.30) expressed great
73 concern about the destructive practice of mountaintop-removal coal mining and urged our church to
74 advocate ending it.-

75 -
76 The social statements:-

- 77 • “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” (ELCA, 2007)¹³,-
- 78 • “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (ELCA, 1999)¹⁴; and
- 79 • “Genetics, Faith and Responsibility”¹⁵ as well as social policy resolution:-
- 80 • “Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply” (CC04.11.57)¹⁶—support this issue paper.—

81 - 82 III. Responses-

83 The 2013 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution (CA13.03.07e) on hydraulic fracking and fossil fuels
84 and encouraged all ELCA synods, congregations and members to inform and educate themselves through
85 the lens of the social statements *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*
86 (1999), and “Genetics, Faith and Responsibility” (2011) about the issues pertaining to hydraulic
87 fracturing.

88
89 The 2016 Churchwide Assembly directed (CA16.06.31) the ELCA's Corporate Social Responsibility
90 Review team to develop a human rights social criteria investment screen based on the social teachings of
91 this church.

92
93 The 2016 Churchwide Assembly passed "Resolution Urging Stewardship of the Gift of Water”
94 (CA16.05.26), calling for the Church Council to direct the churchwide unit to provide resources to

¹¹ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf

¹² <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf>

¹³ <http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/health-and-healthcare.aspx.htm#read>

¹⁴ <http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm>

¹⁵ <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics>

¹⁶ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GMOs_Food_SupplySPR04.pdf



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95 provide to congregations and individual members to encourage and support conservation and prayerful
96 stewardship of water resources.

97
98 The Environment Social Criteria Investment Screen was revised and approved by the ELCA Church
99 Council in November 2017.

100
101 The 2019 Churchwide Assembly endorsed (CA19.02.06c) the Earth Charter.

102
103 The social statements supporting this issue paper:

- 104 • *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (ELCA, 2003).
- 105 • *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (ELCA, 1999).
- 106 • *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (ELCA, 2011).

107
108 The social policy resolution “Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply” (CC04.11.57) and the
109 social message “Human Rights” also support this issue paper.

RESPONSES

110
111
112
113
114 Good corporate environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting. This
115 reporting would include articulating a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing methods and
116 benchmarks to measure environmental performance. Companies must move from being compliance-
117 oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management. In addition, companies can review
118 their probable risk exposure to financial and competitive consequences of environmental changes to
119 ensure that they have sufficient additional expertise to make informed decisions and set responsible
120 benchmarks. -

IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens

121 -
122
123 Over the past few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to issue statements about their
124 environmental policies and practices. One could even say that a shift has been occurring where companies
125 no longer see environmental stewardship as an externally imposed burden but rather as a market-driven
126 opportunity that enhances productivity, corporate image and shareholder value. The key questions for
127 investors then become: 1) whether these policies and practices genuinely result in reducing negative
128 environmental impact and 2) whether one can glean from a company’s report enough meaningful
129 information about its environmental performance and sustainable development strategies.

SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

130
131
132
133
134 A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company’s activities are evaluated.
135 The ~~environmental social criteria investment screen~~ Environmental Social Criteria Investment Screen,
136 approved by the ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007, in 2014, and in 2017, addresses this issue.⁴⁷⁻
137 -

⁴⁷ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen_2014.pdf



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138 ~~V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue Specific¹⁸~~

139 A-

140

141 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC

142

143 A. Energy

144 1. We support reports for the gas and oil industry, including: environmental impact assessments
145 detailing legal risks, regulatory risks and plans to mitigate these risks; the assumptions made in
146 deciding to proceed; the possible long-term risks to the company's finances and operations of
147 ~~companies~~; the financial impact of accidents and spills; and the likely and/or actual impact of
148 hydraulic fracturing operations, including air, water and soil hazards.

149 2. We support reports that ask for risk assessments and propose measures to reduce risks of nuclear
150 storage.

151 3. We support reports assessing (a) the impact on the environment of mountaintop-removal coal
152 mining by a company's clients ~~on the environment~~ and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning
153 future financing of companies engaged in such mining or the construction of new coal-burning
154 power plants that emit carbon dioxide.

155 4. We support reports on a company's efforts, above and beyond legal compliance, to reduce
156 environmental and health hazards associated with coal ~~combustion~~ waste ponds, impoundments
157 and mines, and how those efforts reduce the company's financial and operational risks.

158 5. We support requests for reporting on the development of renewable energy sources with
159 quantitative targets. -

160 6. We support reports on the effects of power ~~generation~~ facilities on water supplies.

161

162 B. ~~B.~~ Environmental Reporting

163 7. We support proposals asking for endorsement of the Ceres Principles;¹⁹ the ~~Carbon Disclosure~~
164 ~~Project~~ CDP water, carbon, forest and supply chain guidelines;²⁰ and their use in preparation of
165 sustainability reports.

166 8. We support reports identifying environmental hazards, including waste facilities and their impact
167 on ~~the~~ their communities as well as reports on the development of a company's policy about such
168 hazards and ~~their~~ its work in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, including land
169 procurement.

170 9. We support reports on accident reduction and mitigation, including a company's progress in
171 implementing the reforms required under a settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency
172 (EPA) and the commitments stated in a company's corporate social responsibility report.

173 10. We support reports on the effects of a company's marketing on the purchasing practices of people
174 living in poverty and what might be done to mitigate harm.

175 11. We support reports on the policies and procedures that guide a company's assessment of host
176 country laws and regulations with respect to their adequacy to protect human health, the

¹⁸ ~~These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.~~

¹⁹ ~~<http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles> Ceres, "About Us," <http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles>.~~

²⁰ ~~<https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx> CDP, "Who We Are," <https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx>.~~



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environment and the company's reputation.

12. We support reports on chemical footprints²¹ of operations and the responsible reduction of pollution from both their operations and the use of their products.
13. We support reports on actions of the company's board of directors nominations committee to ensure that there is environmental expertise on the company's board of directors, including calling for a director with environmental expertise.
14. We support requests that the board compensation committee, when setting senior executive compensation, include environmental metrics and performance in executive incentive plans. -

C. Food/Water

15. We support reports regarding antibiotic use in the food-supply chain and labeling foods treated with antibiotics.
16. We support reports regarding long-term sustainability in the growing, procurement and delivery of food, including seafood and organic products. We also support reports on consideration of and reporting on efforts to source 100-percent⁰ certified sustainable palm oil.
17. We support reports on the company's policies on water stewardship assessing if and how the company plans to increase the scale, pace and rigor of its efforts to reduce water pollution from its supply chain.
- ~~17.~~ 18. We support reports on the company's water stewardship and the human right to water.²²
- ~~18.~~ 19. We support reports evaluating the impact of a company's operations on land, water usage, water resources and waste management, including the potential environmental and public health impacts of each of its company-owned plants, those of its affiliates, as well as proposed ventures that extract water from water-scarce areas. -
- ~~19.~~ 20. We support reports on the impact of a company's hydraulic fracturing operations, including reduction or elimination of hazards to air, water and soil quality from such fracturing. -
- ~~20.~~ 21. We support reports on policy options to respond to the public concerns regarding bottled water, including, but not limited to, providing additional information to consumers, or further modifying the production, delivery or sale of bottled water products so as to minimize environmental and energy impacts.
- ~~21.~~ 22. We support reports on a company's food product supply chain, including: -
 - a) ~~strategies~~ Strategies to significantly reduce waste, energy and water use throughout the supply chain;
 - b) ~~resource~~ The feasibility of reducing the environmental and social impacts of food waste.
 - b) ~~c) Resource~~ conservation programs and pollution prevention measures for the full product life-cycle;
 - e) ~~d) labeling~~ Labeling products with country of origin;
 - d) ~~e) internal~~ Internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically engineered organisms;
 - e) ~~f) safety~~ Safety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from production to consumption;
 - g) Respect for and adherence to seed-saving rights of traditional agricultural communities; and the adequacy of the current monitoring systems concerning adequate to

²¹ <http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/> - See the Chemical Footprint Project, <http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/>.

²² As defined by the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Comment [general comment 15, para. paragraph 2](#)).

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221 monitor use of genetically modified organism use organisms; and plans to provide alternatives
222 should the situation merit. ~~D-~~

223 h) Reporting to shareholders on the feasibility of reducing the environmental and social impacts
224 of food waste generated by the company's operations, given the significant impact of food
225 waste on societal risk from climate change and hunger.
226

227 **D. Forests-**

228 ~~22.23.~~ _____ We support reports studying ways for a company to take leadership on the environmental
229 aspects of paper procurement, including ~~stronger~~ strengthening national paper-recovery goals,
230 setting goals for recycled content in its magazines and books, ~~and~~ setting goals for a majority of its
231 supply chain to adopt strong forest-management certification procedures, and ~~the development~~
232 ~~of~~ developing a sustainable paper-purchasing policy. This might include reports on costs and
233 benefits, greenhouse gas impact, and implementation.-

234 ~~23.24.~~ _____ We support reports on how a company's company and its supply chain's contribution chain
235 contribute to deforestation ~~and~~, how it plans to mitigate these impacts-, and how it could increase
236 the scale, pace and rigor of its efforts to eliminate deforestation and native vegetation conversion
237 in its supply chains.
238

239 **E. ~~E-~~Product Safety**

240 ~~24.25.~~ _____ We support requests for reports or policies on exposure to, ~~the~~ reduction of and/or
241 elimination of toxins, pesticides, and/or radioactive materials in the environment, including
242 product safety or toxicity.

243 ~~25.26.~~ _____ We support reports on product stewardship policies, including recycling strategies. -

244 ~~26.27.~~ _____ We support reports on the implications of a policy for reducing the potential harm and the
245 number of people in danger from potential catastrophic chemical releases by increasing the
246 inherent security of a company's facilities through steps including reducing the use, storage and
247 transportation of extremely hazardous substances, ~~re-engineering~~; reengineering processes; and
248 locating facilities outside high-population areas.

249 ~~27.28.~~ _____ We support reports on a company's policies on the use of nanomaterials and
250 neonicotinoids in its product packaging and product use and educational efforts around these
251 issues.

252 ~~28.29.~~ _____ We support reports on policy options to reduce consumer exposure to and increase
253 consumer awareness of mercury, Biphenyl A (BpA), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and any
254 other toxins contained in a company's products and/or packaging. We support reports on a
255 company's plan to move to safer alternative substitutes for the presence of toxic chemicals in its
256 products.

257 ~~29.30.~~ _____ We support development of policy and reports asking for mechanisms to recycle
258 electronics safely and prevent the improper export of hazardous e-waste.

260 ~~31. VI. Resolution Guidelines~~ We support reports on plastic packaging, estimating the amount of
261 plastics released to the environment due to plastic packaging attributable to all operations, and
262 beginning with the manufacture of the plastic source materials, through disposal or recycling, and
263 describing any company strategies or goals to decrease the use of plastic packaging to reduce
264 these impacts.

265 32. We support reports that include discussion of loss prevention, cleanup and containment for all
266 relevant categories of plastic materials released, regardless of whether they are pellets, powder,
267 flake, granules or other particles.
268



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F. Sustainability

33. We support reports assessing the feasibility of integrating sustainability metrics into performance measures and performance goals into senior executive pay and incentive guidelines.

34. We support reports describing the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) policies, performance, improvement targets and quantitative metrics.

G. Environmental Justice

35. We support reports on how the corporation's policies and practices and the impacts of its business perpetuate racial injustice and inflict harm on communities of color domestically and internationally.

36. We support requests for reports and policies that are responsive to the regulatory and reputational pressure related to including Indigenous people and people of color, such as internal programs or policies on relations with Indigenous people and people of color, recruitment of employees who are Indigenous people or people of color, and procurement from businesses owned by Indigenous people or people of color.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – General-GENERAL

We support practices of good governance, specifically: -

- ~~a~~ A company having an independent chair or independent lead director;~~;~~
- ~~reports~~ Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds;~~;~~
- ~~reports~~ Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that ~~is~~ are used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political;~~;~~
- ~~guidelines~~ Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures;~~;~~ and
- ~~reports~~ Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.²³

Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 5, 2003

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- *Approved by Church Council CC14.11.52j November 2015*

²³

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820 See "[Nondiscrimination in Business Activities](#)" issue paper.

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International Access to Health Care

BACKGROUND

“God creates human beings as whole persons — each one a dynamic unity of body, mind, and spirit. Health concerns the proper functioning and well-being of the whole person.”¹ “We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have an enduring commitment to work for and support health care for all people as a shared endeavor.”² The ELCA recognizes that an individual’s and community’s health is made up of a complex set of social determinants, with *affordable* health care being part of that.

The global impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced and enlarged already-existing weaknesses and inequities in health care delivery, prompting a call by world religious leaders for both equitable vaccine distribution and access to health care for all people “regardless of where they live or who they are.” For example, the Global South has long experienced oxygen shortages and pneumonia deaths because of these shortages, but with oxygen necessary for COVID-19 treatment, those shortages become much more visible. Data for COVID-19 [vaccinations](#) illustrate the sharp divide between, on the one hand, the United States and its territories and, on the other, nations with less access to capital when it comes to access to health care. As COVID-19 vaccines have been developed and become widely available, only the wealthiest nations on the globe were able to purchase them, even though everyone stands to benefit from a global vaccination campaign. Personal protective equipment was also in universally [very short supply](#) at the beginning of the pandemic. Addressing these global inequities will require coordination, investment and cooperation between the public and private sectors. Pharmaceutical companies have joined together with the governmental actors to secure and allocate 2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine before the end of 2021, targeted to health care workers and at-risk populations. The issue is that projects such as COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) do not address the underlying deficiencies of the vaccine distribution system.

¹ *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (ELCA social statement, 2003), p. 3, <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf> .

² *Caring for Health*, p. 2, <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf> .

28 While the world struggles to address COVID-19 globally and equitably, access to basic health care
29 remains a considerable challenge. Primary care, maternal care and childcare are in need of support around
30 the globe. HIV and AIDS (and their comorbidities), malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases
31 and noncommunicable diseases continue to affect people, especially in middle-income and low-income
32 countries. Infectious diseases threaten to reverse development gains, reduce life expectancy and cut
33 productivity and income.

34
35 According to the World Health Organization, by the end of 2019, 38 million people around the globe
36 were living with HIV.³ Malaria estimates in 2019 indicate 229 million cases that year, with children the
37 most vulnerable group.⁴ More than 1.4 million people worldwide died in 2019 from tuberculosis, and it is
38 the leading cause of death from a single infectious agent.⁵ Difficulty in accessing pharmaceuticals can
39 lead patients to miss or skip doses, worsening their diseases and fueling the rise of antimicrobial
40 resistance.

41
42 Access to diagnostics, treatments, pharmaceuticals and preventive care are challenges to global health
43 when the for-profit world has a role to play. Access is affected by production cost and sale price,
44 availability, logistics of transportation and storage, and availability of supplies used in manufacturing
45 (often shipped from less wealthy to wealthier countries). All these factors are influenced by global
46 inequities.

47
48 The ELCA supports health projects at national or local community levels that are implemented by
49 companion churches and organizations. The World Council of Churches coordinates advocacy and
50 participates in efforts that seek to increase collaboration and commitment between the for-profit and
51 nonprofit sectors. Among the projects in which the World Council of Churches participates is the [Rome](#)
52 [Action Plan](#), which, for example, convenes high-level dialogues between governmental, faith-based and
53 for-profit global partners.

54 55 56 ELCA SOCIAL POLICY

57
58 The ELCA social statement [Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor](#) (2003) develops the church's
59 vision of health, illness and healing. It calls for equitable access as a matter of both love and justice and
60 for international cooperation in public health efforts, including preventing and combating infectious
61 diseases. The social statement calls upon society to give priority to groups that, for reasons of race, class
62 or gender, have not had access to adequate health care. The message on [human rights](#) states: "Humans are
63 physical beings and have the right to sufficient and sustainable levels of physical goods such as water,
64 food, shelter and health care" (p. 6). The ELCA committed in its social statement on [faith, sexism and](#)
65 [justice](#) to advocate for "equitable and affordable health care services, including reproductive health care,
66 that honor how bodies differ and eliminate discrimination due to sex (biological), gender, or sexual
67 orientation" (p. 10).⁶

68
69 In 2009 the Church Council (CC09.03.23) adopted "The ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS."⁷ The

³ World Health Organization, "HIV/AIDS," <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hiv-aids> .

⁴ World Health Organization, "Malaria," <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malaria> .

⁵ World Health Organization, "Tuberculosis," <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tuberculosis> .

⁶ *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* (ELCA social statement, 2019), p. 10,
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf .

⁷ ELCA, "HIV and AIDS Ministry," <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/HIV-AIDS-Ministry> .

70 strategy sought to halt the spread of HIV, reduce stigma and discrimination, and reduce the conditions of
71 poverty and the marginalization that contribute to the spread of HIV. This strategy calls for the Corporate
72 Social Responsibility program to advocate with corporations on these goals as well as for achieving
73 universal access. The ten-year time frame of the strategy has ended, but the commitment to reducing
74 stigma and discrimination and supporting access to treatment, among other principles, remains.

75
76 In 2002, the ELCA Church Council (CC02.11.59) approved a shareholder resolution requesting that
77 pharmaceutical companies in which the ELCA holds corporate shares support national and international
78 efforts to make generic antiretroviral drugs accessible to people living with HIV and AIDS in countries in
79 need.

80
81 Through ELCA World Hunger, the ELCA supports access to health care around the world. Support goes
82 to providing clinical care and to community-based health programs. Other projects focus on education
83 and advocacy, pressuring governments to provide the health services and/or medications they have
84 promised (especially for tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV and AIDS).

85
86 While the 10-year strategy on HIV and AIDS of the ELCA has finished, World Hunger continues to
87 provide funding to programs that work on eliminating stigma and discrimination, advocate for continued
88 health care access and treatment for all, and provide education around prevention and treatment,
89 psychosocial care training for pastors and the importance of good nutrition.⁸

90

91

92 RESPONSES

93

94 It makes good business sense for companies to respond to pandemic disease because of its direct impacts
95 on business. These impacts include increased costs, loss of productivity and overall threats to the
96 foundations of the economies in which they operate. The current and future workforce is placed at
97 increasingly high risk because the HIV and AIDS pandemic disproportionately affects people during their
98 most productive years.⁹

99

100 The global corporate community, including the pharmaceutical sector, must become part of the solution to
101 global health challenges, especially in developing countries. Though pharmaceutical companies do make
102 donations of their products, some argue that these donations are ultimately not beneficial: corporations
103 collect tax breaks from donations and still leave many without access, because product prices are not
104 lowered for everyone.

105

106 The scientific community was able to produce COVID-19 vaccines in record time. In the United States,
107 the federal government poured billions into some pharmaceutical companies to speed development of
108 COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics and gave the vaccines emergency authorization. The development
109 of Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines was also greatly facilitated by a decade of government-funded
110 research. Given the urgent global need for COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and treatment, several
111 governments proposed a temporary pause of the intellectual property rights protections in the 2001 World
112 Trade Organization agreement to allow low- and-middle income countries to produce these vaccines and
113 therapeutics locally, so that more people can have access to them. The U.S. government supports this
114 proposal. Nine United Nations human rights experts have welcomed the [proposal](#) for pharmaceutical
115 companies to waive intellectual property rights for the COVID-19 response based on the right to health

⁸ Efforts addressing access to health care have been mandated by the ELCA churchwide assembly as a core principle of work supported by ELCA World Hunger.

⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/hiv/impact/chap4.pdf>

116 care. Pharmaceutical companies are likely to encounter increasing pressure to waive intellectual property
117 rights during public health emergencies in order to increase global access to their products.
118

119

120 **SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS**

121

122 A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company’s activities are evaluated.
123 None currently apply to this paper.
124

125

126 **RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC¹⁰**

127

- 128 1. We support reports about the health pandemic and its economic impact on a company’s
129 operations and business strategy.
- 130 2. We support resolutions asking for the establishment and implementation of standards for
131 responding to health pandemics.
- 132 3. We support the development, in consultation with appropriate United Nations and related
133 intergovernmental agencies, of ways to offer accessible drug treatments, diagnostics and
134 vaccines to people in developing countries.
- 135 4. We support reports on the affordability and accessibility of vaccines, medical devices and
136 testing equipment. We support strengthening board oversight of drug-pricing risk.
- 137 5. We support reports on community and occupational health-hazard impacts of products
138 internationally.
- 139 6. We support reports on policies for safe disposition of prescription drugs, both domestically
140 and internationally.
- 141 7. We support reports on strengthening board diversity.
- 142 8. We support reports assessing the reputational and financial risks from rising pressure to
143 reduce high prescription drug prices by removing barriers to generic competition.
- 144 9. We support reports on whether executive compensation reflects pricing strategies and access.
- 145 10. We support reports on whether and how receipt of public financial support for development
146 and manufacture of a vaccine or COVID-19 therapeutic will be taken into account when
147 making decisions that affect access, such as pricing.
148

149

150 **RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL**

151

152 We support practices of good governance, specifically:

153

- 154 • A company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
- 155 • Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures
(both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.
- 156 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization
157 that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
- 158 • Guidelines or policies governing the company’s political contributions and expenditures.
- 159 • Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹¹

¹⁰ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

¹¹ See “Non-discrimination in Business Activities” [issue paper](#).



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

INTERNATIONAL ACCESS TO HEALTH

AREA: Health
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper-



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

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
REVISION DATE: 7/13/21

MARKER DATES:

RECOMMENDED by the Advisory Committee

on Corporate Social Responsibility, ~~Sept.~~ September 6, 2003

ENDORSED by the ~~Board~~ board of the Division for Church in
Society, ~~Oct.~~ October 24, 2003

APPROVED by the Church Council, November 2003

UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, ~~Sept.~~ September 27,
2007

APPROVED by Church Council, November 2007

UPDATED by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, ~~Sept.~~ September 10,
2010

APPROVED by Church Council, November 2010

APPROVED by the ELCA Church Council, November 2016

[CC16.11.46n]

Background

APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2021 [anticipated]

International Access to Health Care

BACKGROUND

“God creates human beings as whole persons — each one a dynamic unity of body, mind, and spirit.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

6 Health concerns the proper functioning and ~~wellbeing~~well-being of the whole person.”¹ “We of the
7 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have an enduring commitment to work for and support health
8 care for all people as a shared endeavor.”² The ELCA recognizes that an individual’s and community’s
9 health is made up of a complex set of social determinants, with affordable health care being part of that.

Bearing

11 The global impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced and enlarged already-existing
12 weaknesses and inequities in ~~mind~~ health care delivery, prompting a call by world religious leaders for
13 both equitable vaccine distribution and access to health care for all people “regardless of where they live
14 or who they are.” For example, the Global South has long experienced oxygen shortages and pneumonia
15 deaths because of these ~~principles~~, shortages, but with oxygen necessary for COVID-19 treatment, those
16 shortages become much more visible. Data for COVID-19 vaccinations illustrate the sharp divide
17 between, on the one hand, the United States and its territories and, on the other, nations with less access to
18 capital when it comes to access to health care. As COVID-19 vaccines have been developed and become
19 widely available, only the wealthiest nations on the globe were able to purchase them, even though
20 everyone stands to benefit from a global vaccination campaign. Personal protective equipment was also in
21 universally very short supply at the beginning of the pandemic. Addressing these global inequities will
22 require coordination, investment and cooperation between the public and private sectors. Pharmaceutical
23 companies have joined together with the governmental actors to secure and allocate 2 billion doses of
24 COVID-19 vaccine before the end of 2021, targeted to health care workers and at-risk populations. The
25 issue is obliged to consider our brothers and sisters throughout the world and the effects of many diseases,
26 including that projects such as COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) do not address the
27 underlying deficiencies of the vaccine distribution system.

28 While the world struggles to address COVID-19 globally and equitably, access to basic health care
29 remains a considerable challenge. Primary care, maternal care and childcare are in need of support around
30 the globe. HIV and AIDS (and its ~~co-morbidities~~, their comorbidities), malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected
31 tropical diseases and noncommunicable diseases continue to affect people, especially in middle-income
32 and least-developed ~~low-income~~ countries. Infectious diseases, along with the lack of vaccines, threaten to
33 reverse development gains, reduce life expectancy and cut productivity and income.

34 According to the World Health Organization, ~~in 2015, 36.9~~by the end of 2019, 38 million people
35 globally ~~around the globe~~ were living with HIV, with 2 million new cases identified each year.³ Malaria
36 estimates in 2015 ~~2019~~ indicate 3.2 billion people are at risk for getting ~~229 million cases that year, with~~
37 children the disease ~~most vulnerable group~~.⁴ More than 1.54 million people worldwide died in ~~2014~~2019
38 from tuberculosis ~~worldwide~~, and it is the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, accounting for
39 1 in 3 deaths.⁵ from a single infectious agent.⁶ Difficulty in accessing pharmaceuticals can lead patients to
40 miss or skip doses, worsening their diseases and fueling the rise of antimicrobial resistance.

¹ <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf>, p.3 Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor (ELCA social statement, 2003), p. 3,

<http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf> .

² Caring for Health, p. 2, <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf> .

³ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs360/en/> World Health Organization, “HIV/AIDS,”
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hiv-aids> .

⁴ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs360/en/> World Health Organization, “Malaria,”
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malaria> .

⁵ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs104/en/>

⁶ World Health Organization, “Tuberculosis,” <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tuberculosis> .



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

44 Ecumenical work in Africa (in which the ELCA participates) shows that nearly 2 million Africans are infected
45 annually with HIV. What will this do to the continent's society, work force, economy, political stability and
46 hope for the future? A b o u t 10.7 million people have access to antiretroviral medication to combat the
47 disease in developing countries, yet this represents only 40 percent of all people living with HIV and needing
48 access to such life-saving medicines.

49 -

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51 Access to diagnostics, treatments, pharmaceuticals and preventive care are challenges to global health
52 when the for-profit world has a role to play. Access is affected by production cost and sale price,
53 availability, logistics of transportation and storage, and availability of supplies used in manufacturing
54 (often shipped from less wealthy to wealthier countries). All these factors are influenced by global
55 inequities.

56

57 The ELCA supports health projects at national or local community levels that are implemented by
58 companion churches and organizations. The World Council of Churches coordinates advocacy and
59 participates in efforts that seek to increase collaboration and commitment between the for-profit and
60 nonprofit sectors. Among the projects in which the World Council of Churches participates is the Rome
61 Action Plan, which, for example, convenes high-level dialogues between governmental, faith-based and
62 for-profit global partners.

63

64

65 ELCA social policy **SOCIAL POLICY**

66 -

67 The ELCA social statement, "*Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*" (August *Caring for Health: Our*
68 *Shared Endeavor* (2003)), develops the church's vision of health, illness and healing. It calls for equitable
69 access as a matter of both love and justice and for international cooperation in public health efforts,
70 including preventing and combating infectious diseases. The social statement calls upon society to give
71 priority to groups that, for reasons of race, class or gender, have not had access to adequate health care.
72 The message on human rights states: "Humans are physical beings and have the right to sufficient and
73 sustainable levels of physical goods such as water, food, shelter and health care" (p. 6). The ELCA
74 committed in its social statement on faith, sexism and justice to advocate for "equitable and affordable
75 health care services, including reproductive health care, that honor how bodies differ and eliminate
76 discrimination due to sex (biological), gender, or sexual orientation" (p. 10).⁷

77

78 In 2009 the Church Council (CC09.03.23) adopted the "The ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS."⁸ The
79 strategy seeks sought to halt the spread of HIV, reduce stigma and discrimination, and reduce the
80 conditions of poverty and the marginalization that contribute to the spread of HIV. This strategy calls for
81 the corporate social responsibility Corporate Social Responsibility program to advocate with corporations on
82 these goals as well as for achieving universal accesses. The ten-year time frame of the strategy has ended,
83 but the commitment to reducing stigma and discrimination and supporting access to treatment, among
84 other principles, remains.

85

⁷ Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action (ELCA social statement, 2019), p. 10,
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf

⁸ <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/HIV-AIDS-Ministry> ELCA, "HIV and AIDS Ministry,"
<http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/HIV-AIDS-Ministry>.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

86 In 2002, the ELCA Church Council (CC02.11.59) approved a shareholder resolution requesting that
87 pharmaceutical companies in which the ELCA holds corporate shares support national and international
88 efforts to make generic antiretroviral drugs accessible to people living with HIV and AIDS in countries in
89 need.

90 -
91 “Compassion, Conversion, Care: Responding as churches to the HIV/AIDS pandemic; an action plan of The
92 Lutheran World Federation”⁹ (January 2002) develops the basis for the Lutheran Communion’s role in
93 responding to the pandemic. Simply put, *the church itself has HIV and AIDS*. This disease and its effects
94 provoke a significant challenge to the whole community. In its action plan, the LWF puts forth 12 actions to
95 counter HIV and AIDS, which can serve also as a framework for advocacy at the governmental and corporate
96 level:-

- 97 • ~~gaining knowledge and raising awareness~~
- 98 • ~~training of leadership~~
- 99 • ~~connecting experiences~~
- 100 • ~~ensuring gender sensitivity~~
- 101 • ~~telling the truth about sexuality and sexual practice~~
- 102 • ~~promoting and making visible church reflection processes~~
- 103 • ~~articulating a “prophetic presence”~~
- 104 • ~~providing educational resources~~
- 105 • ~~ensuring financial resources~~
- 106 • ~~connecting to civil society and government~~
- 107 • ~~advocacy~~
- 108 • ~~“for the healing of the world”~~

109 -

110 I. Response

111 Publicly held corporations face the pandemic in many ways.

112 Through ELCA World Hunger, the ELCA supports access to health care around the world. Support goes
113 to providing clinical care and to community-based health programs. Other projects focus on education
114 and advocacy, pressuring governments to provide the health services and/or medications they have
115 promised (especially for tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV and AIDS).

116
117 While the 10-year strategy on HIV and AIDS of the ELCA has finished, World Hunger continues to
118 provide funding to programs that work on eliminating stigma and discrimination, advocate for continued
119 health care access and treatment for all, and provide education around prevention and treatment,
120 psychosocial care training for pastors and the importance of good nutrition.¹⁰

121

122

123 RESPONSES

124

125 It makes good business sense for companies to respond to the epidemic pandemic disease because of the its
126 direct impact of HIV and AIDS impacts on business. These impacts include increased costs, loss of

⁹ <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-ecumenical-bodies/church-statements-onhiv/aids/lutheran-world-federation>

¹⁰ Efforts addressing access to health care have been mandated by the ELCA churchwide assembly as a core principle of work supported by ELCA World Hunger.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

127 productivity, and overall threats to the foundations of the economies in which they operate. The current
128 and future workforce is placed at increasingly high risk as because the epidemic HIV and AIDS pandemic
129 disproportionately affects people during their most productive years.¹¹

130
131 The global corporate community, including the pharmaceutical sector, must become part of the solution to
132 the global health challenges of HIV and AIDS, especially in developing countries.

¹¹ http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/AIDSimpact/7_Chap_IV.pdf
<https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/hiv/impact/chap4.pdf>



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

133 Though pharmaceutical companies do make donations of their products, some argue that these donations
134 are ultimately not beneficial: corporations collect tax breaks from donations and still leave many without
135 access, because product prices are not lowered for everyone.

~~II. Social criteria investment screens~~

137
138 The scientific community was able to produce COVID-19 vaccines in record time. In the United States,
139 the federal government poured billions into some pharmaceutical companies to speed development of
140 COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics and gave the vaccines emergency authorization. The development
141 of Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines was also greatly facilitated by a decade of government-funded
142 research. Given the urgent global need for COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and treatment, several
143 governments proposed a temporary pause of the intellectual property rights protections in the 2001 World
144 Trade Organization agreement to allow low- and-middle income countries to produce these vaccines and
145 therapeutics locally, so that more people can have access to them. The U.S. government supports this
146 proposal. Nine United Nations human rights experts have welcomed the proposal for pharmaceutical
147 companies to waive intellectual property rights for the COVID-19 response based on the right to health
148 care. Pharmaceutical companies are likely to encounter increasing pressure to waive intellectual property
149 rights during public health emergencies in order to increase global access to their products.

SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

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153
154 A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company's activities are evaluated.
155 None currently apply to this paper.-

156 -
157 ~~Resolution guidelines for~~

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC¹²—issue-specific

- 160
161 1. We support reports about the health pandemic and its economic impact on a company's
162 operations and ~~their~~ business strategy.
163 2. We support resolutions asking for the establishment and implementation of standards for
164 responding to ~~the health pandemic~~ pandemics.
165 3. We support the development, in consultation with appropriate United Nations and related
166 intergovernmental agencies, of ways to offer accessible drug treatments, diagnostics and
167 vaccines to people in developing countries.
168 4. We support reports on the affordability and accessibility of vaccines, medical devices and
169 testing equipment. We support strengthening board oversight of drug-pricing risk.
170 5. We support reports on community and ~~occupations~~ occupational health-hazard impacts of
171 products internationally.
172 6. We support reports on policies for safe disposition of prescription drugs, both domestically
173 and internationally. -

~~III. Resolution guidelines for ELCA – general~~

- 174 -
175
176 7. We support reports on strengthening board diversity.
177 8. We support reports assessing the reputational and financial risks from rising pressure to

12 These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.-



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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reduce high prescription drug prices by removing barriers to generic competition.

9. We support reports on whether executive compensation reflects pricing strategies and access.

10. We support reports on whether and how receipt of public financial support for development and manufacture of a vaccine or COVID-19 therapeutic will be taken into account when making decisions that affect access, such as pricing.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL

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We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- ~~a~~ A company having an independent chair or independent lead director;;
- ~~reports~~ Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds;;
- ~~reports~~ Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political;;
- ~~guidelines~~ Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures; and
- ~~reports~~ Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹³

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¹³ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non-Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820 See "Non-discrimination in Business Activities" issue paper.

AREA: Private Prisons
DOCUMENT TYPE: Social Criteria Investment Screen

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
FORMAT DATE: 7/13/21

MARKER DATES:
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2021 [anticipated]

Private Prisons

AUTHORITY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) affirms that "an effective system of criminal justice is an essential part of any functioning civil government."¹ In the same statement, this church also declares, "One area stands far above others and deserves immediate attention: this society must find ways to end the overuse of incarceration"² and calls for an end to prison privatization.³ This church has committed to addressing how race and ethnicity figure into political decisions on crime.⁴

WORDING OF THE SCREEN

The ELCA recommends no investment in private, for-profit prisons, including firms involved in for-profit privatization of detention and incarceration in the criminal justice system.

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

The concerns of this church about privatizing prisons are theological, moral and economic. Theologically speaking, the ELCA holds that it is the role of government, not the market, to restrain evil. Morally speaking, it holds that when individuals depend utterly on a system, the state may not abdicate its responsibility for custodial control to an entity guided primarily by profit or production.

¹ *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries* (ELCA social statement, 2013), p. 7, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Criminal_JusticeSS.pdf

² *The Church and Criminal Justice*, p. 36.

³ *The Church and Criminal Justice*, p. 44.

⁴ *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (ELCA social statement, 1993), p. 6, <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/RaceSS.pdf>

29
30 Economically speaking, the church holds that privatizing the criminal justice
31 system creates an economic incentive for for-profit corporations to expand
32 incarceration and detention, treating humans as a commodity to be sold rather
33 than children of God who are never beyond restoration. This incentive may also
34 manifest itself in practices that can become serious human rights abuses such as
35 attempts to keep costs down through inadequate medical and mental health
36 care, insufficient basic hygiene, and inadequate staffing.

37
38 The ELCA urges governments at every level to maintain governmental
39 responsibility and eliminate reliance on the use of private, for-profit detention
40 and incarceration in the criminal justice system. This matter is particularly urgent
41 for communities of color because of the inequitable impact the U.S. criminal
42 justice system has on citizens. It is also urgent for this church to fulfill its
43 commitments to racial justice.

44
45 Recognizing that various investors will implement these criteria along a
46 continuum, the ELCA includes in this screen investments that could be made in
47 private, for-profit prison corporations and also those that could be made in
48 companies involved in the marketing of, supplying of key components for, or for-
49 profit provision of services (such as food service or health care services) to
50 private, for-profit prison corporations.

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53 **SOCIAL POLICY AND STUDIES**

54
55 [*The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*](#) (ELCA social statement,
56 2013),

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58 [“Community Violence”](#) (ELCA social message, 1994),

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60 [*Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*](#) (ELCA social statement, 1993),

61
62 [“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a
63 Democracy”](#) (ELCA social message, 2020),

64
65 [“Human Rights”](#) (ELCA social message, 2017),

66

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Private Prisons

Social Criteria Investment Screen



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

APPROVED by the ELCA AREA: Private Prisons
DOCUMENT TYPE: Social Criteria Investment Screen

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council-
FORMAT DATE: 7/13/21

MARKER DATES:
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2014-CC14.11.18

Authority: 2021 [anticipated]

Private Prisons

AUTHORITY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) affirms the fundamental principles that "an effective system of due process criminal justice is an essential part of law and the presumption of legal innocence as foundational to the U.S. criminal justice system. Yet any functioning civil government."¹ In the same statement, this church hears people's cries that challenge the current system's serious deficiencies also declares, "One area stands far above others and deserves immediate attention: this society must find ways to end the overuse of incarceration"² and calls for an end to prison privatization.³ This church has addressed them in its social teaching document The Church committed to addressing how race and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries (2013)- ethnicity figure into political decisions on crime.⁴

Wording of the Screen:-

¹ The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries (ELCA social statement, 2013), p. 7, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Criminal_JusticeSS.pdf

² The Church and Criminal Justice, p. 36.

³ The Church and Criminal Justice, p. 44.

⁴ Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture (ELCA social statement, 1993), p. 6, <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/RaceSS.pdf>

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



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WORDING OF THE SCREEN

The ELCA recommends no investment in private, for-profit prisons, including firms involved in ~~prison~~ for-profit privatization of detention and incarceration in the criminal justice system.-

-
~~Definition of Problem:~~

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

The concerns of this ~~church~~ church about privatizing prisons are theological, moral and economic. ~~The~~ Theologically speaking, the ELCA holds that it is the role of government, not the market, to restrain evil. ~~The moral reason is~~ Morally speaking, it holds that ~~the role of the~~ when individuals depend utterly on a system, the state in the operation of prisons should ~~may~~ NOT be supplanted by economic players who are ~~abdicate its~~ responsibility for custodial control to an entity guided primarily by profit or production. ~~Contracting with private firms invites problems with successful offender reintegration into society, reduced services including medical care, education, job training and counseling. Such contracts invite offenses that even~~

Economically speaking, the church holds that privatizing the criminal justice system creates an economic incentive for for-profit corporations to expand incarceration and detention, treating humans as a commodity to be sold rather than children of God who are never beyond restoration. This incentive may also manifest itself in practices that can become serious human rights abuses such as ~~lack of~~ attempts to keep costs down through inadequate medical and mental health care, ~~lack of~~ insufficient basic hygiene ~~or holding male and female prisoners in the same area to name a few.~~ , and inadequate staffing.

The ELCA urges governments at every level to maintain its governmental responsibility and eliminate reliance on the use of private, for-profit ~~prisons.~~ detention and incarceration in the criminal justice system. This matter is particularly urgent for communities of color because of the inequitable impact the U.S. criminal justice system has on citizens. It is also urgent for this church to fulfill its commitments to racial justice.

Recognizing that various investors will implement ~~this~~ these criteria along a continuum, ~~for the purpose of~~ ELCA includes in this screen; investments ~~include those~~ which ~~that~~ could be made in private, for-profit prison corporations and also those ~~also which~~ that could be made in companies involved in the marketing of, ~~the~~ supplying of key components for, ~~or the~~ for-profit provision of services (such as food service or health care services) to private, for-profit ~~prisons~~ prison



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

60 corporations.

61 -

62 ~~**Social policy and studies:**~~

63 ~~The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries [ELCA, 2013]~~

64 ~~[http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice-Community Violence](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice-Community-Violence) [ELCA,~~

65 ~~1994] <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Community-ViolenceSM.pdf>~~

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~~<http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice>, 44~~

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69

SOCIAL POLICY AND STUDIES

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71 *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries* (ELCA social statement,

72 2013),

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74 "Community Violence" (ELCA social message, 1994),

75

76 *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (ELCA social statement, 1993),

77

78 "Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a

79 Democracy" (ELCA social message, 2020),

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81 "Human Rights" (ELCA social message, 2017),

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Note: this informal and working background pulls together a mix of both official text and summary material for each the five pending requests to CC for the development of a social message. The material is divided between Actions Taken and Considerations. The actions taken present the history of the request and also present the specific particularities of the request. Considerations provide observations and explanation. The lengthier ones are taken from backgrounds written for CWA or CC; the shorter offer newly minted material. They attempt to provide descriptive information rather than normative assessment.

U.S. National Drug Policy

Actions Taken

1) U.S. national drug policy

[CA13.05.19]: Implementing Resolution #9 from The Church and Criminal Justice: "To direct the ELCA's Theological Discernment Team in the fall of 2015 to bring to the Church Council an assessment of the feasibility of developing a social message on U.S. national drug policy, in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns"

2)CC Actions since 2014 have deferred the question of developing social message on U.S. National Drug Policy each year. There has been recognition of the importance addressing policy in U.S. society but also serious concerns about the feasibility and relevance because the subject matter is changing so rapidly. Moreover, the main rationale each year is that this topic is not as critical as other pressing commitments requested of Church Council authorization (e.g., social message on government and civic engagement)

Considerations

Implementing Resolution #9 was a compromise for the ELCA task force as it concluded its work in 2015. Some on the task force wished the statement to provide the anchors for the ELCA's address to U.S. National Drug Policy. Others objected that the national scene was a moving target and the statement would be dated quickly. Others argued that addressing the topic in the statement would be overwhelming and would divert from the primary focus. Note that the Resolution does not "direct" the development of a social message but directs only an assessment. The initial assessment in 2015 was ambiguous and the question was placed into the social message cue.

Aging

Actions Taken

1) Virginia Synod (9A) [2014]

WHEREAS, a statement of the Lutheran Church in America regarding "Aging and the Older Adult" was adopted by the Ninth Biennial Convention, Chicago, Illinois, July 12–19, 1978; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) upon its founding accepted the statement as a historical document; and

WHEREAS, the document has never been rescinded; and

WHEREAS, the statement is not binding for the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, while this church is blessed by the vital growth of young people and families, it is also blessed by the increasing number of senior members, making the subject of aging of paramount importance to a significant number of ELCA congregations; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod form a committee to study the issue and draft a social statement on aging; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Virginia Synod Council request the Church Council to bring the 1978 statement, "Aging and the Older Adult," out of retirement and revise it as appropriate to make it a living document.

2) [CC14.11.32]: To thank the Virginia Synod for its resolution on aging;

To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To ask that the term "social statement" be avoided in the work of the synodical committee drafting a synod document on aging for the sake of clarity; there is a technical meaning to "social statement" as used in "Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns;"

To acknowledge both the continuing limited staff capacity as well as the continuing presence of important social questions around aging;

To invite an assessment and possible recommendation from the Theological Discernment Team staff in the Office of the Presiding Bishop regarding the feasibility of developing a social message on aging that includes attention to the 1978 LCA statement, "Aging and the Older Adult"; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

3) CC discussion since 2015 have recognized the potential value in development of a message that addresses concerns about aging relevant to a large population in the ELCA. However, action each year has deferred the question of developing a message on aging because the subject matter is not as critical as other pressing commitments (e.g., social message on gender-based violence)

Considerations

The original request used the term "social statement" and it is unclear whether that was the actual intent. In any case, the topic of aging is more naturally developed in a social message since they are topical, briefer, and more deliberative in character. Social statements speak to the great institutions of contemporary life or to the most controversial questions and provide significant framework and policy direction. The LCA document on aging would not provide grounding because it is dated and only historical, rather than official, for the ELCA. However, it could provide a significant source of theological reflection. The development of this message would speak to a host of contemporary questions and would need to draw on contemporary sources.

Gender Identity & Expression

Actions Taken:

1) Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.02.09]

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Sierra Pacifica Synod concerning development of a social statement on gender identity and gender expression;

To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop provide materials to facilitate education among ELCA members so as to build awareness of the broad varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation among God's people, as well as to provide pastoral care insights regarding concerns and issues of the transgender experience and gender nonconformity; and

To request that the Church Council consider authorizing development of a social message on gender identity and gender expression.

2) *Executive Committee Action [EC19.09.28.a17]*

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on Gender Identity to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with appropriate churchwide organization offices and units, 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.

3) *CC ACTION [En Bloc] Fall 2019*

To receive the response on Gender Identity from the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To defer the questions of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Fall 2020 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 synod of this action.

Considerations

In accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018), a social message is framed by existing social documents. Within that framework a social message on gender identity and gender expression can turn to such sources as established science to explore and address what the ELCA should say about these matters. Key social documents for this message include *Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Call to Action* and *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, as well as several social policy resolutions.

As with all ELCA teaching, the address would be done in light of ELCA commitments to the Scriptures, Lutheran theological themes as established in HS:G&T, and attentive to the well-established findings of contemporary science. The particular concern of this memorial for ongoing education could be fulfilled by the commitment to produce a study guide to the message for congregational use.

It must be noted, however, that additional consultation will be needed in order to adequately respond to the breadth and depth of a memorial that asks for attention to “varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation among God's people, as well as to provide pastoral care insights regarding concerns and issues of the transgender experience and gender nonconformity.” Each in this extensive list has its own important particularities.

Because of the intersectional nature of sexism, some of the concerns about education reflected in this memorial fall to the commission of the desk of Justice for Women (OB), which works on gender justice broadly speaking. A discussion of additional educational resources and some thought toward timeline are on their agenda for the Justice for Women Consulting Committee. This conversation will consider what tools for educational engagement might be possible, drawing from existing resources and the principles in existing social teaching.

U.S. National Gun Policy

Actions Taken

1) *Churchwide Assembly Action [CA18.02.09m]*

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod concerning gun violence and gun policy;

To reaffirm the ELCA's long-standing teaching, policy, and pastoral address to gun violence, public policy, and the complex issues of which they are a part;

To encourage synods and congregations to dedicate a time of study and exhortation to action on the issue of gun violence and public policy on guns; and

To request that the Church Council consider authorizing development of a social message on gun violence and public policy that points to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, public health, and social perplexity.

2 Executive Committee Action [EC19.09.28.a18]

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on Gun Policy to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with appropriate churchwide organization offices and units, 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.

3) CC action Fall 2019

To receive the response on Gun Policy from the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To defer the questions of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Fall 2020 Church Council meeting when a new assessment of each issue, staff capacity and finances will be brought to the council; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Considerations

The memorial seeks to extend the church's address to gun violence by asking for the development of a social message. The Whereas section (not listed here) argued that developments since the early '90s have rendered inadequate existing ELCA attention to gun violence and public policy, such as in the social message on Community Violence and social policy resolutions from the early '90s. It also holds that existing documents do not provide members with sufficient moral guidance to act as Christian citizens on these issues.

ELCA advocacy staff acknowledge the lack of specificity on public policy priorities regarding gun violence so that some letters and sign on have been avoided. In particular there is an identified and urgent need for advocacy at the state and federal level to address gun violence. This follows from the dramatic increase in gun deaths and mass shootings - particularly in schools - and the lack of funding for the study of the impact of gun violence as a public health concern. At the same time, there is sufficient guidance from existing social policy resolutions to support bans on assault weapons and for background checks.

Taken together, these factors suggest an identifiable need for a more contemporary foundation for advocacy and member discernment within the ELCA. Gun violence and public policy appropriately could be the focus of a new social message because messages are teaching and policy documents that address narrower topics than social statements.

If authorized, this message would need to be developed with close attention to the social message on Community Violence. If authorized this message would not replace the existing message which is much more comprehensive but build from the theological foundations there. If developed this message could subordinate or eliminate existing social policy resolutions. It also could affirm them.

Climate Change

Actions Taken

1) Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council (SC20.01.15): Resolution to ELCA CC

Whereas: As a church, we are called to care for creation. Climate change should move up higher in priority. A message doesn't create policy but does provide for teaching. It is cheaper and has faster turn-around time than a social statement.

RESOLVED,

To encourage the ELCA Church Council to use resources to create a message on climate change.

2) CC Exec Comm. Action C20.02.12

To receive the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council resolution regarding a social message on climate change;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Domestic Mission unit, for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further action; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Considerations

In accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018), a social message is framed by existing social documents. Within the framework provided by Caring for Creation (1993) a social message on climate change could turn to contemporary questions, controversies, and sources, such as now well-established climate science to explore and address particularities the ELCA has not addressed.

The Big Picture for Social Teaching Writing Projects—Nov. 2021

Key to cryptic abbreviations: SS=social statements; SM=social messages; ST=social teaching & policy; SPR= Social Policy Resolutions; SG= study guide; Athrzd=Authorized; IR=Implementing Resolution

Project	Status	It Addresses:	Start Date	Target Date
SS: Government from faith's standpoint	Athrzd: CWA 2019	On government, civic engagement and the relationship of church and state to develop	Feb. 2020	Aug. 2025
SG: For Peace SS	Hiatus: Response to 2015 CWA's SPR on militarization	Need for discernment on militarization, international policies, etc., grounded in SS	July 2018	July 2022
SG: Faith, Sexism, Justice	Near Publication: as part of process, highly anticipated	Need for guide to new SS	Feb. 2020	Nov. 2021
SG: Suicide Msg editorial update	CC action expected: Response to CWA 2019 concern	Need for accurate wording, resources, references & statistics	May 2020	Nov. 2021
SM: Climate Change	Request: SWM Synod Council, Feb. 2020	The need for contemporary address to a globally acknowledged problem	Immediately in Nov., if authorized	Nov. 2022
SM: Gender Identity & Expression	Request: CWA 2019	The complex dimensions and contemporary questions around gender identity and gender expression.	CC decision pending	
SM: Gun Policy	Request: CWA 2019	Gun violence and public policy that points to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, public health	CC decision pending	
SM: U.S. Drug Policy	IR from Crim Justice SS, 2013	Assess feasibility of developing SM on U.S. National Drug Policy	CC decision pending	
SM: On Aging	Request from Virginia Synod Council, 2017	Social, pastoral, & theological questions associated with aging in this society	CC decision pending	
Social Policy Resolution Assessment	Directed by <i>Policies & Procedures</i> for action at each CWA	This review enables assessment of relevance & adequacy of dated SPRs as church policy	Nov. 2021	CWA 2022

Background Notes

- 1) Theological Ethics desk has four primary kinds of writing projects associated with social teaching.
 - Social statement development, authorized by a CWA;
 - Social message development/ or “thick” social policy resolutions, authorized by CC;
 - Study resources, most commonly the study guides to social statements;
(The development of study resources generally falls into the category of “expected” by church governance but not “directed.”)
 - Informational and interpretive resources regarding existing social teaching;
(Examples include talking points for bishops, “one page” summaries for particular questions, presentations on social teaching procedure or content. These are not listed here).

- 2) The general capacity of the Theological Ethics desk (1.5 people) per year is work on one statement, one message, one study resource, and several informational resources. A social message or study resource request usually involves hiring an independent contractor.

Background on Suicide Prevention Social Message Edit

Many social messages from the late 1980s and 1990s continue to serve the ELCA's social teaching and policy admirably in terms of their key ideas, theological argument, social analysis and calls to action. However, they do show their age to readers with outdated terminology, faulty references and dated statistics. The social message on Suicide Prevention (1999) is a case in point and an edit was authorized by the Church Council last Nov. 2020. [CC20.11.32a]

“Edit” serves as a technical term in *Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns*, defined as “the update of particular wording for the sake of accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context involving no change in substantive meaning;” (p23)

In the case of the Suicide Prevention message, the necessary changes to passe wording, statistics, resources, and references has been dramatic but a careful reading will demonstrate there has been no substantive change in the structure, key concepts, theological analysis, or other core items.

The work was carried out under the management of the director for theological ethics after consultation with relevant staff (e.g. director for disabilities ministry) and leaders of the Suicide Prevention Ministry (SPM) (<https://suicidepreventionministry.org/>), which is an ecumenical non-profit but a successor to Lutheran SPM. Over the summer, a contractor did the initial research and textual review, the director marshalled the suggestions into a review text for two major review cycles. These cycles helped assure that terms, statistics, and resource information were accurate. The reviewers included top professionals from organizations like the National Institute of Mental Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine, as well as the standard mix of ELCA leaders, attentive to diversity.

Again, the proposed edit has made hundreds of piecemeal changes guided by these cycles of review, but a quick read through both demonstrates the reliance on the original for substance. Please note that the text, statistics, and footnotes are finished, while a few items [in yellow] indicate notes to the designer or resource information to be added, if adopted.

[Design: contemporary ELCA style heading would go here]

1
2 **A social message on . . .**

3 **Suicide Prevention**
4
5

6 *Adopted originally by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on November 14, 1999. This*
7 *updated version with contemporary statistics, phrasing, and resource information was adopted November xx, 2021.*
8
9

10 Suicide in the United States is a heart-wrenching national crisis.¹ Statistics indicate it is in the top ten of
11 leading causes of death and the second leading cause among people between the ages of 10 and 34. The
12 suicide rate increased by more than 30% between 1999 and 2019.² More people die by suicide than by
13 homicide,³ and it is estimated that slightly more than half of U.S. adults know someone who has died in
14 this way.⁴
15

16 In addition to this loss of life and its unspeakable tragedy, there is a much larger proportion of
17 individuals who think about (ideate) and/or attempt suicide. In 2017, nearly 1.5 million emergency
18 department visits were related to suicide ideation or suicide attempts. In 2019, 4.8% of adults aged 18 or
19 older⁵ and 18.8% of high school students had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.⁶
20

21 These numbers, we know, speak of individuals whose stories and relationships are unique. They are
22 people in our families, congregations, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Some of us have attempted
23 suicide, and others of us have made sure a relative or friend who speaks of contemplating suicide has
24 gotten help. Many of us have mourned and anguished—often in isolation because of stigma—over the
25 death by suicide of a loved one, while others of us will someday experience this inexpressible grief and
26 suffering.
27

28 Suicide testifies to life’s tragic brokenness. Christians believe that life is God’s good and precious gift to
29 us, and yet life for human beings—ourselves and others—sometimes appears to be hell, a torment
30 without hope. When we would prefer to ignore, reject, or shy away from those who despair of life, we
31 need to recall what we have heard: God’s boundless love in Jesus Christ will leave no one alone and
32 abandoned. We who lean on God’s love to live are called to “bear one another’s burdens, and in this
33 way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). Our efforts to prevent suicide grow out of our
34 obligation to protect and promote life, our hope in God amid suffering and adversity, and our love for
35 the troubled neighbor.
36

37 In U.S. society, suicide is increasingly being viewed as a serious and preventable public health problem.⁷
38 Suicide and its prevention are complex and multidimensional and need to be approached openly and
39 comprehensively. Suicide prevention requires concerted and collaborative efforts from multiple sectors
40 of society. When prevention is given priority and used, research tells us there is hope and that we can
41 make a difference.⁸
42

43 Let us in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America contribute to these efforts. With this message, the
44 Church Council encourages members, congregations, and affiliated institutions to learn more about
45 suicide and its prevention in their communities, to ask what they can do, and to work with others to
46 prevent suicide.

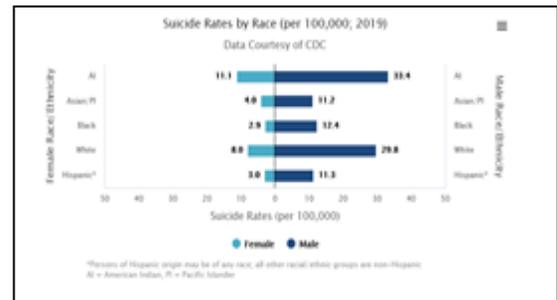
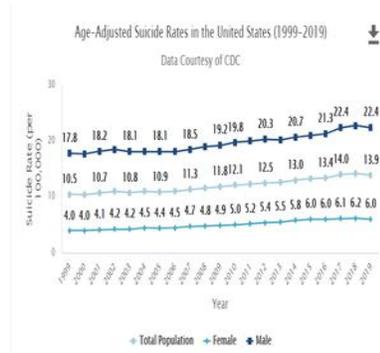
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Becoming Aware

Suicide occurs in all social groups. It occurs among young, middle-aged, and older people; men and women; straight and LGBTQIA+; people who are rich, middle class, or poor; all ethnic and religious groups; married and single people; the employed and unemployed; and the healthy and the sick.

Yet statistics indicate that suicide is more prevalent among some groups than others. The following illustrations are not comprehensive but intended to challenge common misunderstanding.⁹

- The accompanying graph indicate statistics broken out by male and female.¹⁰
- The annual prevalence of serious thoughts of suicide, by U.S. demographic group, are: 4.8% of all adults, 11.8% of young adults aged 18-25, 18.8% of high school students, and 46.8% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual high school students.¹¹
- Among adults aged 18 and older, those who report being of multiple (two or more) races (1.5%) have the highest prevalence of suicide attempts and report the highest prevalence of suicidal thoughts (6.9%).¹²
- In 2019, suicide rates were highest for American Indian, non-Hispanic males (33.4 per 100,000), followed by white, non-Hispanic males (29.8 per 100,000), as indicated by the accompanying graph.¹³
- In 2019, firearms accounted for a little over half (50.4%) of all suicides.¹⁴ People living in a household with a firearm are almost five times more likely to die by suicide than people who live in gun-free homes.¹⁵



There simply is no *one* cause for suicide, yet researchers tell us that suicidal behavior can be associated with a number of *risk factors* that occur in combination. Examples include the following:¹⁶

- Clinical depression and other mental illnesses. The National Alliance on Mental Illness states that 46% of all people who die by suicide have been diagnosed with a mental health condition and 90% have shown symptoms of a mental health condition.¹⁷
- Alcohol and substance abuse. Alcoholism is a factor in 30% of all suicides. In 2019, 18.4% of U.S. adults with mental illness also experienced a substance use disorder.¹⁸
- Significant adverse life stresses when their convergence overwhelms one’s ability to cope. Examples include a family crisis such as death or divorce; loss of one’s livelihood to a rural economic crisis or business downsizing; chronic, acute, or terminal illness; or the effects of a natural or social disaster.
- Adverse life experiences of social origin. These include social oppressions (racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, able-ism) and are especially acute after multiple micro-aggressions and/or marginalization among youth (Adverse Childhood Experiences, ACEs).¹⁹
- Familial factors. These include a family history of suicide, mental illness, substance abuse, violence, or sexual abuse.

- 93 • Repeated exposure to suicidal behavior of others. Suicides among young people sometimes
94 occur in clusters and may even become an epidemic. Young people are particularly susceptible
95 to imitating behavior, which may lead to unintended suicide.²⁰
- 96 • Other common risk factors include prior suicide attempts, easy access to firearms, or barriers to
97 accessing mental health treatment.

99 **Looking at Attitudes**

100 Certain social attitudes present obstacles to suicide prevention. One such set of beliefs says that nothing
101 can be done. “If it’s going to happen, it will.” “It’s not worth trying to help, because these people have
102 such huge problems that nothing can be done.” “Suicide has been around forever; we’re not going to
103 change that fact.” “Let them alone. If they want to kill themselves, that’s their business.”

104
105 Punitive attitudes form another obstacle to suicide prevention. These attitudes are eager to punish
106 suicidal behavior and often blame the living for suicidal deaths. They create an environment in which
107 suicidal behavior is concealed and people with suicidal thoughts are reluctant to talk. Punitive attitudes
108 are a carryover from the time when suicide was considered a crime and an unpardonable sin, and when
109 those who completed suicide were denied Christian burial.

110
111 The failure to understand mental health problems such as depression also obstructs suicide prevention.
112 Some misguided attitudes view serious depression as a character deficit, a human weakness, or a rare,
113 untreatable, and permanent condition. These attitudes convey to depressed people that they should
114 “tough it out” or be embarrassed or ashamed by how they feel.

115
116 In truth, clinical depression is a disease involving changes in brain chemistry. It is one of the most
117 common diseases and can happen to people who have no apparent reason to “be depressed.” Although
118 clinical depression often goes untreated because it is not recognized, people with depression and
119 suicidal thoughts can be helped through effective treatments, especially the combination of medication
120 and therapy. Suicidal behaviors are not inevitable outcomes of depression.²¹

121
122 Experts also speak of common false understandings that stand in the way of suicide prevention:

- 123 • *Falsehood:* People who talk about suicide rarely actually complete suicide; they are just wanting
124 attention and should be challenged in order to “call their bluff.” *The truth is* that people who
125 talk about suicide are serious and may be giving a clue or warning of their intentions. They
126 should not be challenged or invalidated but given assistance in obtaining professional help.
- 127 • *Falsehood:* A person who has made a serious suicide attempt is unlikely to make another. *The*
128 *truth is* that people who have made prior attempts are often at greater risk for dying by
129 suicide.²² A suicide attempt is a cry for help and a warning that something is terribly wrong and
130 should be taken with utmost seriousness.
- 131 • *Falsehood:* The suicidal person wants to die and feels there is no turning back. *The truth is* that
132 suicidal people often feel ambivalent about dying. They often go through a long process in which
133 they try various ways to reduce their profound emotional pain. The balance between their
134 contradictory desires to live and to die shifts back and forth, even up to the time of taking their
135 life.
- 136 • *Falsehood:* Most people who take their life have made a careful, well-considered, rational
137 decision. *The truth is* that people considering suicide often have “tunnel vision”—in their

138 unbearable pain they are blind to available alternatives. Frequently, the suicide act is impulsive.
139 When their suffering and pain are reduced, most will choose to live.
140 • *Falsehood*: Asking about suicidal feelings will cause one to attempt suicide. *The truth is* that
141 asking a person about suicidal feelings provides an opportunity to get help that may save a life.
142 The listener should ask if the person has formulated a plan and has access to the means to carry
143 it out. If the intent or plan and its means are there, the suicidal person should not be left alone
144 but should be helped to get treatment immediately. (See Immediate crisis resources at end of
145 Helpcard section.)

146

147 **A Suicide Prevention Helpcard [Design: could this be set up as its own page for copying?]**

148 If someone you know:

- 149 • Threatens suicide ...
- 150 • Talks or writes about having no reason to live, feeling trapped, of being in unbearable pain ...
- 151 • Appears depressed, sad, withdrawn, hopeless ...
- 152 • Shows significant changes in behavior, appearance, mood (from being “normal” to being
153 depressed, or the reverse) ...
- 154 • Abuses drugs, alcohol ...
- 155 • Deliberately injures themselves ...
- 156 • Says they will not be missed if gone ...
- 157 • Gives away treasured belongings ...

158

159 You can help:

- 160 • Stay calm and listen.
- 161 • Take threats seriously and ask questions even if the person pushes away.
- 162 • Let them talk about their feelings.
- 163 • Be accepting—do not judge.
- 164 • Ask directly: “Have you been thinking about suicide?”
- 165 • Ask how intense and frequent these thoughts are.
- 166 • Ask if they have a plan.
- 167 • Ask if they have a means to carry out the plan.
- 168 • Remove any access to means.
- 169 • Don’t swear secrecy—tell someone.
- 170 • Assure the person that getting help is OK and necessary.
- 171 • Seek their cooperation: “Let’s keep you safe for now until you’re able to see someone.”

172

173 You cannot do it alone, but accompany the person as they:

- 174 • Visit a hospital emergency room.
- 175 • Seek mental health services.
- 176 • See an understanding friend, family member, or relative.
- 177 • Seek a teacher, counselor, family doctor, or member of the clergy as a first contact.
- 178 • Call a local or national crisis line.

179

180 Immediate crisis resources:

- 181 • The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 800-273-8255 (available 24 hours, also available for
182 Spanish and the hearing-impaired).

- 183 • You can also access the Crisis Text Line by texting HELLO to 741741 or through an online chat at
184 www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.
- 185 • Dial 988 for emergency assistance from the National Crisis Helpline.²³

186

187 **Receiving and Giving Help**

188 “The Church,” Martin Luther once wrote, “is the inn and the infirmary for those who are sick and in need
189 of being made well.”²⁴ Luther’s image of the church as a hospital reminds us of who we are—a
190 community of vulnerable people in need of help; we live by the hope of the gospel and are a community
191 of healing. At the same time vulnerable and healed, we are freed for a life of receiving and giving help.
192 In the mutual bearing of burdens, we learn to be people who are willing to ask for healing and to
193 provide it.

194

195 If you are a person who experiences suicidal thoughts you should know that our church community
196 expects, prays, and pleads for you to reach out for help. Talk to someone. Don’t bear your hidden pain
197 by yourself. The notion is all too common that you should tough it out and “go it alone.” Much of U.S.
198 culture teaches that we are not supposed to be vulnerable. When we are hurting, it teaches that we
199 should conceal it and handle things on our own. In the church, however, we admit that we all share the
200 “need of being made well.” There is no shame in having suicidal thoughts or asking for help. Indeed,
201 when life’s difficulties and disappointments threaten to overwhelm the desire to live, you are urged and
202 invited to talk with trusted others and draw upon their strength.

203

204 By the same token, when a loved one talks to us of suicide or we sense that something is seriously
205 amiss, we are called to be our sibling’s keeper. The experience may be frightening, and we may want to
206 deny or minimize the suicidal communication. We may want to shy away because we feel unprepared to
207 help someone with suicidal thoughts or think we may make matters worse. Yet our responsibility is to
208 listen, encourage the person to talk, and find them appropriate help.²⁵ Beyond the crisis situation, we
209 will want that person to hear the healing comfort of the gospel and receive the care of the congregation.
210 That care might, for example, involve creating an ongoing support network for the person and their
211 family or training members in how to provide mental health first aid.

212

213 Pastors have unique opportunities to minister with suicidal people, in part because many people are
214 more willing to approach clergy than other caregivers. Chaplains in hospitals and nursing homes,
215 colleges and universities, the military, and prisons, as well as counselors in church agencies, are called
216 upon to counsel people experiencing suicidal thoughts. Besides safety, the primary concern is to explore
217 the suffering that motivates the person’s thoughts and behavior and to comfort the person in their
218 anguish.

219

220 Drawing upon pastoral wisdom, pastors may seek to discern to what extent the person’s suffering is
221 spiritual or has other sources. They will refer (and often accompany) suicidal people to professional
222 health care and mental health providers for other forms of intervention and assistance. The pastoral
223 response will bring God’s word to bear on the situation with compassion, competence, and willingness
224 to collaborate with other care providers.

225

226 When a suicide does occur, congregations and pastors minister to the bereaved and deceased through
227 Christian burial and loving support. Funerals are not occasions to condemn or idealize an act of suicide.
228 Rather, they are times to proclaim that suicide and death itself do not place one beyond the communion

229 of saints. Because of Christ’s death and resurrection for us, we entrust a troubled person to God’s love
230 and mercy with the promise that “whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s” (Romans 14:8).
231 Pastors and congregational leaders need to offer intentional and sensitive care—best practices²⁶—for
232 the congregation, friends, family, and loved ones of the deceased for some time. Part of that care is to
233 encourage efforts to become part of a support group for survivors.²⁷

234

235 **Preparing to act for prevention**

236 Suicide prevention is broader than responding to a crisis situation. Prevention efforts aim to reduce or
237 reverse risk factors and to enhance protective factors before vulnerable people reach the point of
238 danger. They often combine with efforts to prevent drug and alcohol abuse as well as violence.²⁸

239 Proactive efforts include:

- 240 • Administering effective and appropriate clinical care for mental, physical, and substance-abuse
241 disorders.
- 242 • Providing easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for those seeking help.
- 243 • Restricting access to highly lethal methods of suicide.
- 244 • Developing family and community support groups.
- 245 • Seeking support from ongoing medical and mental health care relationships.
- 246 • Learning skills in problem-solving, conflict resolution, and de-escalating disputes.
- 247 • Teaching cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation
248 instincts.
- 249 • Training others how to help someone.²⁹

250

251 What more can we do in our congregations and communities to prevent suicide? The following ideas are
252 intended to stimulate discussion, reflection, and action:

253

254 Let us first recognize that the day-to-day preaching, teaching, and living of the Christian faith in
255 congregations contribute to suicide prevention in indirect yet significant ways. In the community of the
256 baptized, we come to know that we belong to God and to one another. There we give thanks to God for
257 life and for our new life in Christ, and we are empowered to persevere during adversities and to hope in
258 God when all else fails. We learn that human life is a sacred trust from God and that “deliberately
259 destroying life created in the image of God is contrary to our Christian conscience.”³⁰ We are equipped
260 to empathize with others in their suffering and joy and are prepared to act for their well-being. We are
261 given a reason to live, forgiveness to start anew, and confidence that neither life nor death can separate
262 us from “the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8: 38). How, we might ask, do we do such
263 ministry better?

264

265 When discussing love for others in confirmation classes, could we talk about what to do if a friend hints
266 at suicide? How does our congregation ensure that all members are known and none is invisible? How
267 do we become more attentive to changes in a person’s participation that may indicate personal distress
268 or depression? How do we strengthen the bonds of community with people going through stressful
269 periods in their lives and with older people living alone so they do not feel isolated and abandoned?
270 Might we begin or further develop congregational health ministries, such as a parish nurse program or
271 Stephen Ministry?³¹

272

273 How do we honor the vocations of members who are social workers, psychologists, doctors, nurses,
274 counselors, and other caregivers, and who often work with people contemplating suicide? How do we

275 find ways to assure anyone caring for or helping someone with suicidal thoughts that they are not
276 responsible when “saving a life” does not happen? We also can draw upon wisdom from these
277 caregivers, and upon survivors and advocates for suicide prevention, to educate other members about
278 suicide. How can these become part of our congregational life?
279

280 What in our community, we should ask, are the cultural and social dynamics that lead to isolation and
281 hopelessness? How do we address them? What are the resources in our community to respond to
282 suicidal behavior? Do members know how to access them? Can we join with other churches and
283 community groups to ensure that adequate treatment resources are available? What about our schools?
284 Is suicide prevention part of their programs that focus on mental health, substance abuse, aggressive
285 behavior, and coping skills? Are there peer-counseling or ministry programs in our schools and
286 congregations?³²

287 For decades, over half of U.S. suicide deaths involved firearms. Up to 70% of military and veteran suicide
288 deaths are due to self-inflicted firearm injuries. Often, gun-related deaths in homes with firearms
289 involve someone other than the gun owner.³³ Can we ask whether our homes are really safer with guns
290 in them? Congregations also can be a part of community efforts to improve firearm safety practices,
291 such as providing information on safely storing firearms inside and outside the home.³⁴ Have these
292 concerns been approached in our congregations?
293

294 How do we counter the stigma often associated with mental illness? Should not the crucial role of
295 untreated depression in suicidal behavior be an important consideration in debates on insurance
296 coverage for mental illnesses? What might we do as citizens to promote accessible and affordable
297 mental health services to enable all people at risk for suicide to obtain needed substance-abuse
298 treatment services?³⁵
299

300 We can encourage, use, and learn from suicide prevention programs in our social ministry organizations
301 and at our colleges and universities. What, we should ask, could our church-related day schools do to
302 prevent suicide? How are our seminaries preparing pastors to minister with people who have attempted
303 suicide or harbor serious suicidal thoughts? Should suicide prevention be part of continuing education
304 for rostered people? Could we create opportunities at events for youth, women, and men, and in our
305 camping and retreat programs, to learn about suicide and its prevention?
306

307 **Conclusion**

308 In adopting this message on behalf of the whole ELCA, the Church Council urges the churchwide office
309 and the synods to support members, congregations, and affiliated institutions in their efforts to prevent
310 suicide. It directs the governing bodies of churchwide units to evaluate their programs in light of this
311 message. It calls upon this church’s educational and advocacy programs to make suicide prevention an
312 important concern in their ministries. It directs the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations team in the
313 Office of the Presiding Bishop to share this message with churches with whom we are in full communion
314 and to express our willingness to work with them to prevent suicide. The Church Council affirms and
315 encourages all who work toward a comprehensive national strategy for suicide prevention.
316

317 Often, as members of this church, we go in peace from worship to serve the Lord in the trials and joys of
318 the coming days, hearing words such as this benediction: “The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord
319 make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you

320 peace.” “Amen,” we reply. We are not alone, abandoned, or without hope. The Lord’s name is
321 “‘Emmanuel,’ which means, ‘God is with us’” (Matthew 1:23).

322

323 Resources

324

325 National Suicide Prevention Organizations (as of 2021)

326

- 327 • **American Association of Suicidology (AAS)** | Phone: 202-237-2280 | Email:
328 info@suicidology.org | Website: www.suicidology.org
- 329 • **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)** | Phone: 888-333-2377 (toll-free) |
330 Phone: 212-363-3500 | Email: info@afsp.org | Website: www.afsp.org
- 331 • **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance** | Phone: 800-826-3632 (toll-free) | Fax: 312-642-
332 7243 | Website: www.dbsalliance.org
- 333 • **National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention** | Phone: [need phone #] | Website:
334 theactionalliance.org/about-us
- 335 • **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)** | Phone: 800-950-6264 (toll-free) | Phone: 703-
336 524-7600 | Website: www.nami.org
- 337 • **National Center for Injury Prevention and Control** | Division of Violence Prevention, Centers
338 for Disease Control and Prevention | Phone: 770-488-4362 | Email: ohcinfo@cdc.gov |
339 Website: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/ncipchm.htm
- 340 • **National Council on Suicide Prevention** | Phone: [need phone #] | Website: www.thencsp.org
- 341 • **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)** | Phone: 301-443-4513 | Email:
342 nimhinfo@nih.gov | Website: www.nimh.nih.gov
- 343 • **National Mental Health Association (NMHA)** | Phone: 800-969-NMHA (toll-free) | Phone:
344 703-684-7722 | Website: www.nmha.org
- 345 • **Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)** | Email: save@save.org | Website:
346 www.save.org
- 347 • **Suicide Prevention Ministry** | Phone: [Phone #] | Website: suicidepreventionministry.org
- 348 • **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program** | Phone: 303-429-3530 | Email:
349 ask4help@yellowribbon.org | Website: www.yellowribbon.org
- 350 • Miscellaneous websites with useful links: **Suicide Prevention Resource Center**, resources by
351 state (www.sprc.org/states); **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** resources for
352 underrepresented communities ([afsp.org/mental-health-resources-for-underrepresented-](http://afsp.org/mental-health-resources-for-underrepresented-communities)
353 [communities](http://afsp.org/mental-health-resources-for-underrepresented-communities)) and LGBTQ suicide prevention ([afsp.org/stronger-communities-lgbtq-suicide-](http://afsp.org/stronger-communities-lgbtq-suicide-prevention)
354 [prevention](http://afsp.org/stronger-communities-lgbtq-suicide-prevention)); **Lutheran Services in America** (www.lutheranservices.org).

355 Note: Most state health or disease control and prevention departments also have resources on suicide
356 prevention and mental health.

357

358

359 [Design: Back Page]

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361

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366

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368 WITH SOY-BASED INKS ISBN 6-0001-1792-2 [Design: are both of these still true?]

369 Endnotes

¹ In 2019 suicide deaths numbered 47,511. See “Leading Cause of Death in the United States,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed Sept. 28, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/leading-causes-of-death.htm>

² See Pamela L. Owens, Kimberly W. McDermott, Rachel N. Lipari, et al., “Emergency Department Visits Related to Suicide Ideation or Suicide Attempt, 2008-2017,” Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb263-Suicide-ED-Visits-2008-2017.pdf. From 1999 to 2019, the national suicide rate increased 32%—from 10.5 to 13.9 per 100,000 individuals, with an average of 130 suicides each day in 2019. See Holly Hedegaard, Sally C. Curtin, and Margaret Warner, “Suicide Mortality in the United States, 1999-2019,” National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief, no. 398 (DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc:101761](https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc:101761)). It should be noted that suicide deaths sometimes go unreported for reasons of concealment and insurance and that some accidents are camouflaged suicides.

³ “Leading causes...” <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/leading-causes-of-death.htm>

⁴ William Feigelman, Julie Cerel, John L. McIntosh, et al., “Suicide Exposures and Bereavement Among American Adults: Evidence From the 2016 General Social Survey,” *Journal of Affective Disorders* (February 2018): 1-6 (DOI: [10.1016/j.jad.2017.09.056](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2017.09.056)).

⁵ See “Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results From the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health,” Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, HHS publication no. PEP20-07-01-001, NSDUH Series H-55, accessed Aug. 25, 2021, www.samhsa.gov/data.

⁶ See Asha Z. Ivey-Stephenson, Zewditu Demissie, Alexander E. Crosby, et al., “Suicidal Ideation and Behaviors Among High School Students—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2019,” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, August 2020, www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/su/su6901a6.htm?s_cid=su6901a6_w (DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su6901a6](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su6901a6)). It should be added that many of these individuals go untreated due to stigma, lack of social support, and disparities in access to mental health care.

⁷ This is true in both governmental and private sectors. The U.S. Congress declared suicide prevention a national priority in the late 1990s (U.S. Senate Resolution #84, May 6, 1997, and U.S. House of Representatives Resolution #212, Oct. 9, 1998). Along with others, ELCA members Elsie and Jerry Weyrauch, who lost their daughter Terri to suicide, led grassroots efforts through the Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network USA (SPAN USA—which has since merged with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) to create congressional and executive branch awareness of suicide (obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/champions/suicide-prevention/the-suicide-prevention-action-network-%28span-usa%29). Along with other advocacy groups, SPAN USA’s efforts helped spur the first “Surgeon

General’s Call to Action to Prevent Suicide,” in 1999 (sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/surgeoncall.pdf). It also helped frame the first U.S. National Suicide Prevention Strategy in 2001 (pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20669520/).

In 2021, an updated “Surgeon General’s Call to Action” focused on implementing what we know about suicide prevention (www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sprc-call-to-action.pdf). The National Strategy also was updated in 2012 (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23136686).

⁸ Psychotherapies aimed at addressing suicidal thoughts and behaviors can reduce reattempts and even brief interventions that support continuity of care and organize support for the individual are beneficial. See “Brief Suicide Intervention Preventions in Acute Care Settings May Reduce Subsequent Suicide Attempts,” National Institute of Mental Health, Sept. 16, 2020, www.nimh.nih.gov/news/research-highlights/2020/brief-suicide-prevention-interventions-in-acute-care-settings-may-reduce-subsequent-suicide-attempts. Further, research is showing that interventions that build healthier family and peer relationships, as well as efforts that support social connections to schools and other community organizations in youth, reduce the risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors in young adulthood. See “Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicidetechnicalpackage.pdf.

⁹ These statistics come from recent surgeons general’s reports and accompanying documents as well as from suicide prevention organizations listed at the end of this message. Such information relies on official United States data. Contact or visit the web pages of these organizations for updated data.

¹⁰ Between 1999 and 2019, suicide rates have trended upward for both men and women (10.5 to 13.9 per 100,000 people). Death by suicide has been consistently higher among men (17.9-22.4 per 100,000) than women (4.0-6.0 per 100,000).

¹¹ See “Suicide,” National Institutes of Mental Health, accessed June 30, 2021, www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See the Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>.

¹⁵ See “What the Data Says About Gun Deaths in the U.S.,” Pew Research Center, Aug. 16, 2019, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/16/what-the-data-says-about-gun-deaths-in-the-u-s/.

¹⁶ This summary of risk factors draws especially from research findings of the National Institute of Mental Health and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. For more information on risk factors, contact or visit the websites of these and other organizations listed at the end of this message.

¹⁷ See Deborah M. Stone, Thomas R. Simon, Katherine A. Fowler, et al., “Vital Signs: Trends in State Suicide Rates—United States, 1999-2016 and Circumstances Contributing to Suicide—27 States,” Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, June 8, 2018 (DOI: dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6722a1).

¹⁸ Ibid. The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years.

¹⁹ See “Adverse Childhood Experiences, Overdose, and Suicide,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/injury/priority/index.html.

²⁰ See Madelyn S. Gould and Alison M. Lake, “The Contagion of Suicidal Behavior,” National Center for Biotechnology Information, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207262/.

²¹ For more information concerning medical depression, visit the websites of the organizations listed at the end of this message.

²² Research indicates that repeated attempts reduce the fear of dying and increase tolerance for pain, resulting in greater likelihood of successive attempts. See Kimberly A. Van Orden, Tracy K. Witte, Kelly C. Cukrowicz, et al., “The Interpersonal Theory of Suicide,” *Psychological Review* (April 2010): 575-600.

²³ The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designated 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on July 16, 2020. The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 was signed into law on Oct. 17, 2020, requiring phone service providers to transition to 988. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline took effect on July 16, 2022. A national transition period is underway toward complete national activation.

²⁴ See Martin Luther, “Lectures on Romans,” *Luther’s Works (LW)*, vol. 25, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972): 263.

²⁵ A handy reference can be created from the “helpcard” on page [xx, if design makes possible]. Congregations are encouraged to copy this card for use as a bulletin insert or to post it on a bulletin board.

²⁶ For best practices for messaging about suicide prevention in the aftermath of a suicide death in the community, see Timothy Doty and Sally Spencer-Thomas, “The Role of Faith Communities in Suicide Prevention: A Guidebook for Faith Leaders,” sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/2010FaithLeaderGuideBookweb.pdf, or David Litts, “After a Suicide: Recommendations for Religious Practices & Other Public Memorial Observances,” sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/aftersuicide.pdf. These resources include recommendations for religious services and other public memorial observances.

²⁷ The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) maintains a current national directory of survivor support groups (afsp.org/find-a-support-group). “Survivor” refers to anyone whose loved ones have completed suicide. Detailing the church’s vital ministry for survivors lies beyond the scope of this message. However, a few helpful resources include: Corrine Chilstrom’s *Andrew, You Died Too Soon: A Family Experience of Grieving and Living Again* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993) and Iris Bolton and Curtis Mitchell’s *My Son ... My Son ... A Guide to Healing After Death, Loss, or Suicide* (Atlanta: Bolton Press, 1996).

²⁸ See the ELCA social message “Community Violence” (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1994), www.elca.org/socialmessages. Other acts of violence are sometimes connected with the self-violence of suicide. The message addresses our society’s “atmosphere of violence,” of which suicide is part.

²⁹ For instance, the national coalition of Suicide Prevention Ministry offers trainings to congregations, both in person and virtual (www.suicidepreventionministry.org).

³⁰ See the ELCA social message “End-of-life Decisions” (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1992), 4, www.elca.org/socialmessages. The message summarizes a Christian perspective on death and dying (page 2) and offers guidance for difficult decisions at the end of life.

³¹ Suicide Prevention Ministry has developed a program model for congregations; visit www.suicidepreventionministry.org. Information on Stephen Ministries can be found at www.stephenministries.com, or phone 312-428-2600.

³² For information on peer ministry resources, adult training, youth retreats, camps, and support, email the Ministry Training Leadership Center (www.peerministry.org) at peermin@peerministry.org.

³³ See “Learn the Facts,” American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, www.afsp.org.

³⁴ Faith communities can become aware of local laws and resources for temporary storage of firearms due to suicide risk, as well as risk related to substance use and domestic violence (these three problems often co-occur). See the community page at Prevent Firearms Suicide, preventfirearmsuicide.efsgv.org/interventions/community/. Faith community leaders should also be

aware of ERPO (Extreme Risk Protection Order) laws; see “Extreme Risk Protection Orders,” Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, [giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/who-can-have-a-gun/extreme-risk-protection-orders/](https://www.giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/who-can-have-a-gun/extreme-risk-protection-orders/).

³⁵ See the ELCA social statement *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2003), www.elca.org/socialstatements.

Assessment after the removal of Vision & Expectations

Report to the ELCA Church Council
Nov. 2021

Rev. Dr. Philip C. Hirsch
Executive Director, Christian Community & Leadership



VISION AND EXPECTATIONS



Brief Background

- In March 2020, the ELCA Church Council voted to remove Vision & Expectations from use
- The council asked for regular updates on the assessment of the need for a document in its place
- In response to this request Bishops were surveyed twice in 2021 on the need for another document.

Some of what we have been hearing....

Suggestions to check
other church body code
of ethics

Lack of bandwidth to
create another
document

An aspirational
document would be
difficult to keep from
being disciplinary

Definitions &
Guidelines is adequate
for discipline

Additional documents
create confusion

Hard to tell if another
document is needed

Conclusions and Recommendation

- There is still no clear purpose for the writing of a new document.
- There seems to be less interest since *Definitions and Guidelines* was updated.
- Christian Community and Leadership has no directive for writing at this time. Recommend suspending this project until a need arises.

VISION
AND
EXPECTATIONS



Chicago, Illinois

or

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Social Policy Resolutions (SPRs) to consider for Archive in 2022

Explanation: ELCA Policies and Procedures calls for review of SPRs after 25 years of service to the ELCA. Since SPRs are adopted in a particular social context, this planned review of their relevance enables subsequent generations of church leaders to consider whether a resolution should continue to represent the policy of the ELCA. The director for theological ethics will bring recommendations to the Church Council in the spring before a churchwide assembly, after inviting input from ELCA leaders and staff. Church Council then adopts a list of SPRs for recommendation to the churchwide assembly for action *en bloc*. Those that are archived are kept for historical purposes but no longer represent church policy.

The candidates for consideration in 2022 are:

Name	Yr Adopted	Call No	Hyperlink - English	Notes
Abortion	1995	CC95.11.79	Abortion SPR 1995	-
African Development Foundation	1995	CA95.97.66	African Development Foundation SPR 1995	-
Aid to Cuba	1995	CA95.07.63	Aid to Cuba SPR 1995	-
Care of Creation	1995	CA95.0526a	Care of Creation SPR 1995	-
Election Reform	1995	CA95.07.67	US Election Campaign Finance Reform SPR 1995	-
Energy Audits	1995	CA95.05.26b	Environment- Energy Audits SPR 1995	-
Extremist Groups	1995	CA95.03.5	Extremist Groups SPR 1995	-
Family Farms	1995	CA95.05.44	Family Farms SPR 1995	-
Guatemala	1995	CA95.03.7	Guatemala SPR 1995	-
US Army School	1995	CA95.03.6	US Army Schools of the Americas SPR 1995	-
Violence Against Women	1995	CA95.07.62	Violence Against Women SPR 1995	-
Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People	1995	CA95.06.50	Welcoming Gay and Lesbian People SPR 1995	-
Resolution on Jerusalem	1996	CC96.04.12	Resolution on Jerusalem SPR 1996	-
Abortion	1997	CA97.06.30	Abortion SPR 1997	-
Abortion Insurance	1997	CC97.04.31	Abortion Insurance SPR 1997	-
American Indian Alaskan	1997	CA97.05.17	American Indian and Alaskan Native Strategic Plan SPR 1997	-
Campaign Jubilee	1997	CA97.06.47	Campaign Jubilee 2000 SPR 1997	-
Fair Labor Employment	1997	CA97.06.29	Fair Labor Practices - Employment SPR 1997	-
Landmines	1997	CA97.02.3	Landmines SPR 1997	-
Religious Persecution	1997	CA97.06.48	Religious Persecution SPR 1997	-

**THE STRATEGY TOWARDS AUTHENTIC DIVERSITY ADVISORY TEAM
PROGRESS REPORT
Fall 2021**

The Authentic Diversity Advisory Team (ADAT) was formed in 2020. Many of the Team's members also developed the Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity (STAD) document adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2019. The team meets to prioritize areas of the Authentic Diversity Report and Recommendations for engagement with churchwide staff and to create visibility and spaces for the strategy within the synods. Since the Spring of 2021, the team continues to meet virtually to share updates from their synods and to engage with churchwide staff. The following are a few highlights of work underway.

Responding to the Journal of Lutheran Ethics (JLE)

Journal of Lutheran Ethics (JLE) is a free, monthly, ecclesial online publication living out the Lutheran tradition of addressing social issues theologically, using the resources of historical, theological, and ethical tradition, biblical interpretation, and social sciences.

The publication is a bridge between the academic study of Christianity and the contemporary life of the Church, JLE is a meeting place for scholars and professors, seminary and university students, pastors and bishops, and theologically informed lay persons, advocates, and activists.

In February of 2021, the Authentic Diversity Advisory Team (ADAT) met with editor of the Journal of Lutheran Ethics (JLE) and ELCA Churchwide staff to address a published article critiquing the Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity (STAD) written by Rev. Dr. Ted Peters, Emeritus Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. The article published in the February 2021, Journal of Lutheran Ethics issue [Overcoming ELCA Racism with Authentic Diversity - Journal of Lutheran Ethics](#) created much controversy and social media critique. At the invitation of the Authentic Diversity Advisory Team a meeting with JLE and Churchwide staff was held in March. The meeting resulted in the publication of a Letter to the Editor and a response to the "Overcoming ELCA Racism with Authentic Diversity" article in the April 2021 issue of JLE.

In his article, Dr. Peters critiqued the Authentic Diversity Strategy and called for its redrafting. The Advisory Team's Letter to the Editor strongly challenged the author's motive for writing such a critique, pointing out the many flaws in its premise. To quote directly from the Team's letter: "In our judgment, [Peters'] reasoning was poorly presented; full of false and often contradictory arguments; and showed little, if any, scholarly research into the viewpoints of our document."

The Rev. Priscilla Austin, a member of the Advisory Team, co-wrote a separate, more detailed response, denouncing even more forcefully the erroneous assumptions of Dr. Peters' article. She points out that: "Peters writes as though there were few concrete, actionable suggestions contained within STAD. He repeatedly calls for practical changes and laments self-flagellation and centering white people's feelings, but only once in 53 paragraphs (paragraph 37) does he refer to the concrete recommendations found on pp. 11-16 of STAD."

Both the Letter and the Clarifying Response called the editorial board of the JLE to task for its lack of due diligence in its failure to do verify the accuracy of the original article, and the lack of diversity in the authors who contributed to an issue addressing diversity.

All the referenced articles are available through the following links:

The [Letter from the ELCA Authentic Diversity Advisory Team - Journal of Lutheran Ethics](#) along with a [A Clarifying Response about the ELCA Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity - Journal of Lutheran Ethics](#) written by Rev. Priscilla Austin and Rev. Elizabeth Rawlings were published in the April/May edition of the Journal of Lutheran Ethics. Also in that issues, an [Editor's response](#) was written by JLE editor Dr. Jennifer Hockenbery, apologizing for the lack of due diligence and promising to do better going forward. The Rev. Dr. Ted Peters also wrote an apology in another publication, [Apologies to the authentic diversity advisory team - Peters - 2021 - Dialog - Wiley Online Library](#).

The amount of time spent addressing this issue distracted the Team from existing work, not to mention the feeling of disappointment felt by the Team in the apparent dismissiveness of our efforts to date.

Conference of Bishops

As part of the 2021 new bishops' orientation, Rev. Albert Starr, Rev. Abraham Allende the co-conveners of the Advisory Team along with Judith Roberts provided an on overview of the STAD. The presentation created visibility and spaces for engagement of the strategies outlined in the Authentic Diversity document, urging them to push for contextualizing the Strategy within their respective synods, to champion this work, and to be intentional about creating synod infrastructures, thereby sustaining the efforts of the strategy through transitions in leadership.

Minnesota Area Synod Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity

Members of the ADAT are encouraged to serve as a resource to synod bishops in implementing the STAD within their own synod. ADAT members Cheryl Chatman and Kelly Sherman-Conroy of the Minnesota Area Synod have periodically been engaged with Synod over the past couple of years regarding the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity. They have met separately with Bishop Ann Svennungsen to specifically discuss actions the synod is taking in response to the recommendations in the plan. In addition, they have coordinated efforts with Brenda Blackhawk, the synod's Congregational Organizer of Racial Justice. She convenes gatherings for leaders of color in the synod. Cheryl & Kelly hosted a virtual presentation and facilitated a discussion with leaders on the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity. Brenda and synod staff have developed a 7-page chart of all the recommendations from the strategy by themes, and then listed things the synod was currently doing, along with ideas for initiation and implementation of the recommendations. The next part of the plan is to take this chart to the leaders of color for their information and input. Their responses and feedback will be shared with the synod staff, with hopes of developing specific strategies to prioritize and initiate additional activities, programs, and opportunities.

The current roster of the ADAT members is below:

Authentic Diversity Advisory Team Members

The Rev. Abraham D. Allende <i>Bishop Emeritus, Northeastern Ohio Synod</i>	Ms. Jennifer DeLeon <i>Director for Justice, Women of the ELCA</i>
The Rev. Priscilla Austin <i>Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church Seattle. WA</i>	Ms. Grace El-Yateem <i>The Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH)</i>
Ms. Cheryl Chatman <i>Retired – Executive VP, Dean of Diversity Concordia University, St. Paul, MN</i>	Mr. Elias Haroun <i>The Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage (ALAMEH)</i>
The Rev. Joseph Castañeda Carrera <i>Assistant to the Bishop for Authentic Diversity and Ethnic-Specific Ministries Southwestern California Synod</i>	The Rev. Dr. Surekha Nelavala <i>Pastor, Global Peace & Beloved Community Adjunct Professor, Trinity Lutheran Seminary</i>
Kelly Sherman Conroy, Ph. D. <i>Secretary, American Indian/Alaska Native Lutheran Association.</i>	The Rev. Dr. Moses Penumaka <i>Director of Theological Education For Emerging Ministries TEEM</i>
The Rev. Patricia Davenport <i>Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod</i>	The Rev. Lamont A. Wells <i>President, African Descent Lutheran Association</i>

Churchwide staff responsible for convening the table include, Rev. Albert Starr, Director for Multiethnic Ministries, Judith E.B. Roberts, Sr. Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Share Green, staff support.

STAD CHURCHWIDE STAFF UPDATES Fall 2021

Recommendations for Theological Education and Leadership

In Spring 2021 in a consultation with the STAD Advisory Table, Rev. Marris Krey, Director, Fund for Leader/Mission Funding Director, Rev, Dr. Javier Goitia prepared the following action responses to the STAD:

6. The churchwide organization recommit monies from the Fund for Leaders capital campaign to the Educational Grant Program (EGP) to ensure that such grants are intentionally and appropriately distributed to the communities of color for which they are intended.

Working with the Program Director for African Descent Ministries and the African Descent Strategy Team – currently there are three ELCA African American and/or African Descent (3 at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago; 1 at Lutheran Theological Seminary) PhD students in our ELCA seminary system.

The Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) Home Area is actively gathering information about ELCA African American and/or African Descent PhD students enrolled in non-ELCA seminaries. Moving forward, CCL will expand the tracking to include students representing all of the ethnic specific communities.

CCL has an Educational Grant Program (EGP) Graduate Scholarship to support ethnic-specific, LGBTQIA, and differently abled graduate (PhD, not DMin or MAR) ELCA students. This year (2021) this grant has \$28,000.00 to distribute among 7 students. CCL is identifying other financial resources to pair with the EGP Graduate Scholarship and rethinking the scholarship to better accompany and financially support students.

In addition, an ELCA seminaries ethnic-specific faculty meeting is in the planning phase for 2022. The event is geared towards networking and promotion of actions related to the STAD and other diversity, equity and inclusion related documents. ELCA Seminary Leaders are planning and sponsoring an ethnic-specific faculty retreat to be held in 2022.

To recommendation under Theological Education and Leadership of the STAD:

11. "The churchwide organization should strategically disburse Fund for Leaders scholarships to enhance the capacity of people of color who are TEEM candidates, non-English speakers, part-time students, or seminary students. It should provide communities of color with opportunities for student leadership and reinstate the Horizon Internship Program so that students of color can train in their own communities"

The following actions will be taken by the Fund for Leaders (FFL):

New scholarship guidelines for the 2022-2023 year will include the following changes:

- Removing "full-time" status as a requirement for the Mission Developer scholarship
- Allowing Synod, Congregation, and Mission Developer scholarship funds to support students who are on full or part-time internship
- Creating a new TEEM scholarship which will support a minimum of 30 TEEM students for the 2022-2023 academic year, with hopes to grow the number of TEEM students supported each year.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, FFL authorized a pilot project allowing the Metro NY Synod to use their synod FFL funds to pay the majority of an intern's stipend. FFL is actively exploring how it can support internship sites--similar to the Horizon Internship program. Conversations are in the early planning phases among FFL staff and FFL Leadership Table (at Oct 25/26 meeting).

Recommendations for Healing

1. Awareness Raising awareness calls us to: Host learning opportunities for a deeper understanding of the systemic and root causes of historical and contemporary racism and internalized racial oppression.

Resource development is underway for the congregational study resource to the [Slavery Apology Explanation.pdf \(elca.org\)](#) known as Declaration to People of African Descent. The

declaration calls the ELCA to exam the complicity of the church in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and legacy of U.S. racism. The congregational resource is currently under development and will be released by the spring of 2022. Staff leads: Sr. Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Director for Racial Justice.

In addition, the [Declaration to American Indian Alaska Native.pdf \(elca.org\)](#) was approved during a special CC meeting on Sept. 2021. This Declaration to American Indian and Alaska Native People is presented as part of the implementation to the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly mandate: “To repudiate explicitly and clearly the European-derived doctrine of discovery as an example of the ‘improper mixing of the power of the church and the power of the sword’ (Augsburg Confession Article XXVIII, Latin text), and to acknowledge and repent from this church’s complicity in the evils of colonialism in the Americas, which continue to harm tribal governments and individual tribal members.” Staff leads: Desk Director for American Indian and Alaska Natives, Director for Theological Diversity and Engagement & Director for Racial Justice.

On January 17, 2022, the ELCA will join the growing national movement towards the important work of racial healing. Launched by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, [National Day of Racial Healing 2021 – Heal Our Communities](#). The National Day of Racial Healing is a time for contemplation and collective action on #HowWeHeal from the effects of racism. Following the birthday observation of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr--the day serves as an opportunity to bring All people together in their common humanity to create collective action for racial justice. Currently, ELCA congregations and the Churchwide organization recognize June 17 as the commemoration of the Mother Emanuel 9 victims and a day to heal from racism. In 2019, the ELCA Church Council in the Declaration to People of African Descent also called for a date to heal from racism; both dates will be recognized annually by the ELCA. Staff leads: Sr. Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Executive for Worship, Director for Racial Justice & Social Media Manager.

Strategic Recommendations for Raising Awareness of the STAD

The following are activities within the Strategic Communications team:

The ELCA.org home page banner features the STAD document. The March 2021 “Worth a look” feature of document: ongoing since March 2021 and to the current.

A Justice Hub resource webpage is currently under development and will include a specific area for STAD resources. IT is currently working to revise the webpage content.

The document has also been featured in the Seeds Monthly email that reaches ~90,000 audience) and the Living Lutheran “Deeper Understandings” series [deeper understandings Archives - Living Lutheran](#) In addition, other stories related to racial justice and healing include. 1/21 ["My life matters" - Living Lutheran](#) and 2/21 [A song in the midst of suffering - Living Lutheran](#). A featured article on the *Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery* will be released in Nov. 2021. Staff leads: Sr. Director for Stat Comm and Manger, Member Communications Strategy.

Publishing House of the ELCA (1517 Media) Report

Submitted by Tim Blevins, President and CEO

The publishing activities of 1517 Media are intended to complement the goals of the ELCA churchwide organization. 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, and in the ministry as a whole, toward the fulfillment of this mission.

Congregational Resources

The profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on congregational life is well known, especially on activities that involve gathering in person for worship and faith formation. Over the past three months, we have begun to see a staged recovery from the double-digit percentage decline in sales of congregational resources experienced in our fiscal year ending June 30, 2021; however, we expect the recovery curve will continue more slowly over several years, especially as the fall season has brought a resurgence of COVID variants. Nevertheless, through our Augsburg Fortress (augsburgfortress.org) and Sparkhouse (wearesparkhouse.org) resources, we remain focused on and dedicated to helping congregations thrive in their worship and faith formation ministries.

WORSHIP: Our support for the ongoing and evolving renewal of worship continues. 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 shows signs of continuing even as in-person worship is beginning to resume. We have recently partnered with Church Publishing to develop versions of our web service subscriptions that serve the Episcopal Church USA.

One year ago, in Nov. 2020, *All Creation Sings: Evangelical Lutheran Worship Supplement* was released. The pace of congregational adoptions has increased in the past six months as churches discover new liturgies (one a bilingual Spanish and English communion service), 200 hymns and songs in diverse genres, and a timely, expanded prayer section. Enlarged Print, eBook, and Guitar editions are being released this fall. To support the Spanish language resources in *All Creation Sings*, new Spanish content is being added to sundaysandseasons.com, including the prayers of the day for the coming church year C.

Worship and prayer in the home has become increasingly valued during times of isolation. To our subscription devotionals, *Christ in Our Home* and *The Word in Season*, we have added seasonal offerings for Advent/Christmas and Lent as well as two new seasonal *Families Celebrate* activity card decks.

FAITH FORMATION: We are in the early stages of conducting comprehensive research into the rapidly evolving Christian education landscape, even as in-person learning begins to resume. We continue to expand our online platform, Sparkhouse Digital, which serves a variety of learning environments.

In May, we released a new curriculum with resources for children, youth, and adults based on Daniel Erlander's *Manna and Mercy* introduction to the Bible. In Sept., *Praying the Catechism* was published, a revised and expanded edition by Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada National Bishop Susan Johnson of her father Pr. Donald Johnson's beloved work.

Books

The pandemic-related challenges experienced in our congregational resources have been largely balanced by increased activity across the book publishing industry, which has coincided with our expanded program and investment to result in a highly successful fiscal year for our several book imprints.

Fortress Press (fortresspress.com), long a vital part of this church's publishing ministry, offers "scholarship that matters" for the church, the classroom, and the academy. Beaming Books (beamingbooks.com) addresses 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), grounded in a grace-based theological stance, aims 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. This sampling of recently published titles illustrates the range of subjects and authors in these categories.

FORTRESS PRESS

Black Lives Matter to Jesus, Marcus Jerkins

Death by Baptism, Frank Honeycutt

Liberating Luther: A Lutheran Theology from Latin America, Vitor Westhelle

Preaching the Headlines (Working Preacher series), Lisa Thompson

Toni Morrison's Spiritual Vision, Nadra Nittle

BEAMING BOOKS

The Girl with Big, Big Questions, Britney Winn Lee/ JacobSouva

Opening the Road: Victor Hugo Green and His Green Book, Keila Dawson/ Alleanna Harris

Our Father in Heaven: A Lord's Prayer Pop-up Book, Agostino Traini

BROADLEAF BOOKS

A More Perfect Union: A New Vision for Building the Beloved Community, Adam Russell Taylor

Steeped in Stories: Timeless Children's Novels to Refresh Our Tired Souls, Mitali Perkins

Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story, Julie Rodgers

United States of Grace, Lenny Duncan

You Can Talk to God like That: The Surprising Power of Lament, Abby Norman

1517 Media Organizational Matters

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION: The work of a cross-functional Intercultural Competency Team continues with activities such as monthly encounters with 1517 Media authors from Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. Although we recognize the distance we have yet to travel, we are grateful that more than one-third of the new hires for publishing and central services teams in the past six months are from these communities.

OFFICE MOVE: We have completed our move to 411 Washington Ave. in the Minneapolis North Loop. Gradually, we are learning new and flexible ways of doing our work both in person and remotely, with continued emphasis on everyone's health and safety. More than 15% of our workforce now lives in other parts of the country beyond the Twin Cities.

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 me at blevinst@1517.media.

1517 Media Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Tim Blevins, President and CEO

Meeting Dates: June 11, 2021 and a virtual vote not associated with a meeting

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.)*

Virtual Vote

Elected the following persons to serve as members of the Audit and Finance Committee, Acquisitions Committee and Board Development Committee:

1. Audit and Finance Committee, Acquisitions Committee: Brook Selassie
2. Board Development Committee: Joy Moore. (PH.21.01.01)

June 11, 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the minutes of the November 6, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting in open session.
(PH.21.06.02)

Executive Session actions

Approved the minutes of the November 6, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting in executive session.
(PH/ES.21.06.01)

Approved the 1517 Media 2022 operating budget as presented. (PH/ES.21.06.02)

Approved that Tim Blevins, the President and CEO of 1517 Media, be elected to a second four-year term as president and CEO, beginning effective September 1, 2022; and that the Chair of the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, prepare and execute a contract for the service of Tim Blevins as President and CEO for the period commencing September 1, 2022.
(PH/ES.21.06.03)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

1517 Media, Publishing House of the ELCA

Submitted by: Tim Blevins, President and CEO

Date of Board Meeting: November 5, 2021

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 11, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting in open session.
(PH.21.11.03)

Executive Session actions

Voted to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2021 Board of Trustees meetings in executive session.
(PH/ES.21.11.04)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

Portico Benefit Services (Portico) Report

Submitted by the Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO, [twitter.com/@RevJeffThiemann](https://twitter.com/RevJeffThiemann)

Greetings. As you know, the world is changing fast, and the pandemic has only amplified that sense of instability. In this 3-min. [video](#), I describe Portico’s ongoing strategic focus on growth across the whole of the ELCA and some implications for our ministry together.

Learning Highlights

Benefit	Outcomes	Learning
<p>Chronic joint pain is one of our costliest chronic conditions. We introduced SWORD Health in March to help members address this kind of pain more easily and with less invasive and costly interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49% of Portico participants report less pain by week 12 • 62% report reduction in perceived need for surgery • 60% report reduction in use of prescription and over-the-counter medications 	<p>Members are outspoken about their satisfaction. Example: “I knew I needed therapy because my pain was getting worse, but I was afraid to go in person due to the pandemic. I am no longer limping like I was, which has been great for my self-esteem!”</p>
<p>Also in March, we introduced BurnAlong online health and fitness classes as a multi-dimensional alternative to the more limited, and now discontinued, fitness center reimbursement program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,089 enrolled as of Aug. 31 • 63% of classes taken were fitness-related, 17% in emotional well-being (stress relief, mindfulness, etc.), 20% in specialty categories (self-defense, senior focus, etc.) 	<p>Enrollment already exceeds the roughly 600 who used the fitness center reimbursement. And members appreciate the multi-dimensional offerings; courses beyond fitness are chosen more than 35% of the time.</p>
<p>In May, we introduced Being Here, a podcast series featuring ELCA leaders, to complement video content offered to ELCA-Primary health plan members on the Being wellness platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 4 months, the podcast series earned as many listeners as comparable Being video courses in 18 months • 3 more episodes planned 	<p>Audio-only formats free members from their screens and allow them to listen while doing other things, making them a powerful way to connect people to information.</p>
<p>Fall 2020, we replaced our unscreened retirement plan default fund with social purpose target date funds. We compared new member response to the default fund <i>before the switch</i> (Oct. 2019 – May 2020) <i>and after</i> (Oct. 2020 – May 2021).</p>	<p>8% more new members stayed in the social purpose default fund than the unscreened default fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63% stayed in default before switch • 71% stayed after switch 	<p>There is a strong tendency for members to remain in the default fund. Impact of the switch: 5% of new members landed in social purpose funds before the switch while 71% of new members landed in social purpose funds after the switch.</p>

Extending Service in the ELCA

Interest in our benefits program jumped significantly this year as ELCA social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities moved out of crisis mode and began to plan for the longer term. For details, view my [short video](#).

2022 Rate, Benefit, & Enrollment Changes

Portico's [2022 rate and benefit recommendations](#) were approved by our board of trustees in early August, including:

- The lowest baseline rate increase for ELCA-Primary health contributions in ten years;
- No change to ELCA-Primary deductibles, out-of-pocket limits, prescription drug cost-share, and coinsurance;
- A double-digit contribution *decrease* for retired and non-sponsored ELCA Medicare-Primary health benefit members, and a decrease for most organizations' sponsoring members with this coverage; and
- Two new benefits in response to member feedback — a new hearing aid benefit for ELCA-Primary adults, and voluntary (100% member paid) vision care services coverage through VSP for all sponsored members.

Bundling Humana's Medicare Advantage and prescription drug coverage in 2022 will create dramatic savings for ELCA Medicare-Primary members. Currently, we contract with Humana for the group Medicare Advantage benefit, and with Express Scripts, Inc. for the prescription drug benefit. The efficiency of bundling will create significant cost savings with minimal disruption expected. Note: Portico, as a member of a multi-denomination buying coalition, will continue to secure advantaged pricing through Express Scripts for its ELCA-Primary benefits members.

2022 Annual Enrollment details of note:

Timeframe — The window for sponsoring organizations to make their selection this year was earlier and shorter, Oct. 4 – 15, 2021. This summer, we began advising them to schedule any benefit discussions ahead of this window.

Deadline — Employers who don't select an ELCA-Primary health benefit option by their deadline will be assigned Silver+ paired with the Level A Health Savings Account (HSA) employer contribution for 2022. This approach makes better use of limited resources and avoids delaying members' enrollment. We chose this option because it provides greater choice (members can stay with Silver+ or choose Gold+) and the cost is often similar for the employer.

Resources — Benefit decisions are often made by a team of decision-makers. This summer, we provided EmployerLink users [new shareable resources](#) (behind sign-in) to help teams understand the differences between Gold+ and Silver+, Portico's benefits program, and how the program serves the ELCA community.

Governance Working Group

Staff and trustees reviewed the ELCA governing documents to provide comments for ELCA Church Council consideration and recommendation to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. We focused on clarifying which provisions apply to Separately Incorporated Ministries and defining 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.

Transition to Hybrid Workforce Model

Thanks to years of crisis planning and preparation, Portico was well-positioned to move its 170-person workforce online without disruption in 2020. Over time, Portico's cultural strengths helped us thrive in a remote environment. In early 2021, knowing our lease was up at year-end and the long-term cost savings of going hybrid could be substantial, we made the stewardship decision to adopt a hybrid work model. In January, we'll move into a significantly smaller office space designed to support our workforce priorities — balancing onsite and remote work, inviting collaboration, and remaining adaptable as we move through the hybrid learning curve. For more perspective, read our chief operating and financial officer's recent blog post, [Recognize Your Moment of Confluence](#).

Investment Market News

After two consecutive strong quarters in the equity markets, the third quarter took a bit of a pause. The S&P rose just 0.58% in Q3 due to Sept. losses (down 4.65%). Still, year to date the S&P 500 is up 15.92%, and this is on the heels of 2020 when it increased by 18.40%. Sept. was a good reminder that equity markets don't always go up. As financial questions or concerns emerge, please encourage both sponsored members and retirees to reach out to Portico's Financial Planners at 800.922.4896 for assistance.

Portico Benefit Services Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO

Meeting Dates: June 1, 2021 and August 5-6, 2021

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.)*

August 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Adopted resolution proposing the nomination of Todd J. Maloy as Trustee to be elected at the ELCA Church Council meeting in Nov. 2021 and directing staff to forward same to the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA.

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

August 2021 Resolutions/Actions

PLAN AMENDMENTS

ELCA Disability Benefits Plan – Effective January 1, 2022

Approved amendment to:

- Section 7.04 – Changing the coverage continuation option for Interim Pastors or Interim Rostered Laypersons whose enrolled status terminates.

ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan – Effective January 1, 2022

Approved amendments to:

- Section 3.01 – Add the new ELCA-Primary Copay Options as eligible for Health Flexible Spending Accounts
- Sections 4.06, 5.05 – Add additional flexibility due to Department of Labor guidance
- Section 9.01 – Eliminate the wellness dollar contributions to HSAs by the Plan

ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan – Effective January 1, 2022

Approved amendments to:

- Section 3.04 – On Leave from Call requirements to continue benefits
- Sections 5.01, 8.22 – Lump-Sum Survivor Benefit calculation changes

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Effective January 1, 2022

Approved amendments to:

- Sections 1.02, 2.01, 9.01, 9.04, 9.06, 10.02 – 10.07, 10.10, 10.11 – Adding the ELCA-Primary Select Copay Option and the Value Copay Options)
- Sections 12.02, 12.05 – 12.08, 12.14 – Health benefits clarifications in accordance with BCBS requests
- Sections 14.01 – 14.08 – Health Support Program updates
- Sections 15.01 – 15.07 – Prescription benefit changes for the new ELCA-Select Copay Options and Express Script guidance
- Sections 17.13, 17.14, 21.01 – 21.06 – Vision Care Services update of coverage options and benefits
- Sections 20.11, 20.13 – Personal Wellness Account changes

Elected the following Board of Trustees Officers for 2021-2023:

Leon J. Schwartz, Chairperson *(elected for one year 2021-2022)*

Lori A. Lewis, Vice Chairperson

Vincent P. Brown, Secretary

Approved the resolution relating to the Appointment of the Treasurer to be Stacy A. Kruse, Chief Operating and Financial Officer.

Approved the nomination of the following At-Large Members for 2021-2023:

At-Large Member #1: Angela M. Dejene

At-Large Member #2: The Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich

Approved the Committee Chairs for 2021-2023:

Diana G. Haywood, Appeals Committee

Frank A. Roth, Audit Committee

Rev. Dr. Thomas P. Schlotterback, Board Development Committee

Jennifer L. McGinnis, Finance Committee

John R. Hoffman, Investment/Corporate Social Responsibility Committee

Angela M. Dejene, Services & Solutions Committee

Approved the 2022 Contribution Rates for the Medical and Dental Benefits Plans, Survivor, Disability and Retiree Support.

Approved resolution concerning the approval of Portico Benefit Services' Strategic Plan for 2021-2023.

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

June 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the retention of RSM as independent auditor for the year ending December 31, 2021.

August 2021 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the resolution for a registered address change for Portico Benefit Services' principal and registered office shall be established as 7700 France Avenue South, Suite 350, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435-2802.

Received the August 2021 Portico Benefit Services Management Report.

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA (MIF) Report

Submitted by Eva M. Roby, President and CEO

Financial Update

At this time, when the world has been gripped by the global COVID-19 pandemic for more than a year, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) continues to exhibit growth and stability. On Aug. 31, 2021, MIF's loans were \$580.6 million, down slightly from \$596.4 million at year end. All congregations and ministries to which we had offered financial relief in the form of interest-only payments or deferred payments due to hardships engendered by the pandemic have returned to their regular payment schedules.

Total investment obligations increased to \$566.5 million on Aug. 31, 2021, from \$543.1 million at year end. Our customers continue to seek out safe investment vehicles, such as MIF's Demand and Term products, during this time of lingering uncertainty.

Total assets rose to \$807.8 million at Aug. 31, 2021, from \$773.8 million at Dec. 31, 2020. Net assets rose to \$226.5 million, from \$218.2 million at year end. MIF's capital ratio remains strong and healthy at 28.05%.

Key Initiatives and Partnerships

The MIF Board of Trustees, together with MIF management, undertook a detailed review of its governance documents, including the relevant provisions of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*; MIF's bylaws; MIF's board committee charters; and MIF's Governance Policy and Guidelines. The chair of MIF's Governance Committee worked closely with MIF's executive management and Corporate and Compliance Counsel to undertake an initial assessment of these documents, review the work of the other board committees, and then complete a final review and approval of all proposed changes. The proposed changes to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* were submitted to the Office of the Secretary in preparation for upcoming legislative meetings.

As part of our initiative to strengthen our organizational development capabilities, we completed a comprehensive review and rework of our overall learning and career development program to ensure that it is flexible, accessible, encourages targeted and value-added development opportunities, and meets the organizational needs. In addition, we continued our work on the development and rollout of our core organizational behaviors and organizational competencies.

All of MIF's business operations have continued uninterrupted since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic when we shifted primarily to remote working arrangements to comply with local mandates intended to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Now we have begun developing our long-term plan for what the future of work will look like at MIF. An impact analysis is being carried out to study the impact of a hybrid work model – which blends both in-office work and remote work – on areas such as collaboration and connection, customer service, productivity, equity and accessibility, technology, and compliance and risk management, just to name a few. We also are engaging our staff to obtain their input as we craft our new future model.

MIF continues to participate in loans for Episcopal ministries through the Episcopal Church Building Fund (ECBF). This year, we added a staff director to focus on building relationships with Episcopal diocesan leaders and individual parishes to uncover lending needs.

Looking Ahead

MIF will enter the final year of our current strategic plan in 2022, and, as such, we have already begun work on developing new strategies for 2023-2026. We are excited to launch the process of creating our new Strategic Plan that will carry us into the future as well as enable us to continue our tradition of strength and stability.

Mission Investment Fund Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Eva Roby, President and CEO

Meeting Dates: October 21, 2021

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

To be provided, if any

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

To be provided, if any

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

To be provided, if any

ELCA Foundation

Submitted by Kathy F. Summers, President and CEO

The ELCA Foundation, a separately incorporated ministry, has a network of 23 regional gift planners, working in 21 partnerships, across the United States. As of June 30, 2021, the Foundation stewarded more than \$1 billion in gifts, endowments, and other investments for this denomination. The regional gift planners work with over 150 ministry partners, including 54 synods, and are supported by the Gift Administration and Financial Services (accounting and investment administration) Teams. The Foundation works with donors and beneficiaries to create individual gift plans, administer life income and endowment gifts, distribute terminated gifts, and facilitate the sale of marketable assets such as land, homes, and other assets.

- Regional Gift Planners are available to:
 - Guide individuals in discerning how to be faithful stewards of their estates and invite them to support ministries, congregations, and synods through charitable estate gifts.
 - Help synods, congregations and related entities invest endowment funds and other assets in the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (Fund A), which is structured to provide distributions to support ministry today and into the future utilizing investments that adhere to the ELCA's social purpose guidelines.
 - Advise church leaders in the development of gift acceptance policies for congregations, which often include gifts to synods.
- The Gift Administration Team works with individuals to initially establish and ultimately distribute proceeds from charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts, donor-advised funds, and named endowment funds. Financial Services handle operations and administration for all life-income gifts, endowments, and investments in Fund A.
- The gift planning network, including affiliates, posted solid results throughout the first half of 2021, with \$51.5 million in total gifts and endowment assets. Of that, \$32.9 million was written in future planned gifts, \$5.0 million in current gifts (including funded trusts, gift annuities, and individual endowments) and \$13.6 million in new outside investor assets.
- New gift plans written during the first two quarters totaled 76. In addition, gift planners stewarded over \$17.5 million in previously written plans, in some cases increasing the estimated gift to ministry.
- As of June 30, 2021, the value of participant accounts invested in Fund A was \$975.6 million, compared to \$904.2 million on Dec. 31, 2020. There are 1,184 investing participants in Fund A, including 960 congregations and 54 synods. Throughout the first half of 2021, 30 new endowment accounts were opened, totaling \$4.9 million, and 5 accounts were closed, totaling \$2.4 million. Contributions from outside participants to new and existing endowment accounts totaled \$25.2 million; withdrawals totaled \$10.0 million.
- Throughout the year, approximately \$62.4 million was distributed to ministry.

ELCA Foundation Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Kathy Summers, President and CEO

Meeting Dates: July 26, 2021; August 25, 2021; September 16, 2021; September 17, 2021

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

Approved the classification of trustees as required by the ELCA Constitution following the election of ELCA Foundation trustees at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly and to present the classification to the ELCA Church Council.

Class 1 (term limit ends in 2022):

Kristy Albrecht, Liza Canino, Pr. Kelly France, and John Quello

Class 2 (term limit ends in 2025):

Karen Bohn, Eric Brudos, Keith Christensen, and Eric Golberg

Class 3 (term limit ends in 2028):

Bruce George, Naomi Horsager, Kori Reed, and Chuck Self

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

Approved of the transfer of \$450,000 from the ELCA Foundation's undesignated account into the Operating Reserve Fund.

Approved of the audited financial statements of the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust for the year ended Dec. 31, 2020.

Approved of the audited combined financial statements of the ELCA Foundation and the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust for the year ended Dec. 31, 2020.

Approved the increase in the number of ELCA Foundation Trustees from 12 to 15 as allowed under the ELCA Constitution.

Approved the engagement of the firm Crowe for the 2021 fiscal year financial audit for the ELCA Foundation and ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Combined Audit.

Approved the engagement of the firm Crowe for the 2021 fiscal year financial audit for the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust.

Approved the ELCA Foundation's 2022 Operating Budget.

Approved Eric Brudos as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved Heather Marx as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved Kori Reed as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved Eric Golberg as member at large of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved Naomi Horsager as member at large of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved Ingrid Stafford as member at large of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation and member of the Executive Committee.

Approved James Wilkins as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation.

Approved Kim Kernodle as Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation.

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

Approved of the [March 18, 2021, minutes](#); the [July 26, 2021, written action minutes](#); and the [August 25, 2021, written action minutes](#) of the ELCA Board of Trustees.

Approved the reception of the following reports:

- Report of the President of the ELCA Foundation
- Report of the Treasurer of the ELCA Foundation
- Audit Committee Report
- Finance Committee Report
- Governance Committee Report
- Investment Committee Report
- Resource Development Committee Report
- Graystone Fund A Report
- Report of the Presiding Bishop
- Report of the ELCA Treasurer
- Report of the Advisory Bishop

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Report

Submitted by Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

The work of the churchwide staff of Women of the ELCA is to support the organization's participants as they live out the mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Here are some highlights of activities of the churchwide women's organization:

- The Eleventh Triennial Convention (2021) was held digitally August 3-5, 2021. Along with electing new board members and officers, the convention adopted several constitutional changes and acted on topics as diverse as human trafficking, Thursdays in Black, immigration reform, school violence and mass shootings, and the #metoo movement. A [news story](#) highlights the actions taken. Half of the convention offering has been designated for Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest.
- The churchwide executive board has [authorized three foci of anti-racism awareness-raising, anti-racism accompaniment, and anti-racism advocacy](#) for the remainder of the 2020-2023 triennium. Staff, led by the executive director, are beginning to implement them. That work was kicked off with a small survey in October (to be followed with a larger survey in November) examining how best to meet women's needs in this pandemic and increasingly digital world.
- The churchwide organization launched a feasibility study July 1, with findings and recommendations to be presented at a November 7 board meeting. The study examines the capacity of the organization to conduct a major campaign beginning in 2022.
- [Gather](#) magazine's Bible study continues in print, on video and even online via Facebook, Zoom and other social media channels. The current study, "The gift of the Spirit: A divine wild goose chase," was written by the Rev. Sara Olson-Smith.
- [Daily Grace](#) devotionals (a smart phone app and also available via email) and Women of the ELCA's websites continue to help us connect and serve in a variety of ways.
- [Café](#), WELCA's e-magazine for younger women, [launched a monthly B.Y.O.D. virtual series](#) (bring your own dinner) last October and recently celebrated its one-year anniversary. At these online events, readers virtually mingle and chat with writers and other friends of the organization. This is one of many efforts staff have launched to support community, the bedrock of the organization.
- The organization will host another digital Blue Christmas service on the evening of December 21, the Winter Solstice. Last year's inaugural Blue Christmas service had over 200 worshippers.
- The [application cycle for scholarships](#) opens December 15, for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Women of the ELCA Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

Meeting dates: Multiple dates in 2021, as noted (via Zoom)

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)*

At an April 23, 2021, meeting, approved sending a proposed 2021 budget of \$1,636,250 to the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2021)

At an April 23, 2021, meeting, authorized the president to create and fill two task forces, one on the future vision of the organization and one to consider a major campaign

At a June 23, 2021, meeting, adopted three foci of anti-racism awareness-raising, anti-racism accompaniment, and anti-racism advocacy for the remainder of the 2020-2023 triennium and instructed the executive director to begin implementing them

At a June 23, 2021, meeting authorized the hiring of Rebecca Sundquist Fundraising for a 4-month contract with a start date of July 1, 2021, to cover a feasibility study for a major campaign

At an August 2, 2021, meeting, authorized the use of money from the New Ministries Fund to allow staffing options (either a severance package or continued part-time work) through the end of the current fiscal year for those in the part-time positions which will end on August 31, 2021

At an October 23, 2021, meeting, received a summary of actions taken at the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2021)

At an October 23, 2021, meeting, encouraged the executive director to research and implement ways to draw attention to the availability of Spanish language resources on the website and to explore developing original Spanish language resources by diverse Latina authors who are native Spanish speakers.

At an October 23, 2021, meeting, received findings from an October general purpose survey of participants and received an interim report on the feasibility study

At an October 23, 2021, meeting, authorized the executive director to research and draft documents refining the administration of the Katharina von Bora Luther Endowment Fund, to be returned to the board for consideration at its April 2022 meeting

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions)*

At an April 23, 2021, meeting, approved the application of the Latinx Conference of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod to form a non-geographic special unit of Women of the ELCA

At an October 23, 2021, meeting, authorized the creation of a task force to propose programming for the board's racial justice education

Financial Results as of September 30, 2021

November Church Council Meeting



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Unrestricted Fund Results

Unrestricted Fund Results thru 9/30/2021

(in Thousands)

	Actual	Fav (Unfav) Variance From	
		Budget	Prior Year
Revenue			
Mission Support	\$25,248	\$191	\$(231)
Other	<u>13,996</u>	<u>1,233</u>	<u>3,632</u>
Total Revenue	39,243	1,424	3,401
Des/Res Funds Released	622	(1,939)	(1,330)
Expenses	<u>(35,355)</u>	8,412	2,522
Rev in Excess of Exp	\$4,510	7,897	4,594



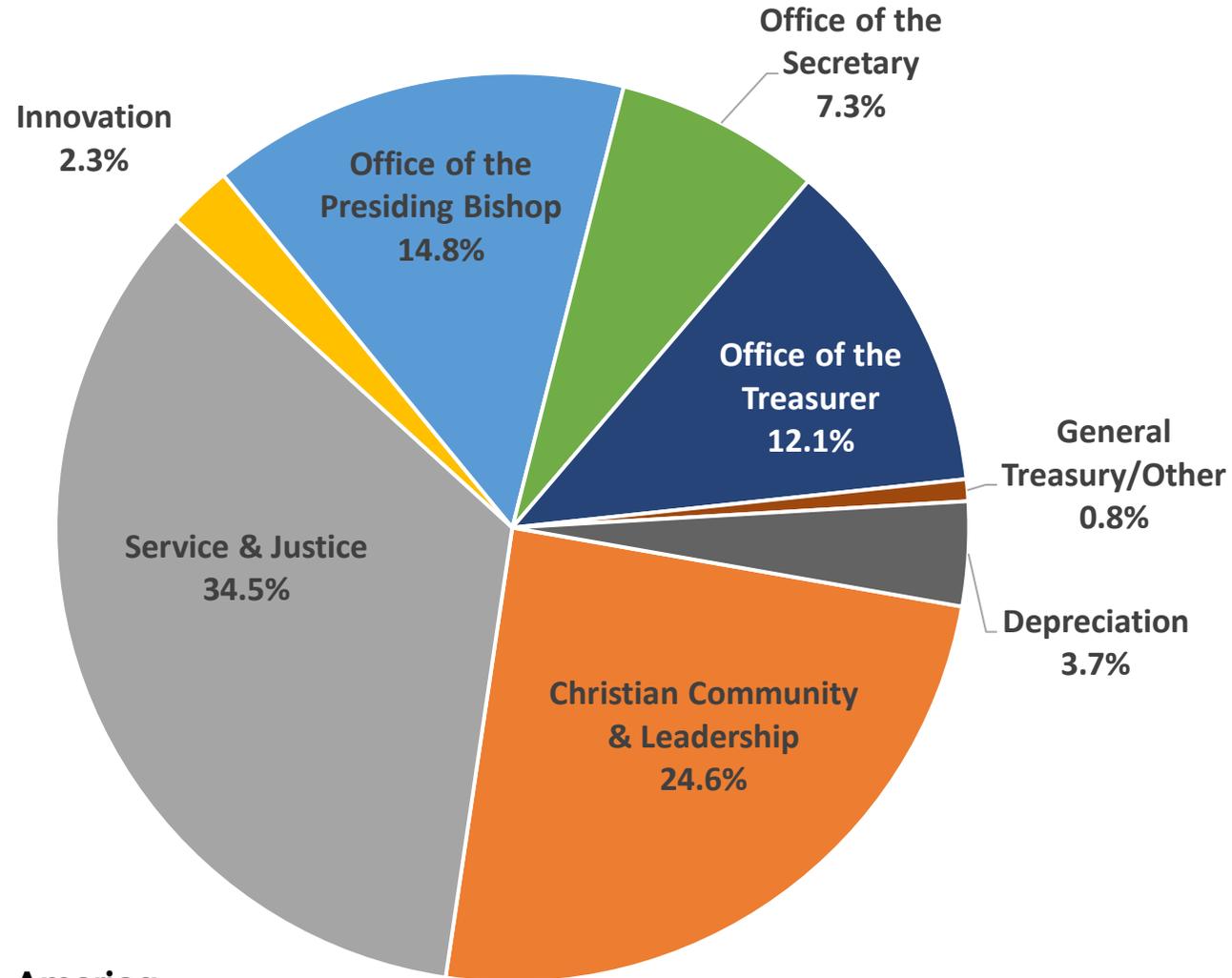
Unrestricted Fund Sources of Revenue (in 000s) 9/30/21

	Actual	Fav (Unfav) Variance From	
		Budget	Prior Year
Mission Support	\$25,248	\$191	\$(231)
Direct Gifts	3,531	(699)	376
Investment Income	2,181	1,177	1,837
Beq/Trust/Endow Distr	4,699	736	1,203
Rent	1,231	68	5
Service Agreements/Other	1,354	(49)	210
Mission Investment Fund	1,000	---	---
Release from Rest/Des Fund	622	(1,939)	(1,330)
Total	\$39,865	\$(515)	\$2,072

Actual Expenses vs Spending Authorization - YTD through 9/30/21

	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Spending Authorization</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	<u>Percent of Budget</u>
Home Areas				
Christian Community & Leadership	11,007,538	14,939,336	3,931,798	73.68%
Service and Justice	5,565,076	8,613,682	3,048,606	64.61%
Innovation	1,024,397	1,457,870	433,473	70.27%
Operations	15,750,055	16,655,594	905,539	94.56%
Presiding Bishop	7,066,962	7,511,089	444,127	94.09%
Treasurer	5,415,136	5,835,635	420,498	92.79%
Secretary	3,267,957	3,308,871	40,914	98.76%
OTHER				
General Treasury	348,464	367,467	19,002	94.83%
Depreciation	<u>1,659,902</u>	<u>1,733,333</u>	<u>73,432</u>	<u>95.76%</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>35,355,432</u>	<u>43,767,283</u>	<u>8,411,850</u>	<u>80.78%</u>

Expenditures by Home Area/Office, incl World Hunger



	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL VS. BUDGET	FY21 TOTAL BUDGET
BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 10,164,521			
Income				
Direct Giving	8,424,268	8,974,424	(550,156)	18,510,000
Endowments and Donor Requested Payments	639,321	562,500	76,821	750,000
Bequests & Trusts/Misc	661,205	1,000,000	(338,795)	1,500,000
Release of Bequest Income	-	370,000	(370,000)	740,000
Total Income	9,724,794	10,906,924	(1,182,130)	21,500,000
Expense				
Service and Justice:				
Domestic Program	2,142,329	2,922,158	(779,829)	3,882,707
International Program	5,811,724	11,524,718	(5,712,994)	15,692,063
Witnessing in Society	1,096,228	1,034,420	61,808	1,547,980
Fundraising Allocation Exp	842,283	897,442	(55,159)	2,177,250
Total Expense	9,892,564	16,378,738	(6,486,174)	23,300,000
NET	(167,770)	(5,471,814)	5,304,044	(1,800,000)
ENDING BALANCE	\$ 9,996,751			



World Hunger through Sept 30, 2021

2021 Lutheran Disaster Response

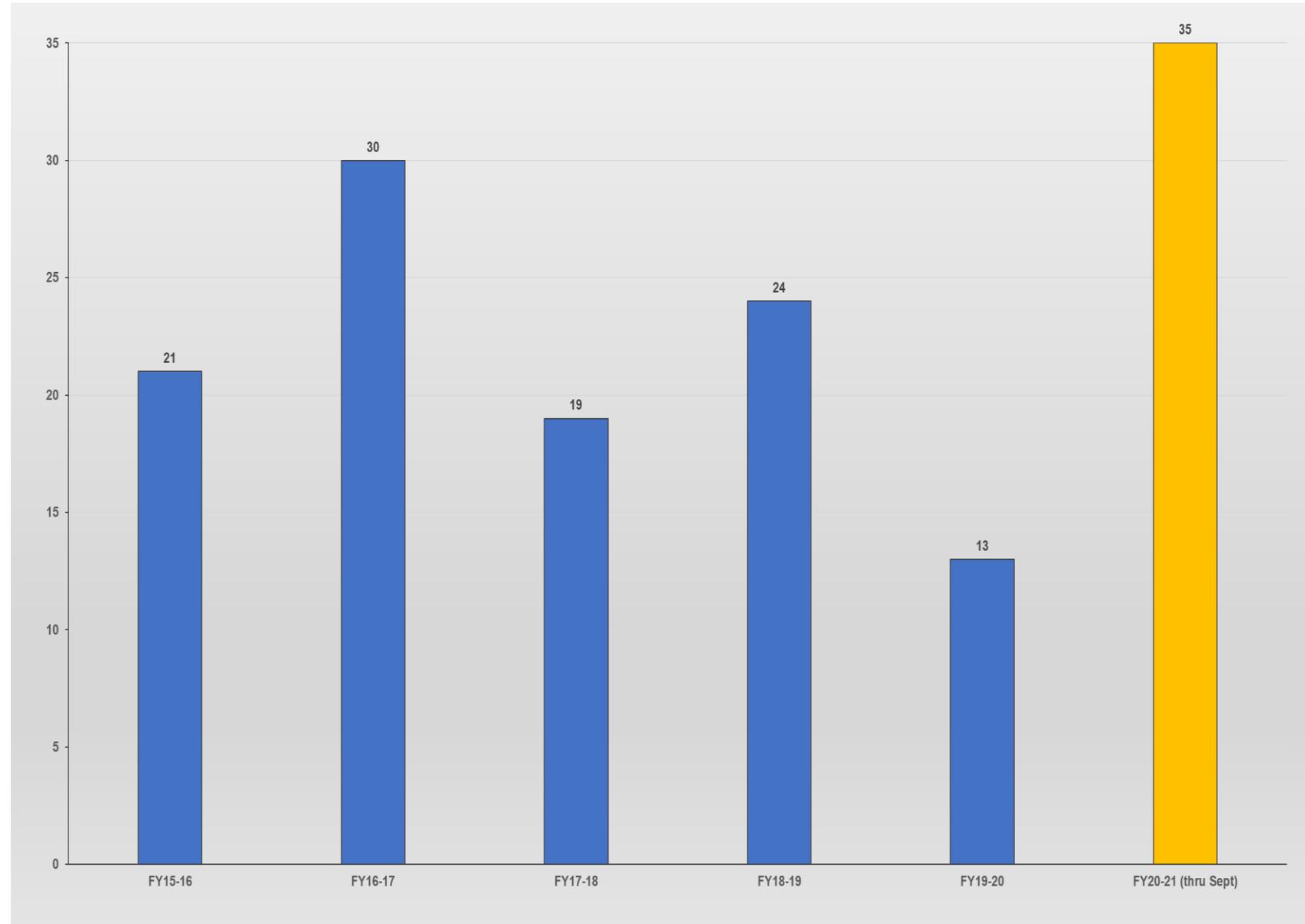
Lutheran Disaster Response

- \$6.7 million in gifts were received through Sept 2021 and \$5.2 million was distributed
- No new named disasters have been added in 2021
- Fund balances are available to support disasters as follows:
 - International Work: \$4.0 million
 - Domestic Work: \$6.7 million
 - Gen'l Pgms, incl gen'l hurricane response: \$12.2 million

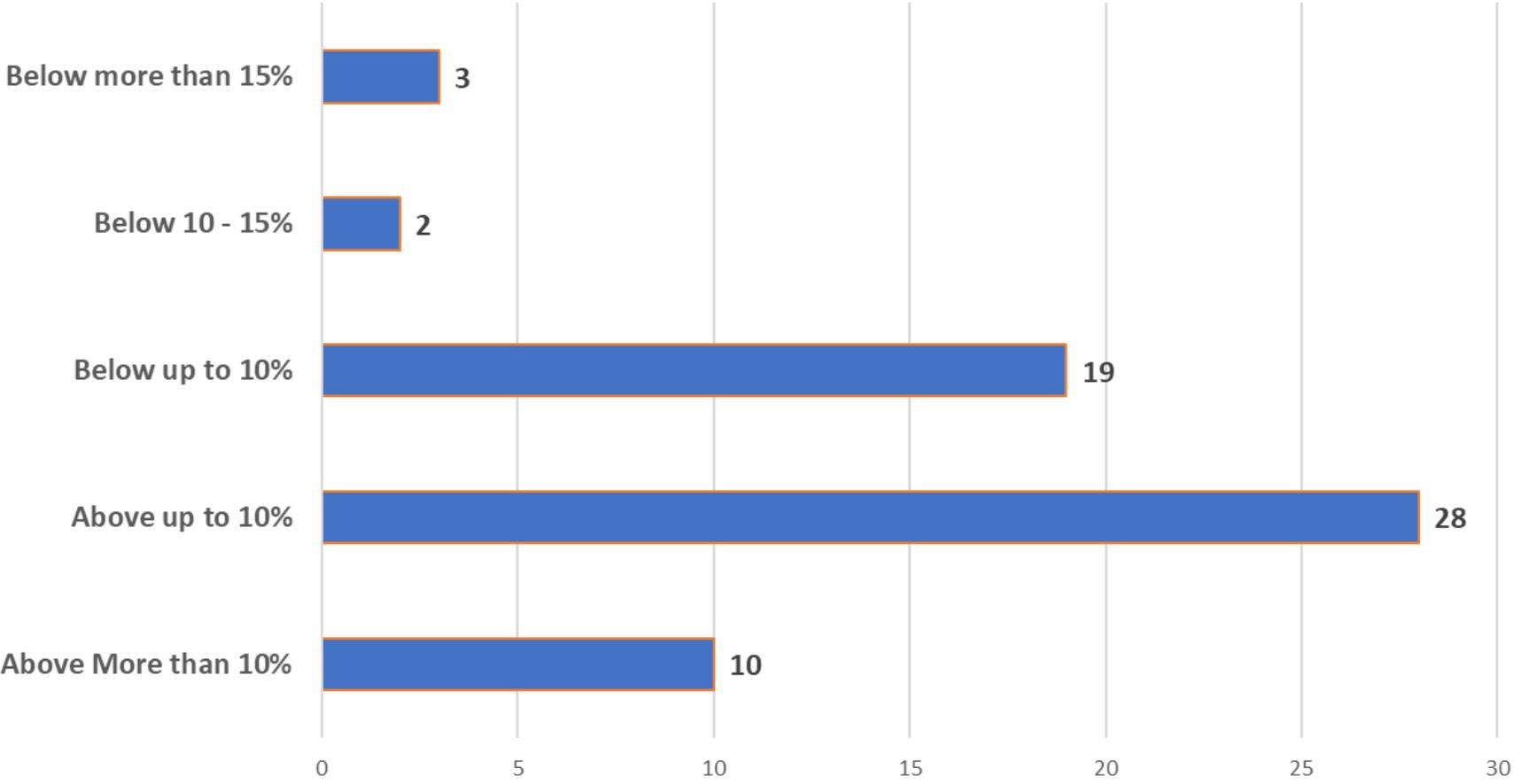


Mission Support Update

Number of Synods with Higher \$ Mission Support Share Year-over-Year



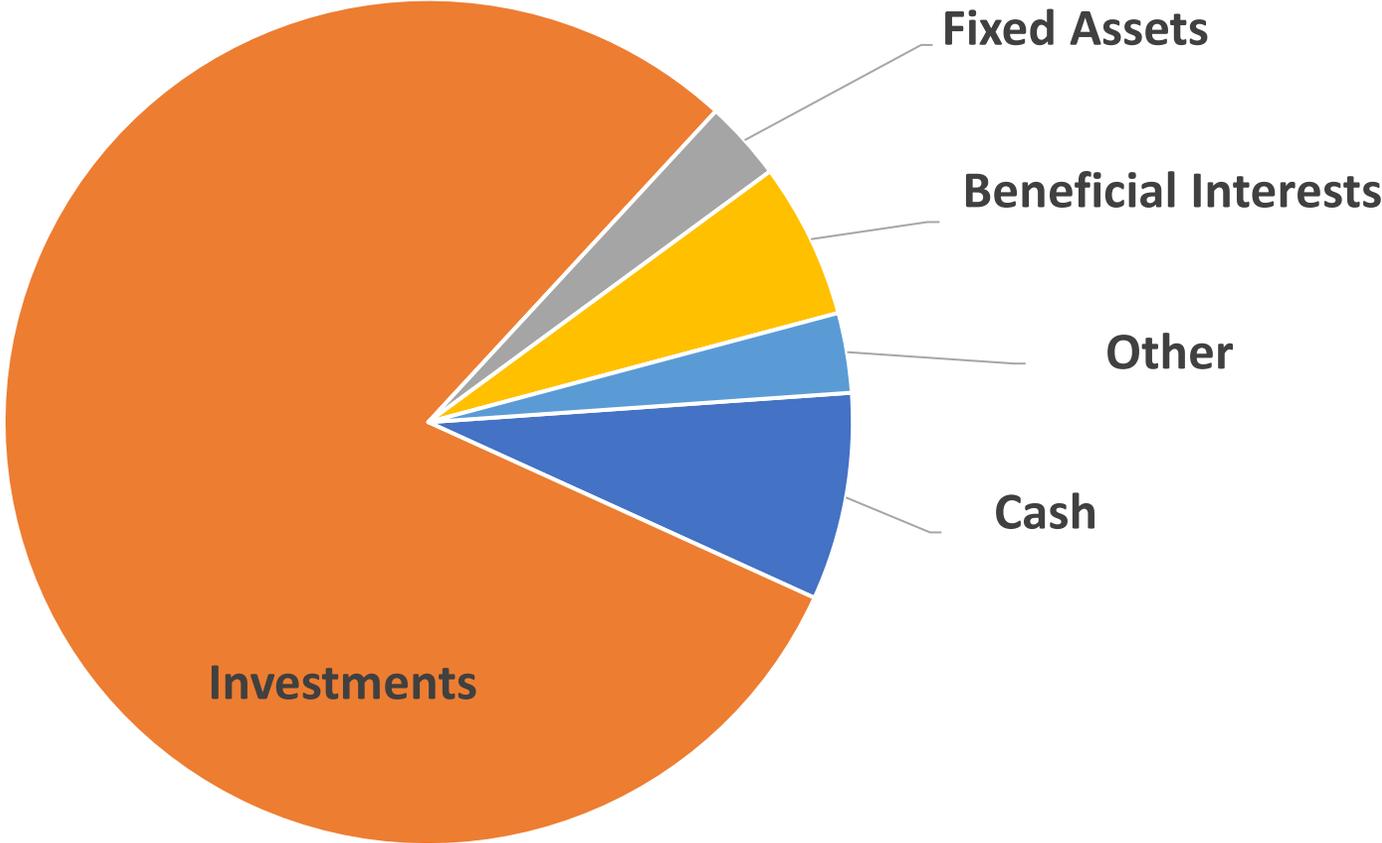
Number of Synods Above or Below Estimated Budget - Sept YTD



Statement of Financial Position (SOFP)

What does our Balance Sheet look like?

Total Assets are \$656 million.



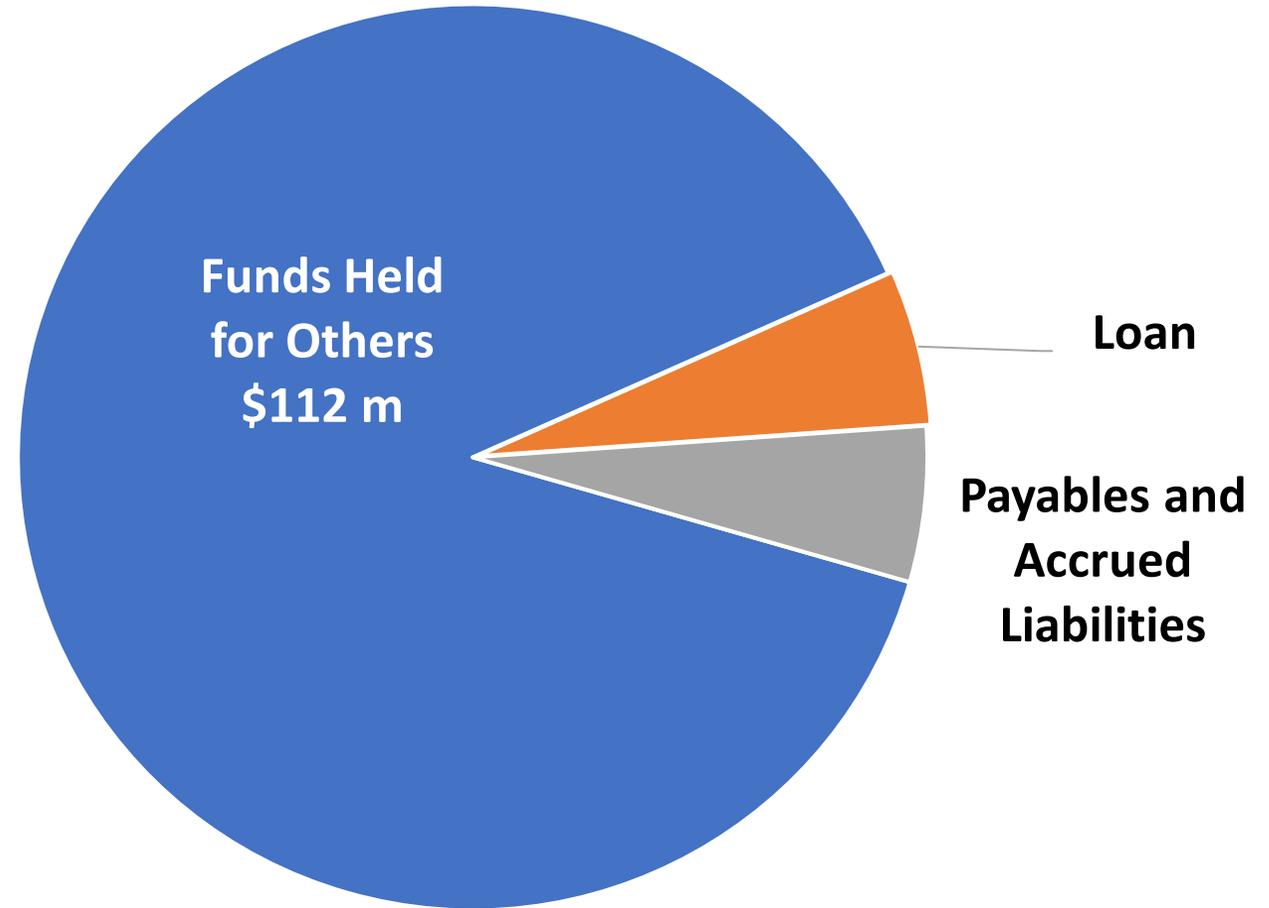
What does our Balance Sheet look like?

Total Liabilities are
\$126 million.

Net Assets = \$530
million.

24% Unrestricted

76% Donor Restricted



Significant Events in 2021

- Paycheck Protection Program Loan
 - Churchwide Organization received loan in the amount of \$7,506,200
 - \$5,696,814 was for the CWO
 - \$1,809,386 was for separately incorporated ministries which fall under the CWO HR administration
 - Loan was forgiven by Small Business Administration in July 2021
 - Treated as Gain on Extinguishment of Debt on income statement (non-operating)



Questions/Thoughts?



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Report from the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee November 2021



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FY22 Budget

Proposed Current Fund Revenue Budget

	2020	2021		2022		
	Actual	Budget	Projection	Per CWA	Adjustments	Proposed Budget
Current Fund Budget						
Mission Support	\$ 40,739,221	\$ 40,250,000	\$ 40,750,000	\$ 41,000,000	\$ (1,000,000)	\$ 40,000,000
Direct Gifts	5,355,499	6,510,000	7,100,000	7,630,000	(2,355,000)	5,275,000
Investment Income	1,100,091	1,475,380	2,000,000	1,975,380	100,000	2,075,380
Bequests & Trusts	2,258,643	2,064,000	2,500,000	2,064,000	336,000	2,400,000
Endowment	3,349,445	3,449,169	3,700,000	3,314,152	400,000	3,714,152
Rent	1,849,989	1,744,855	1,850,000	1,744,855	100,000	1,844,855
Service Level Agreements/Other	2,896,653	2,103,519	1,800,000	1,803,519		1,803,519
Total Unrestricted	\$ 57,549,541	\$ 57,596,923	\$ 59,700,000	\$ 59,531,906	\$ (2,419,000)	\$ 57,112,906
Global Mission Missionaries	577,768	2,005,000	1,000,000	2,200,000	90,000	2,290,000
Global Mission - YAGM's	177,902	575,000	135,000	1,300,000	(165,000)	1,135,000
Other Temp Restr Direct Gifts		150,000		-	978,000	978,000
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000		1,500,000
Other Gifts	\$ 2,255,670	\$ 4,230,000	\$ 1,135,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 903,000	\$ 5,903,000
Total Unrestricted	\$ 59,805,211	\$ 61,826,923	\$ 60,835,000	\$ 64,531,906	\$ (1,516,000)	\$ 63,015,906
Designated Funds Released	\$ 750,000	\$ 3,087,077	\$ -	\$ 3,042,111	\$ (1,174,867)	\$ 1,867,244
Restricted Funds Released:						
Japan/Int'l Women Leaders	937,533	933,000	933,000	933,000	-	933,000
Total Revenues	\$ 61,492,744	\$ 65,847,000	\$ 61,768,000	\$ 68,507,017	\$ (2,690,867)	\$ 65,816,150

Key Revenue Assumptions

- Total Revenue decrease from CWA to Proposed FY22: \$1.5 million
- Mission Support decrease of 1.8% from projected 2021 amount (approximates 97% of synod intents)
- Direct Gifts (“Where Needed Most”) – Decr of \$2.4 million. Est based on buildup from Development Team. Engaging consultant
- Bequests & Trusts – historical trends +\$336K
- Endowment Distributions – based on current trends +\$400K
- Other “Temp Restricted Gifts” – based on build up from Development Team
- Reduction in Designated Fund Release - \$1.2 million less budget support needed

FY22 Proposed Current Fund Spending Authorization

Current Fund Home Areas	FY 21 Budget Unrestricted	Increase				Previously MDF	FY 22 Budget Unrestricted	Reduction @ 5%	Proposed FY22 Budget
		Payroll and Benefits	Travel	YAGMs					
Christian Community and Leadership	\$ 22,268,376	296,506	376,000	800,000	63,000	\$ 23,803,882	\$ (1,113,419)	\$ 22,690,464	
Innovation	2,111,697	25,248				2,136,945	(105,585)	2,031,360	
Service and Justice	12,560,316	87,076	200,000		65,000	12,912,392	(628,016)	12,284,376	
Operations						-			
Office of the Presiding Bishop	11,962,108	295,428	121,000			12,378,536	(598,105)	11,780,430	
Office of the Secretary	5,061,939	74,623			130,000	5,266,562	(253,097)	5,013,465	
Office of the Treasurer	8,732,564	201,119			569,000	9,502,683	(436,628)	9,066,054	
						-			
General Treasury	150,000					150,000		150,000	
Depreciation	3,000,000					3,000,000	(200,000)	2,800,000	
Total Spending Auth Requested	\$ 65,847,000	980,000	697,000	800,000	827,000	\$ 69,151,000	\$ (3,134,850)	\$ 65,816,150	



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Key Expenditure Assumptions

- Starting point is FY21 budget
- Compensation and Benefits increase of \$980K includes 4 factors:
 - 2% compensation increase
 - 3.5% increase in medical insurance costs
 - Impact of 2% comp increase on other benefits
 - 2nd round of adjustment related to comp study focused on racial, gender, and years of service equity
- Travel – reinstatement of 70% of costs that were cut from 2021 budget
- Young Adults in Global Mission – program to be resume in FY22, fully offset by revenue

Key Expenditure Assumptions - continued

- Previously Mission Development Fund – costs are ongoing – no longer fit the definition of the MDF endowment. Allows MDF funding to support new initiatives related to the Future Church goals
- Reductions at 5% - change in philosophy – tighter budgets require greater discipline in alignment with strategic goals. Historically budgeted at 100% of all potential costs. 3-year historical average 93.9%.

CC ACTION

Recommended:

To revise the 2022 fiscal year current fund income proposal from \$68,507,018 to \$65,816,150;

To approve a 2022 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$65,816,150;

World Hunger FY 22 Budget

FY22 Proposed World Hunger Revenue and Spend Authorization

		2020	2021		2022		
		Actual	Budget	Projection	Per CWA	Adjustments	Proposed Budget
ELCA WORLD HUNGER							
Direct Gifts		\$ 19,144,151	\$ 18,510,000	\$ 20,300,000	\$ 19,500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 20,000,000
Endowment		881,417	750,000	825,000	500,000	250,000	750,000
Bequests and Miscellaneous		4,167,021	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000
Release - Covid-19 Appeal		248,000			-		-
Release of Bequest income			2,740,000		-	415,000	415,000
Total ELCA World Hunger Income		\$ 24,440,589	\$ 23,500,000	\$ 22,625,000	\$ 21,500,000	\$ 1,165,000	\$ 22,665,000
EXPENDITURES							
Service & Justice							
	<i>WH Domestic Program (part of S & J)</i>		\$ 3,882,707				\$ 3,508,393
	<i>WH International Program (part of S & J)</i>		15,692,063				15,284,143
	<i>WH Witnessing in Society (part of S & J)</i>		1,547,980				1,576,500
	<i>WH Fundraising (part of S & J)</i>		2,177,250				2,295,964
Total ELCA World Hunger Expenses			\$ 23,300,000				\$ 22,665,000

World Hunger Assumptions

Income

- Direct Giving – increase of \$500K over churchwide assembly. Historical strength in Youth Gathering years. Amount provided by Development Team.

Expenditures

- Spending request is breakeven; however, may be an opportunity to increase spending based on projected FY21 end of year fund balance. Planning team will provide detailed request and we will present to BFC spring meeting, if materially different.
- Reflects Constituting Convention restrictions on spending
 - 25 - 30% of spending within the territorial jurisdiction of the ELCA
 - 70 – 75% of spending in other areas of the world
 - For calc, fundraising costs are split 50/50 between int'l and domestic (2013 action)



CC ACTION

Recommended:

To revise the 2022 fiscal year World Hunger income proposal from \$21,500,000 to \$22,665,000; and

To approve a 2022 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$22,665,000.

Report from Work of Audit Committee

- Met on Wednesday, November 10th

External Audit

- Reviewed a preliminary draft of the audited financial statements
- Crowe LLP has not finalized their work but have not found any adjustments and do not expect based on the remaining work to be done (other than possibly a couple of reclassifications for consistency between years)
- Plan to issue an unmodified opinion
- Audit Committee will review the final draft before issuance.



Report from Work of Audit Committee (cont)

External Audit (continued)

- Audit was behind schedule this year for a variety of reasons (none of which relate to inaccurate numbers or improprieties)
 - a) Two general ledger systems were in operation during FY21
 - b) Remapping of accounts for implementation of Future Church, effective 2/1/2021 took priority over preparation for audit
 - c) Extended absence and departure of Director of Accounting, made more challenging by remote work
 - d) Availability of “same external audit team”



Report from Work of Audit Committee (cont)

Internal Audit

- Received report from new internal auditors, BKD, and approved work plan for 2022.

Information Technology

- Received report from Information Technology Security Audit and program update



Report from Work of Audit Committee (cont)

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

- **Recommended: To accept and forward to the Church Council for their action: To receive the preliminary report of the ELCA Audit Committee for the churchwide organization's fiscal year ended January 31, 2021; and to authorize the Executive Committee to approve the final report.**
- **Recommended: To approve the reappointment of Mr. Kevin Anderson, Ms. Tracey Beasley, Mr. Gary Hecht, Mr. Keoni Newman, and Ms. Ingrid Stafford as members to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2021.**

To approve the appointment of Ms. Kerry Fehrman as a member to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning in November 2021.



Report on Work of the Resource Development Committee

Plans for Exploring, Testing, and Learning



Mission Support

- Observation: Mission Support conversations at the congregational level are occurring at varying intensities and in different formats across the ecology of the church.
- Recommendation: Develop innovative strategy to partner with synod bishops, synod and churchwide staff, and outside consultant(s) to intentionally engage with various synods and congregations around Mission Support. Share key learnings as applicable.



Testing/evaluating market response to unrestricted giving tactics

- Observation: The messaging/tactics around unrestricted giving to Churchwide could be further clarified as well as evaluated for its impact.
- Recommendation: Leveraging external consult, ELCA Churchwide Organization will intentionally evaluate the existing strategies surrounding the “Where Needed Most” fund and its resonance with donors.



Evaluation of new fundraising priorities

- Observation: The emphasis on Innovation at the Churchwide Organization needs to be tested with donors before identifying this program as a fundraising priority.
- Recommendation: ELCA Churchwide staff will engage with external consult to test/evaluate the potential for fundraising around “innovation” or other future church realignment key priorities.



Comprehensive Evaluation of External Communications from Churchwide Organization

- Observation: The overall messaging from the ELCA Churchwide Organization appears disjointed from larger fundraising strategies.
- Recommendation: An intentional external evaluation of all Churchwide Organization communications with an eye towards donors and branding.



Thank You to all Committee Members

Budget & Finance Committee	Audit Committee	Resource Development Committee
Jim Jennings (Chair)	Tracey Beasley (Chair)	Joe Nolte (Chair)
Tracey Beasley	Kevin Anderson	Rev. David Beckman (at large)
Kerry Fehrman	Gary Hecht (at large)	Rev. Nick Billardello
Rev. Dena Gable (Vice Chair)	Keoni Newman	Cherrish Holland
Cherrish Holland	Ingrid Stafford (at large)	Glenn Kraft (at large)
Keoni Newman		David Lenz
Rev. Kjersten Sullivan		Keoni Newman
Valerie Shaw		Sonia Wolfe
Loren Solberg		Rev. Katherine Yarnell
Bishop Jeff Clements		Bishop Jeff Clements
Bishop Barb Collins		Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt
Bishop Pedro Suarez		

Questions/Comments



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Board Development Committee

Ms. Cheryl Chatman



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Thanks to the Committee Members

- Tara Lynn
- Cherrish Holland
- Marcus Bigott
- Jim Jennings
- Loren Solberg
- Joe Nolte
- Cheryl Chatman
- Support Staff: Louise Johnson and Jodi Slattery



Information to be shared

- What topics do you want to discuss at a future meeting?
 - Adding opportunity to the next regular meeting agenda for interest topics to be discussed
- Process Observation Structure
 - BDC members will be the process observation team
 - Continue to do an end-of-the-meeting evaluation



Information to be shared

- Church Council Committee Restructure
 - Discussed the work needed to plan for size and composition of new standing committee assignments
 - Look for a committee interest form in the coming weeks
- Primers for Spring 2022
 - Youth and Young Adult education
 - Racial Justice Training
 - Churchwide Assembly and council's role



Program and Services Committee



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En Bloc Items

- Reviewed 1 investment screen and 3 issue papers for Corporate Social Responsibility:
 - Private Prison Social Criteria Investment Screen
 - Environmental Topics Issue Paper
 - Climate Change Issue Paper
 - Health Issue Paper
- Acted on Follow-up to Vision and Expectations report
 - To receive with gratitude the response and recommendation from the Christian Community and Leadership unit regarding the question of developing an aspirational document; and
 - To suspend the consideration of developing an aspirational document until a need arises.

These recommendations from Program and Services are *En Bloc* actions for Church Council approval.



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En Bloc Items

- Acted on several pending social message requests:
 - To decline to initiate the development of a social message on **U.S. national drug policy**
 - To release the request for the development of a social message on **aging**, with the understanding that an ELCA study on aging should be developed when possible as a means to foster discernment, especially in congregations
 - To release the request to develop a social message on **gender identity and gender expression** in light of the various actions already underway to address the topic, with the understanding that the ELCA will continue its ongoing efforts to address the concerns expressed in the “Gender Identity” memorial
 - To maintain the request for consideration of developing a social message on **U.S. national gun policy**
- Recommend the authorization of the next social message
 - **Climate Change**

These recommendations from Program and Services are *En Bloc* actions for Church Council approval.



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Discussion Items

- Received an update on the development of a social statement on government, civic engagement, the relationship of church and state
- Reviewed a list of social policy resolutions (SPRs) that will be considered over the next 6 months for archiving
 - SPRs that are 25 years old automatically are considered, but “retired” only by Church Council recommendation to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for action *(recommended action forthcoming at Spring 2022 CC meeting)*
- Oriented to the council’s responsibility for a day of public repentance and a process of confession and repentance in the ELCA for the sins of patriarchy and sexism



Suicide Prevention Social Message Edit

CC Action

- To adopt the proposed editorial update as the revised text of the ELCA social message on Suicide Prevention (1999) in order to provide accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context;
- To encourage conversation within ELCA congregations and to invite similar conversations with ecumenical and inter-religious partners to study this social message; and
- To direct the churchwide organization to promote communication of this message throughout this church.

