

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN  
AMERICA**

**Church Council**

**MINUTES**

**Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022**

**Prepared by the  
Office of the Secretary**



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**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES  
Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022**

The 110th meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, at the Eaglewood Resort, Itasca, Illinois.

The Executive Committee of the Church Council met Thursday morning, March 31, in Ballroom A/B at the Marriott Chicago O’Hare, Chicago, Illinois. Worship with Holy Communion took place Thursday afternoon at the Eaglewood Resort. The Rev. William H. Callister presided, and the Rev. Dena M. Gable preached. Ms. Lisa Burk served as assisting minister, and Mr. Ismael E. Danforth was lector. Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship, and Ms. Marit E. Johnson, official documentation manager, served as musicians.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

The following people were present for all or part of the meeting:

***Voting members***

**Officers:**

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop  
Mr. Carlos E. Peña, interim vice president  
Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary  
Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer

**Chair of the Conference of Bishops:**

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, bishop of the New Jersey Synod

**Church Council:**

Mr. Kevin Anderson	The Rev. Pamela J. Hoh
Ms. Tracey A. Beasley	Ms. Cherrish Holland
The Rev. Marcus A. Bigott	Mr. James J.F. Jennings
The Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III	Mr. David M. Lenz
Ms. Susan Boxberger	The Rev. Tara R. Lynn
Ms. Lisa Burk	Mr. Keoni Newman
The Rev. William H. Callister	Mr. Joseph T. Nolte
The Rev. Karn S. Carroll	Mr. Gary A. Pederson
Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman	Mr. William D. Rice ( <i>excused</i> )
Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb	The Rev. Ricardo Rivera
Mr. Ismael E. Danforth	Mr. Noah F. Roux
Ms. Divine	Ms. Valerie J. Shaw
The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist	Mr. Loren A. Solberg
Ms. Kerry A. Fehrman	The Rev. Kjersten L. Sullivan
The Rev. Dena M. Gable	Ms. Loni Taylor
The Rev. Daniel W. Gerriettes	Ms. Sonja Wolfe
The Rev. Emily C. Hartner	Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger

***Representatives of the Conference of Bishops:***

Bp. Sue J. Briner, Region 4	Bp. Christopher deForest, Region 7
Bp. Barbara J. Collins, Region 8	Bp. Pedro M. Suárez, Region 9
Bp. Yehiel Curry, Region 5	Bp. Andrew A. Taylor, Region 2
Bp. Donald M. Kreiss, Region 6 ( <i>excused</i> )	Bp. Shelley R. Wickstrom, Region 1
Bp. Patricia J. Lull, Region 3	

***Churchwide Staff Resource People:***

Mr. Thomas A. Cunniff, general counsel  
The Rev. Sara A. Cutter, senior director for operational effectiveness  
Ms. Jennifer G. DeLeon, director for racial justice  
Ms. Aja Favors, associate general counsel  
Ms. Victoria E. Flood, senior director for Mission Support  
The Rev. N. Keith Fry, executive for Office of the Secretary administration  
The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for Christian community and leadership  
The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration  
Ms. Marit E. Johnson, official documentation manager  
Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment  
The Rev. Barbara J. Lund, senior director for operations and innovation  
The Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director for service and justice  
Ms. Judith E. Roberts, senior director for diversity, equity, and inclusion  
Deacon MaryAnn Schwabe, executive for synod relations  
Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, executive for governance  
Ms. Evelyn Soto, senior director for resources and relationships  
Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship  
The Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for theological ethics

***Guests:***

**Separately Incorporated Ministries:**

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president, Portico Benefit Services

**Ethnic-Specific Ministry Associations:**

Mr. Vance Blackfox, representing the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association  
Ms. Jennifer DeLeon, president, Latino Ministries Association  
The Rev. Khader N. El-Yateem, president, Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage  
Ms. Shari Seifert, president, European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice  
The Rev. Maria (Gigie) Sijera-Grant, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Lutheran Association  
The Rev. Lamont A. Wells, president, African Descent Lutheran Association

**Ecumenical Guest:**

Mr. Steven Nishibayashi, The Episcopal Church

**Other Guests:**

Ms. Aubrey Thonvold, executive director, ReconcilingWorks  
The Rev. Mark N. Swanson, chair of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations

**Media:**

Ms. Candice Hill Buchbinder, public relations manager

Thursday, Mar. 31, 2022  
PLENARY SESSION I

**CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

(Agenda I.A.)

Mr. Carlos E. Peña, interim vice president of the ELCA and chair of the Church Council, called the Church Council meeting to order at 4:22 p.m. (CDT). Agenda items were distributed electronically.

Vice President Peña asked the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA, to open the meeting with prayer. He then provided a land acknowledgement: The meeting took place on the original and ancestral homelands of the Kickapoo, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Potawatomi, Miami, Ho-Chunk, and Ojibwe peoples. The vice president proceeded with a review of deadlines and announcements.

A motion was made to adopt the agenda.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.01 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.**

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP**

(Agenda I.B.)

Presiding Bishop Eaton reported that the churchwide organization is proposing to realign its budget to allow more resources for innovation. Over the next triennium, the goal would be to move toward 70% of budget committed to core ministries, 20% allocated to adjacent ministries, and 10% allotted to new ministries.

As the ELCA seeks to be “rooted in tradition and radically relevant,” the Innovation home area interviewed young adults with the question, “What gives your life meaning?” Many of those interviewed affirmed that they are searching for “meaning making” in their lives. The presiding bishop noted that the gospel has not changed, but the world has. She stated her belief that the ELCA has the opportunity to put the good news into the modern vernacular just as Luther did in his day, so that the gospel might have free course in the world.

The presiding bishop invited the Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director for the Service and Justice home area, to provide updates on relief work in Afghanistan and Ukraine. Pastor Malpica-Padilla reported that the churchwide organization is in discussion with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) to determine ways to assist with refugee resettlement in five synods. Initial conversations did not come to a resolution, but staff in both organizations will reconvene to continue discussions. There are also other potential opportunities to support resettlement of refugees from Ukraine.

The ELCA has committed \$2 million to The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) for work in and around Ukraine with the possibility of an additional \$1 million in aid. The LWF provides support through member churches in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia. The churchwide organization is providing financial support to 10–15 pastors in Ukraine whose bishop asked them to remain in the country.

Additionally, Presiding Bishop Eaton reported that the ELCA continues to be engaged with work in South Sudan and Ethiopia.

The presiding bishop commented on how pandemic isolation has led to a need to tend to relationships across this church. “We are called to be ambassadors of reconciliation,” she said.

Presiding Bishop Eaton reported that a listening team would be engaging in conversations across the Sierra Pacific Synod in response to concerns that had been raised. The team will compile a report and make recommendations to the presiding bishop to aid her discernment regarding a response. She expects to receive the report after Easter.

**REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

(Agenda I.C.)

Vice President Peña reflected on Luke 13 and the joys and challenges of opening hearts to change. He then reviewed his schedule for the next six months of his interim service, which includes synod assemblies, meetings of the World Council of Churches, a Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service meeting, and the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

## **PRIMER: YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS, AND THE CHURCH**

(Agenda I.D.)

Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb, Mr. Ismael E. Danforth, Ms. Divine, Mr. Keoni Newman, Mr. Noah F. Roux, and Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger—members of the Church Council Youth and Young Adult Working Group—provided a primer on youth, young adults, and the church.

Members explained that young adults may find community through social media or shared experiences and events, with shared values being of paramount importance.

The working group noted the need to define the term “engagement.” People can engage emotionally, intellectually, or physically in a shared space. Members pointed out that faith communities are uniquely situated to provide engagement in all three ways. Working group members shared possible ways to engage young adults such as college care packages, volunteer events, social media, and young adult Bible studies.

These ideas connect with the ELCA Young Adult Ministry goals:

- Maintain a robust digital ministry strategy.
- Develop Young Adult Ministry networks across leaders, participants, and partners.
- Improve and develop leadership and discernment opportunities for young adults.

## **RECESS**

The 110th meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:20 p.m. (CDT) and reconvened at 5:32 p.m. (CDT).

## **RATIFICATION OF CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

(Agenda I.E.1.)

Vice President Peña asked Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, to move the item.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

## **VOTED:**

**CC22.04.02**

**To ratify the following appointments of continuing members of the ELCA Church Council to Church Council committees for the 2022–2025 time period beginning at the close of the Churchwide Assembly on August 12, 2022:**

- **Budget and Finance Committee:** Tracey Beasley, Kerry Fehrman, Cherrish Holland, Keoni Newman;
- **Legal and Constitutional Review Committee:** Kevin Anderson, Emily Hartner, David Lenz, Noah Roux;
- **Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee:** Divine, Marcus Bigott, Tara Lynn, Loren Solberg; and
- **Christian Community and Leadership Committee:** Nick Billardello, Pamela Hoh, Valerie Shaw, Kjersten Sullivan; and
- **Service and Justice Committee:** Susan Boxberger, Bill Callister, Karn Carroll, Joanne Engquist, Loni Taylor.

## **ELECTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda I.E.2.)

Vice President Peña announced that chairs of the new committees would be invited to observe Executive Committee meetings through Aug. 12, 2022, when they would take office.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

## **VOTED:**

**CC22.04.03**

**To declare that the newly elected chairs of the Budget and Finance Committee; Christian Community and Leadership Committee; Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee; Legal and Constitutional Review Committee; and Service and Justice Committee shall be members of the Executive Committee of the Church Council beginning at the close of the Churchwide Assembly on August 12, 2022.**

**ADDRESSING THE DISCIPLINE CONCERNS OF ROSTERED PERSONS OF COLOR AND/OR WHOSE PRIMARY LANGUAGE IS OTHER THAN ENGLISH**

(Agenda I.E.3.)

Vice President Peña invited Ms. Judith E. Roberts, senior director for diversity, equity, and inclusion, to address the recommendation.

Ms. Roberts noted that this action item stemmed from the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity Advisory Table. She reported that rostered ministers of color and other historically marginalized groups do not always have support systems guiding them through the discipline process. The proposal recommends creating a task force to examine current discipline practices, review full-communion partners' processes, consider a course of action for community healing and restoration, and consider staffing possibilities.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.04**

**To authorize the creation of a task force charged with reviewing the current process for discipline and its impact on persons of color and other historically marginalized groups, considering recommendations for staffing, community healing and restoration, and learning best practices from full communion partners;**

**To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint members to the task force composed of representation from the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity Advisory Table, Conference of Bishops, Committee on Appeals, ethnic-specific associations, and churchwide staff from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (i.e., Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, director for racial justice, chief diversity officer, senior director for diversity, equity and inclusion), the Office of the Secretary (i.e., general counsel), and the Service and Justice home area (i.e., ethnic-specific ministries); and**

**To request a report with possible recommendations be provided to the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.**

**ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL DEBT AMONG ROSTERED MINISTERS**

(Agenda I.E.4.)

Ms. Roberts reported on her shared work with Mr. Adam DeHoek, program director for Resourceful Servants and congregation statistics analyst. Ms. Roberts and Mr. DeHoek have been considering strategies for supporting and helping alleviate educational debt for rostered ministers. There continues to be a gap in eliminating educational debt, especially for rostered ministers of color and rostered ministers from historically marginalized communities who wait longer to receive calls and who may be called to serve lower-income or underfunded communities. In addition to educational debt, lower compensation can affect a rostered minister's retirement and financial planning.

Mr. James J.F. Jennings offered an amendment.

There being no discussion the chair led the vote on the amendment.

**Moved;**

**Seconded;**

**Carried:** To authorize the creation of a task force charged with studying the issue of addressing educational debt among rostered ministers and developing a comprehensive strategy to provide educational debt relief to as many rostered ministers as possible;

To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint members to the task force composed of representation from across the ELCA ecology (e.g., the churchwide organization, synod staff to include bishops and/or directors for evangelical mission, congregations, seminaries, colleges/universities, Mission Investment Fund, Portico Benefit Services, ELCA Federal Credit Union, ELCA Foundation, etc.); and

To request that **the first** progress reports be provided to the **Fall 2023** Church Council **meeting** and a final report with possible recommendations be provided to the Spring 2025 Church Council meeting.

A council member proposed that the root cause of excessive educational debt lies in the rising costs of higher education in the United States.

The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for Christian community and leadership, reported that the work of the proposed task force would expand on the work of the Quality of Call project, led by Ms. Mary J. Streufert, director for



gender justice and women’s empowerment. The Quality of Call project focuses on women in Word and Sacrament ministry. The project recently examined the correlation between salary and the size of the congregation a minister of Word and Sacrament serves. The Episcopal Church completed a study that reported similar findings. An ELCA study completed in 2013 demonstrated that 84% of those graduating with a Master of Divinity degree had debt; the average debt was \$49,000. The Quality of Call project is scheduled to continue for two more years.

There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.05** To authorize the creation of a task force charged with studying the issue of addressing educational debt among rostered ministers and developing a comprehensive strategy to provide educational debt relief to as many rostered ministers as possible;

To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint members to the task force composed of representation from across the ELCA ecology (e.g., the churchwide organization, synod staff to include bishops and/or directors for evangelical mission, congregations, seminaries, colleges/universities, Mission Investment Fund, Portico Benefit Services, ELCA Federal Credit Union, ELCA Foundation, etc.); and

To request that the first progress report be provided to the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting and a final report with possible recommendations be provided to the Spring 2025 Church Council meeting.

**A DECLARATION OF THE ELCA TO THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY**

(Agenda I.E.5.)

The vice president noted that the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Committee of the Conference of Bishops had recommended that the Church Council adopt “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Muslim Community.”

The Rev. Mark N. Swanson, chair of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations and professor at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, reviewed the development of the proposed declaration. With an increase in violence and discrimination against Muslims, the panel recognized the urgency of this document. While The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is not yet ready to begin work on its own statement, the LWF encouraged the development of the ELCA declaration, with the possibility that it might serve as a resource for an eventual LWF statement.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.06** To adopt “A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Muslim Community” as a statement on Lutheran-Muslim Relations.

**ECUMENICAL GREETING**

(Agenda I.F.)

Mr. Steven Nishibayashi brought greetings on behalf of The Episcopal Church.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice President Peña announced that the Executive Committee authorized an *ad hoc* committee to review the role of advisory members to the Church Council. The *ad hoc* committee has met twice and will now begin a process of connecting with various constituencies to inform the committee’s work.

Secretary Rothmeyer made various announcements and reminded council members about committee meetings taking place Friday morning.

**RECESS**

The Rev. Ricardo Rivera offered a closing prayer. The Spring 2022 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 6:18 p.m. (CDT) on Thursday, Mar. 31, 2022.

**Friday, Apr. 1, 2022**  
**PLENARY SESSION II**

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Members of the Church Council gathered in meetings of the current Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services committees in the morning. Members then gathered in meetings of the council's new committees: Budget and Finance; Legal and Constitutional Review; Christian Community and Leadership; Service and Justice; and Faith, Society, and Innovation. The committees elected chairs. A midday prayer service was held in the Red Oak Ballroom, led by the Rev. Barbara J. Collins, bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship, and Ms. Marit E. Johnson, official documentation manager, served as musicians.

**CONVERSATION ON CULTURAL HUMILITY**

Council members met for a conversation on cultural humility at 2:00 p.m. Minutes were not kept.

**CALL TO ORDER AND EXECUTIVE SESSION**

(Agenda II.A.)

Vice President Peña called the second plenary session to order at 3:20 p.m. (CDT). The Church Council immediately entered into executive session for a legal briefing. Minutes for meetings held in executive session are added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The council returned to open session at 3:53 p.m. (CDT).

**PROCESS OBSERVATION**

Mr. James J.F. Jennings provided a process observation.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

(Agenda II.B.)

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, reported that 2022 Churchwide Assembly voting members had been invited to submit up to three names to identify potential nominees for vice president of the ELCA. As of 12:00 p.m. on Apr. 1, 2022, 21 persons had been identified. The deadline to submit possible nominee names was at midnight on Apr. 1. Those who are willing to have their names be considered must submit biographical forms by May 1, 2022. The biographies will be posted online and in the Churchwide Assembly Guide app but will be removed on the first day of the assembly before the assembly is called to order. The secretary stressed that this is an identification process and not a nomination process. The first ballot for vice president will be an ecclesiastical ballot on which any eligible layperson may be nominated. This identification process was first used before the 2016 Churchwide Assembly for that year's election of the vice president and again before the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for the election of the secretary.

The Nominating Committee submitted a slate of names for the incoming Nominating Committee class for the Church Council to consider *en bloc*. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly will vote on this slate as well as on those for the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, the Church Council, and the boards of the separately incorporated ministries.

Secretary Rothmeyer reviewed two appendices attached to her written report. One named the churchwide organization representatives assigned to the various synod assemblies, and the other lists 2021 Church Council calls that have been issued. The secretary was previously given the authority by the Church Council to issue such calls. Secretary Rothmeyer would like the council to reconsider this process.

**REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT WORKING GROUP**

(Agenda II.C.)

Mr. Keoni Newman and Mr. Noah F. Roux reported on behalf of the Church Council Youth and Young Adult Working Group. Other members include the Rev. Marcus A. Bigott, Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb, Mr. Ismael E. Danforth, Ms. Divine, and Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger. The primary objective of the working group is to examine how youth and young adult members of the Church Council may assist the churchwide organization in engaging one million new, young, and diverse people. The working group posed the questions, "Once we engage these one million new members, how do we retain and engage them?" and "If your congregation had young adults come to your congregation on Sunday, would you have the support in your congregation to retain them?"

The working group noted the need to define the term “engaged.” The group is excited about programming already occurring with young adults through the churchwide organization, especially through the Young Adult Ministry team. New “Gather” grants will allow synods to fund programs specifically for young adults.

In the future, the working group plans to meet with leaders across the ELCA and work more closely with the ELCA Young Adult Ministry Team’s steering committee. Mr. Newman and Mr. Roux expressed their hope to bring more concrete proposals to future council meetings.

Council members encouraged the working group to connect with the Innovation home area, outdoor ministries and Bible camps, campus ministries, and military chaplains.

## REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.D.)

Mr. Gary A. Pederson, chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, reported on items the council would consider *en bloc*, including proposed amendments to the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, a rule for hearings prior to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, additional proposed bylaw amendments to forward to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, a continuing resolution amendment relating to former churchwide staff’s ability to serve on boards and committees, and amendments to Portico Benefit Services’ bylaws. The committee elected Mr. Kevin Anderson as its incoming chair.

## PROPOSED CONTINUING RESOLUTION AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS OF THE ELCA

(Agenda II.D.1.)

Mr. Pederson moved the action. He explained that this action established the three new Church Council standing committees: Service and Justice, Christian Community and Leadership, and Faith, Society, and Innovation.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC22.04.07

*Two-thirds required*

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,” effective pursuant to Church Council action CC21.11.26, which calls for full implementation immediately following the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

RECESS

The 110th meeting of the Church Council recessed at 4:32 p.m. (CDT) and reconvened at 4:44 p.m. (CDT).

## REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda II.E.)

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, chair of the Conference of Bishops and bishop of the New Jersey Synod, reported that the Conference of Bishops was able to gather in-person Mar. 3–5, 2022. As the conference had not met in-person for two years, the majority of the meeting was conducted in retreat format and focused on relationship building and anti-racism work. She concluded her report with prayer.

## REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.F.)

Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman, chair of the Board Development Committee, reported on the committee’s plans for ongoing racial justice and gender justice trainings at Church Council meetings. The committee also is planning a welcome video and will designate mentors for the incoming Church Council class.

Ms. Chatman announced that the Rev. Marcus A. Bigott will be the new chair of the committee and Mr. Loren A. Solberg will be vice chair.

### **REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

(Agenda II.G.)

The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, reported on the committee's final meeting. The committee will dissolve following the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and its work will be integrated into that of the three new standing committees. The committee reviewed the report on the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity and considered how this strategy could impact decisions across the ecology of the ELCA.

### **PERSONAL REFLECTION ON FAITH**

Mr. Joseph T. Nolte provided a personal reflection on faith.

### **PROCESS OBSERVATION**

The Rev. Marcus Bigott provided a process observation.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Secretary Rothmeyer made announcements regarding the informal conversations scheduled to take place Friday evening. The Executive Committee of the Church Council would meet Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. with current and incoming committee chairs.

### **RECESS**

Mr. James J.F. Jennings offered a closing prayer. The Spring 2022 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 5:22 p.m. (CDT) on Friday, Apr. 1, 2022.

Saturday, Apr. 2, 2022  
PLENARY SESSION III

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice President Peña called the third plenary session to order at 9:03 a.m. (CDT).

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

(Agenda III.A.)

Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer of the ELCA, reported on financial results through Jan. 31, 2022. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$8 million. Mission Support exceeded budget by 0.9%. Thirty-two synods increased their giving in FY21 over FY20. Unrestricted direct gifts were at 94% of budget. Bequests were \$3 million above budget. When bequest income exceeds the budget, the difference is allocated to the Mission Development Fund, which funds new ministries. Overall spending was at 90% of budget.

Treasurer Fedyk reviewed possible expenses for a future capital campaign. While a capital campaign is not planned at this time, excess revenues from FY21 could allow for funds to be set aside for future use. Mr. James J.F. Jennings, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, was to bring forth that action during the report of the Budget and Finance Committee. There would also be an action item related to expenses for the ELCA Youth Gathering incurred due to the cancellation of the 2022 gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Direct giving for ELCA World Hunger in FY21 was \$20.7 million. Total income was \$22.9 million, while total spending was at 91.6% of budget.

At the Nov. 2022 meeting, the Church Council acted to request that churchwide offices and home areas reduce spending by 5%. Certain areas, because of the nature of their work, were not able to reduce spending by that amount. The Office of the Treasurer is working to reallocate adjust the budget, which includes increased funding for ethnic-specific and multi-cultural ministries in the Service and Justice home area and additional investments in ELCA World Hunger for further grant disbursements.

Treasurer Fedyk reviewed the proposed budget for the 2023–2025 triennium. The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration, explained how the percentages of funds could be reallocated. Currently the churchwide organization plans 98% of the budget for core ministries with 2% directed to innovation and new ministries. The new proposal recommends 70% budgeted to core ministries, 20% to adjacent ministries (programs that are redeveloped to reach new audiences), and 10% to new programs, initiatives, innovation, and new ministries.

The triennium proposal projects a 2.1% decline in Mission Support per year and an annual 7% increase in fundraising. The income proposal for ELCA World Hunger is just under \$23 million for each year and assumes that spending will equal income.

**REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda III.B.)

Mr. James J.F. Jennings, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, reported that the committee had received reports from the Resource Development Committee, from an investment advisor, and from the senior director for Mission Support. The committee had reviewed the churchwide organization's cash management position and the proposed 2023–2025 triennial budget.

Mr. Jennings moved the action regarding funds for a possible capital campaign that Treasurer Fedyk addressed in her report.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.08**

**To approve the establishment of a Church Council designated fund, entitled Campaign Readiness Fund, in the amount of \$3.0 million to be used to assess the feasibility of a fundraising campaign at a future date.**

Mr. Jennings then moved the action concerning the ELCA Youth Gathering fund that Treasurer Fedyk discussed in her report.

There being no discussion, chair led the vote on the action.

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**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.09** To add \$1.5 million to the Youth Gathering designated fund, to be used to offset losses incurred by the Youth Gathering related to the cancellation of the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering and to provide start up support for the future ELCA Youth Gathering events.

Mr. Jennings then moved the action related to the FY22 spending authorization for the churchwide organization. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.10** To increase the FY22 spending authorization in the Current Fund by \$650,271, from \$65,816,150 to \$66,466,421.

Mr. Jennings moved the motion related to FY22 spending allocations for ELCA World Hunger. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.11** To increase the FY22 spending authorization in ELCA World Hunger by \$3,321,700, from \$22,665,000 to \$25,986,700.

Mr. Jennings moved the proposed triennium budget recommendation.

A member asked about opportunities to increase rental income from the Lutheran Center as remote and hybrid work have altered the use of the building. Treasurer Fedyk noted that the churchwide organization is exploring further rental opportunities. Another member asked about increased fundraising for innovation. Treasurer Fedyk responded that the Office of the Treasurer is committed to aligning the proposed budget with the strategic vision.

There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.12** *To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

**2023 Budget Proposal**

To approve a 2023 current fund spending authorization of \$68,814,000;  
To approve a 2023 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$22,869,000; and  
To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorizations after periodic review of revised income estimates.

**2024 Budget Proposal**

To approve a 2024 current fund income proposal of \$70,191,000;  
To approve a 2024 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$22,930,000; and  
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

**2025 Budget Proposal**

To approve a 2025 current fund income proposal of \$71,594,000;  
To approve a 2025 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$22,960,000; and  
To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

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**REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE**

(Agenda III.C.)

Ms. Sonja Wolfe, chair of the Program and Services Committee, reported on the committee's final meeting. The committee received reports on the Christian Community and Leadership Candidacy task force, progress on the government and civic engagement social statement, the Word and Service unified cross design, and the recommendation to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to archive certain social policy resolutions.

**PROCESS FOR PUBLIC REPENTANCE OF PATRIARCHY AND SEXISM**

(Agenda III.C.1.)

Ms. Wolfe reported that the Program and Services Committee also received a report on the process for public repentance of patriarchy and sexism, which is called for in the implementing resolutions of the social statement on *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*.

She moved the action.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.13**

**To authorize the formation of an *ad hoc* committee tasked with guiding a process for public repentance and a churchwide day of confession and repentance regarding the sins of patriarchy and sexism;**

**To appoint the following individuals to serve on the *ad hoc* committee: Ms. Tracey Beasley (chair), Bishop Anne Svennungsen, the Rev. Viviane Thomas-Breitfeld, and Ms. Sonja Wolfe;**

**To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint additional members to the *ad hoc* committee; and**

**To request the *ad hoc* committee provide periodic updates to the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee through at least the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.**

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda III.D.)

Secretary Rothmeyer moved the motions.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote on each action.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.14**

**To approve the revised Executive Committee Charter; and**

**To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.**

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.15**

**To approve the new and revised committee charters; and**

**To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

(Agenda III.E.)

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that there was one item of new business.

The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist raised the question of the length of council meetings. She proposed adding a day to the meeting to allow for additional relationship building and conversation.

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**CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC***

(Agenda III.F.)

Secretary Rothmeyer reported that there had been no requests to remove items from *en bloc* consideration.

***EN BLOC* APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS**

(Agenda III.G.)

A motion was made to take *en bloc* action on the remaining recommendations on the consent calendar. As the items were voted on *en bloc*, there was no discussion; the vice president called for the vote.

VOTED:

*Two-thirds required*

CC22.04.16

To adopt, *en bloc*, the following amendment to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*:

19.06.A~~2213~~.

A former full-time or part-time employee shall not be eligible for ~~a minimum of six~~ three years subsequent to such employment; for nomination or election to the board of ~~a the~~ separately incorporated ministry or committee related to the churchwide unit or office in which the employee served.

VOTED:

CC22.04.17

To take action *en bloc* on the remaining items listed in *En Bloc* Items, Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions, Responses to Previous Church Council Actions, and Responses to Synod Actions.

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**A. Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings**

In keeping with bylaws 20.22.14. and 20.24.04. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Committee on Appeals unanimously approved amendments to the “Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings” and recommended the amendments for approval by the Church Council. The revisions are for clarification and bring language into alignment with the constitution.

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC22.04.17a

To adopt the amendments to the “Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings against Rostered Ministers and Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.

**B. 2022 Churchwide Assembly “Rules of Organization and Procedure”**

Each triennium the Church Council submits a recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America regarding proposed “Rules of Organization and Procedure.” Voting members of the assembly act on the rules in the first plenary session of the assembly.

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC22.04.17b1

To recommend adoption of the following proposed action by the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:  
To adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force).

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC22.04.17b2

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church to prepare further editorial and scheduling revisions that may be found necessary for the Rules prior to their publication in the *Pre-Assembly Report*; and  
To report any changes to the Church Council at its August 2022 meeting.



**C. Rule for 2022 Churchwide Assembly Hearings**

For the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, the Office of the Secretary proposes holding electronic hearings prior to the assembly. Hearings are non-legislative sessions held to inform assembly voting members regarding important actions. In accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 14.13., the Church Council may adopt the rule, with a two-thirds vote required for adoption.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17c **To adopt the rule to hold hearings prior to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.**

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

Following the November 2021 Church Council meeting, additional amendments to certain bylaws have been identified for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly. The process for adopting bylaw amendments at a Churchwide Assembly is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution.

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

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17d **To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:  
To adopt, *en bloc*, the following amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**7.31.10.** Synod-authorized Ministry. When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not ~~possible~~ feasible to provide ~~appropriate pastoral leadership~~ rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament, the synod bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a minister of Word and Sacrament appointed by the synod bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod’s pastor. Such an individual will be trained to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synod leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

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

...

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, Pillow, Dauphin County, in the ~~state~~ commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

**E. Proposed Amendments to the Portico Benefit Services Restated Articles of Incorporation**

Portico Benefit Services executed a new office lease resulting in a change to its registered office location. As a Minnesota corporation, Portico Benefit Services is required to provide its new registered office location to the Secretary of State and in its articles of incorporation.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17e **To approve the amended Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA—Portico Benefit Services.**

**F. Deacons Unified Cross Design**

The unified cross design concept comes to the Church Council following two years of conversation among deacons, review of existing and comparable symbols used in diaconal ministry around the world, and engagement

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with potential manufacturers, and designers. This symbol will serve as one of the primary symbols for the ministry of Word and Service in the ELCA.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC22.04.17f**        **To affirm the design concept for a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service;**  
                         **To request that the Christian Community and Leadership home area programs for**  
                         **worship and candidacy, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, proceed with**  
                         **executing an agreement with a manufacturer and distributor;**  
                         **To request that the churchwide organization create appropriate communication to ministers**  
                         **of Word and Service and synods about the process to purchase deacon cross pins; and**  
                         **To update existing or create new guidance and educational resources related to the**  
                         **symbols of the ministry of Word and Service.**

**G. Archiving of Certain Social Policy Resolutions**

Social policy resolutions (SPRs) serve as this church's policy directives until a) replaced by subsequent resolutions, b) rendered moot by subsequent social teaching documents, or c) sent to archive by a Churchwide Assembly. A review for relevance shall be initiated 25 years after adoption. Social policy resolutions are adopted in a particular social context, and this planned review of their continued relevance enables subsequent generations of church leaders to consider whether a resolution should continue to represent the policy of this church.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC22.04.17g**        ***To recommend adoption of the following proposed en bloc action by the 2022 ELCA***  
                         ***Churchwide Assembly:***  
                         **To archive the social policy resolutions identified in the “2022 Archiving of Certain Social**  
                         **Policy Resolutions” document, in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the**  
                         **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).**

**H. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the Nov. 11–13, 2021 meeting 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 Nov. 11, 2021, Dec. 13, 2021, Jan. 25, 2022, and Feb. 22, 2022, have been provided electronically to members on Church Council Microsoft Teams.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC22.04.17h**        **To approve the minutes of the Nov. 11–13, 2022, meeting of the Church Council; and**  
                         **To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the**  
                         **Nov. 11, 2021, Dec. 13, 2021, Jan. 25, 2022, and Feb. 22, 2022, meetings.**

**I. Church Council Nominations and Elections**

The Church Council has the responsibility for electing people to fill terms on boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries (SIMs), 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 also elects nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC22.04.17i1**        **To elect to the board of directors of United Lutheran Seminary to a term beginning July**  
                         **1, 2022 and expiring June 30, 2025: Mr. Bernie S. Annor and the Rev. Judith Anne Sullivan.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC22.04.17i2**        **To elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary to a four-year term beginning July**  
                         **1, 2022, and expiring June 30, 2026: Ms. Maria G. Cowles, Mr. Steven D. Huseh, Mr. Michael**  
                         **M. Jerstad, Ms. Brenda Skelton-Bendtsen, and Mr. Clarence M. Smith.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17i3 To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to a term beginning Oct. 1, 2022, and expiring Sept. 30, 2024: The Rev. Bridget P. Jones.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17i4 To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary at California Lutheran University to a term beginning in June 2022 and expiring in June 2025: The Rev. Manuel Retamoza, the Rev. John M. Reutter-Harrah, and the Rev. Kirsten Sauey Hofmann.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17i5 To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term beginning July 1, 2022, and expiring June 30, 2025: The Rev. Jack Sullivan, Jr.

#### J. Nominating Committee

The Church Council nominates individuals for possible election to the Nominating Committee by the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with 12.51.03. and 19.11.01. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The committee has a range of 12 to 18 members. At least one but no more than three members must be from any of the nine regions of this church. Members serve one six-year term (or until a successor is elected) and are not eligible for re-election.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC22.04.17j To receive the written report of the Office of the Secretary on nominees for the Churchwide Nominating Committee;

To note that bylaw 19.11.01. states in regard to the Nominating Committee: “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 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 criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor;”

To request, therefore, that the Church Council restrict the tickets to the following: lay woman; lay man (YA); lay man (PC/L); lay man (Region 6); minister of Word and Service (Region 3); minister of Word and Sacrament (PC/L); and minister of Word and Sacrament; and

To request that the Church Council transmit the following slate of nominees to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly:

##### Churchwide Nominating Committee

###### Group 1: Lay Woman

- A. Ms. Susan Humphrey, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C)
- B. Ms. Rachel Line, Pacifica Synod (2C)

###### Group 2: Lay Man (YA)

- A. Mr. Carlos F. Ferrufino, Rocky Mountain Synod (2E)
- B. Mr. Matthew Lang, Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D)

###### Group 3: Lay Man (PC/L)

- A. Mr. Christopher A. Vergara, Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)
- B. Mr. Nathaniel P. Viets-VanLear, Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)

###### Group 4: Lay Man (Region 6)

- A. Mr. Ethan A. Roberts, Southern Ohio Synod (6F)
- B. Mr. George Watson, Southeast Michigan (6A)

###### Group 5: Minister of Word and Service (Region 3)

- A. Deacon Krista Lind, Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)

B. Deacon Amanda Randall, South Dakota Synod (3C)

**Group 6: Minister of Word and Sacrament (PC/L)**

- A. The Rev. Eleanor Dutta, Central States Synod (4B)
- B. The Rev. Kwame Pitts, Upstate New York Synod (7D)

**Group 7: Minister of Word and Sacrament**

- A. The Rev. Jonathan Hemphill, Southeastern Synod (9D)
- B. The Rev. Bradley E. Schmeling, Saint Paul Area Synod (3H)

**K. Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies**

During the COVID-19 pandemic and redesign of the churchwide organization, the churchwide organization embraced a People First Hybrid Workplace Model. This new model necessitates amendments to the telecommuting policy within the personnel policies to reflect this new arrangement. However, more internal review is needed before these can be presented.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

CC22.04.17k      **To authorize the Executive Committee to approve the amended Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies prior to the August 2022 Church Council meeting.**

**RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ACTIONS**

**L. Sanctuary**

*Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.03.07]*

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;

To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy “Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities” (AMMPARO);

To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and

To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS, and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;

To declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body; and

To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

*Executive Committee Action [EC19.09.28.a6]*

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on Sanctuary to the Global Mission and Domestic Mission units, in consultation with the AMMPARO (“Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) team, LIRS and other appropriate churchwide organization 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.

*Response from the AMMPARO Team (November 2019)*

There are essentially three requests from the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for further action:

1. educational materials for congregations and synods;
2. guidance for the three expressions of this church on what it means to be a sanctuary church body from the Church Council in consultation with the churchwide organization; and
3. a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

In terms of educational materials, the churchwide office has already produced talking points, an overview of sanctuary, and a video answering frequently asked questions. A new congregational study titled “Transformed Communities: Freed for Radical Welcome,” originally produced by Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, has been edited by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) with significant input by AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant

Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities) staff as a Bible study for congregations to begin to discern their work with migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. More materials will continue to be produced.

In order to provide the requested guidance for the three expressions on what sanctuary means, AMMPARO staff, as well as others at the churchwide office, have reached out to other denominations who have supported sanctuary congregations to receive any materials and resolutions that they have produced. A small group of churchwide staff has been assembled as an advisory team to the AMMPARO Sanctuary team to oversee this process and recommends the following five-step process:

1. Convene the five sanctuary synods and selected sanctuary hosting congregations to receive their guidance and suggestions in January 2020. Representatives from LIRS and churchwide staff will be included.
2. Get feedback, if possible, on preliminary conclusions at the March 2020 joint meeting of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops.
3. Present a draft of the final report to the Fall 2020 Conference of Bishops meeting for feedback.
4. Present the definitions and final report to the Church Council at its fall 2020 meeting.  
Release the definitions, together with tools for synods and congregations, to use following the Church Council's action. These tools will be guides for those who wish to engage around sanctuary. Resources will be available shortly after the approval of the definitions by the Church Council.

A report will be presented at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with a final report presented to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

*Church Council action [CC19.11.47t]*

To receive the response on “Sanctuary” from the AMMPARO (“Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) team;

To affirm the timeline proposed in the response;

To request that the definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body for the three expressions of this church be provided to the Church Council's Fall 2020 meeting;

To request a final report be provided to the Church Council's Spring 2022 meeting in anticipation of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

*Response from the AMMPARO Sanctuary Team (November 2020)*

The ELCA AMMPARO Team received significant input at the March 2020 joint Conference of Bishops and Church Council meeting as well as through the online feedback form for congregational members. A variety of opportunities were contemplated but were not possible to carry out as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To respond to these changed conditions, the online feedback survey was heavily promoted and kept open for additional time in order to receive more input. The analysis of the input timeline was modified, which has delayed the drafting of definitions and guidelines.

The current uncertainty around future policy makes the drafting of effective guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body most difficult at this time. The ELCA constituency would best be served by guidelines that respond to the post-election context.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertain policy future around immigration issues as a result of the fall elections, the ELCA AMMPARO Team respectfully requests the Church Council postpone its receipt of the definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body until the Spring 2021 meeting of the Church Council.

*Church Council action [CC20.11.33t]*

To receive the update from the AMMPARO (“Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) Team on definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body;

To extend the deadline for these definitions and guidelines to the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting; and

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

*Response from the AMMPARO Team in the Service and Justice unit (Spring 2021)*

The Service and Justice unit developed the “ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines” to provide guidance to congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization on the invitation to action from the Sanctuary Memorial,

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recognizing that this church’s understanding of sanctuary will evolve amid changing contexts. The document can be located in the April 2021 Church Council meeting materials.

*Church Council action [CC21.04.07]*

To recognize that the ELCA’s ministry as a sanctuary church body is a public witness that calls ELCA members to value the dignity of each human being made in God’s image;

To thank the churchwide staff for the development of additional resources that provided education and discernment around sanctuary;

To encourage an understanding of the word ‘sanctuary’ that is rooted in the principles of walking alongside, or accompanying, immigrants and refugees while acknowledging that the word ‘sanctuary’ has no legal or universally accepted definition; and

To affirm the guidance provided in the “ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines” for ways congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization can accompany and support the ministry of sanctuary.

*Response from the AMMPARO Team in the Service and Justice unit (Spring 2022)*

Following the affirmation of the “ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines” by the ELCA Church Council at its Spring 2021 meeting, the guideline document was publicized and posted on the Sanctuary Church page on the ELCA website. AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) team received only positive expressions of thanks from people who were seeking this guidance. No negative feedback was received. As an additional resource for congregations interested in sanctuary, a “Sanctuary Discernment Guide” was produced and is in the final stages of editing before it will be posted on the ELCA Sanctuary Church webpage. This guide is actualized to this current context and will provide help to any congregation interested in better understanding sanctuary as well as information to congregations looking to declare sanctuary.

AMMPARO submitted a question to the 2020 Form C for congregations and received some astonishing information. At the end of 2020, 1692 congregations reported having discussed sanctuary in their congregations as a result of the sanctuary memorial, while 1693 congregations expressed a desire to learn more about sanctuary. The “Sanctuary Discernment Guide” will be offered to these congregations for their further study. A careful examination of the list of congregations interested in learning more about sanctuary reveals that every synod in the ELCA has at least one or two congregations and in some cases, dozens of congregations interested in learning more about sanctuary. Based upon the results of previous Form C questions that AMMPARO has submitted, a clear pattern of growing congregational interest, engagement and advocacy for migrant and refugees is visible and can be celebrated.

Sanctuary is not being requested in this current context. In fact, almost all persons who were previously in sanctuary in ELCA congregations have left sanctuary. The “ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines” and the new “Sanctuary Discernment Guide” will provide important resource material for all should the need arise in the future.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC22.04.171 To receive with gratitude the final report on “Sanctuary” from the AMMPARO (“Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) Team in the Service and Justice unit; and  
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

**RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS**

**M. Climate Change Action**

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.

	<b>Sustainability Table Description</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	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.
<b>Goal</b>	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.
<b>Design</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Develop specific goals and measurements</b></li> <li><b>2. Establish Steering Committee members:</b> Advocacy; Young Adult, Domestic Mission, Global Mission, Mission Advancement, Synods/Congregations, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC)</li> <li><b>3. Create Smaller Working Issue Groups:</b> Communication, Education, Advocacy, Energy/Building Grounds, Worship, Justice (racial, ethnic, economic, environmental) and Funding.</li> </ol>
<b>Membership</b>	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.
<b>Meeting Timeline</b>	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 the 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

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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.

The 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 to 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. The 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 to 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), and the US also having rejoined the Paris Agreement." The 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.

*Church Council action [CC21.11.25t]*

- 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.

*Response from Service and Justice (Spring 2022)*

The Sustainability Table (Table) established in 2019 assists ELCA in addressing climate change. The Sustainability Table includes Building Resilient Communities (BRC), Witness in Society (WIS), and ELCA members of the congregations. Below is a synopsis of the ongoing climate change work.

Table's work includes preparing ELCA congregations' and ministries' capacities for building resilient communities in the face of climate change and environmental matters.

The Table's Steering Committee decided to re-evaluate the needs of this church. These include a focus on establishing a website to provide resources on sustainability for churches and congregations and addressing historical environmental justice issues. The [Sustainability Website](#), while the committee continues to improve it, will eventually test the site with diverse ELCA focus groups. The Table is also working with ELCA Development Operations to explore options for external funding from federal and state sources. The Table's goal of becoming more diverse includes extending invitations to area desk managers.

WIS led 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 finalized the Paris Agreement Rulebook and continued with crucial discussions on climate finance, impacts that cannot be addressed by mitigation and adaptation measures (loss and damages), and raising commitments from all to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. WIS continues the climate change work within ELCA (including BRC and Lutheran Disaster Response) and with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular (eNGO) groups external to ELCA. In February 2022, ACT Alliance, Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and WIS sponsored a side-event to the [United Nations Environment Assembly](#), entitled "Voices of Hope and Faith: Sharing visions of living in harmony with nature," presenting an opportunity for youth, indigenous people and women to voice a call for action now.

BRC and WIS are partnering to initiate a Creation Care Steward pilot project in Pennsylvania for reducing the carbon footprint of worship facilities, camps, seminaries, and other facilities. The learnings from this project will be shared with the rest of ELCA to help chart the path to Net-Zero by 2050. BRC and WIS are accompanying communities on the journey to a livable future where no one is left behind. Thus far, 24 churches, both campuses of United Lutheran Seminary, and three camps have elected to join the project. Each 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. WIS is working with the World Resources Institute, Georgetown University, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency to develop the tools for conducting the assessment.

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.

While this work continues, this is the final report to Church Council.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC22.04.17m**      **To receive with gratitude the final report on climate change from the Witness in Society Team in the Service and Justice unit.**

**N. Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent**

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

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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 it does 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.

*Church Council action [CC21.11.25u]*

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.

*Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Spring 2022)*

Christian Community and Leadership Home Area is gathering data from three synods about rostered ministers of color and the size of the congregations they serve. A [study](#) done by The Episcopal Church USA suggests a strong correlation between the size of the ministry and compensation for a rostered minister ([additional narrative to study](#)). The study also would suggest one way to address the issue raised would be to include rostered ministers of color in interviewing for large member congregations. This will be reported in Fall 2022.

A [report](#) indicating wait times for candidates of color seeking first calls accompanies this response to the Church Council. A plan to address this inequity needs to be developed by the Conference of Bishops who oversee first call placements.

Conversations between Portico Benefit Services and the ELCA churchwide organization continue regarding the sharing of data and the needs to protect privacy as well as to help the church understand the trends related to compensation.

The data and additional information being collected will be shared with the Quality of Call Initiative that will begin the work of improving the quality of call for rostered ministers of color that will most include wait time and compensation.

The Christian Community and Leadership home area will provide an update and progress report for the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting with a final report coming to the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC22.04.17n**

**To receive the progress report from the Christian Community and Leadership unit regarding the research work related to 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 Fall 2022 Church Council meeting and a final report be presented at the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.**

RESPONSES TO SYNOD ACTIONS

**O. Ethiopia**

*Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2021]*

WHEREAS, Ethiopia—a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country—has been in the news for over four decades affected by natural and human caused disasters, drought, famine and war; and

WHEREAS, due to severe political persecution under three successive Ethiopian regimes over the last four decades has meant targeted imprisonment and killing, especially of the Oromo people, the largest group in Ethiopia; and

WHEREAS, the Oromo people belong to many faiths—Evangelical Christian (Lutherans), Islam, and Waaqeffataa—and members of these groups are refugees, many of whom fled on foot to neighboring countries to seek safety in different parts of the world; and

WHEREAS, since late 1970s and early 1980s the largest Oromo refugees were assisted and resettled by Lutheran Social Services and International Institute of Minnesota, by extension the largest East African communities are in the state of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, among those refugees there were members of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), which is the Lutheran Church in Ethiopia—the most targeted group because of members’ faith, especially under the Marxist regime (1974–1991) and again by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front regime (1991–2018)—who were targeted because of their demand for human rights and justice; and

WHEREAS, some of those refugees (former members of EECMY) faithfully continued to worship the Lord by setting up Bible study groups in their own Oromo language in their newly adopted country and soon grew to become full-fledged congregations, including Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church of Minnesota (OROECM); and

WHEREAS, members of OROECM still have friends and family members back in Ethiopia under continued persecution, severe human rights violation, and total insecurity which has led to starvation, absolute poverty, and a state of war; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urges the Office of the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA to call upon the office of the prime minister of Ethiopia to respect and uphold the human rights and security of all Ethiopian people and refrain from arbitrary arrest and incarceration, especially through the targeting of Oromo people and respect the rule of law; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urges the Service and Justice unit, through the Lutheran Office for World Community, to call upon the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Council, and all other faith groups within the country, to help to resolve all differences between the government and the opposition parties peacefully so that peace prevails, and necessary normal governing functions can prevail, including peaceful elections and the transfer of power according to the law of the land; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urges the Office of the Presiding Bishop to call upon the president of the Lutheran World Federation and the general secretary of the World Council of Churches to assist these faith communities in facilitating the discussions leading to peace in the land and to provide technical support as needed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urges the Office of the Presiding Bishop to call upon the office of the prime minister of Ethiopia to realize that a perpetual state of war, human rights abuse, injustice, imprisonment, and killings never provide solutions and instead to opt for peaceful solutions and goodwill among all the people of Ethiopia; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly urges the Office of the Presiding Bishop to call upon the office of the prime minister of Ethiopia to release all political prisoners without any precondition and call all political and concerned parties into a national dialogue to resolve the ongoing conflict.

*Response from the Service and Justice home area (Spring 2022)*

The resolution calls for actions by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Service and Justice home area, and the Lutheran Office for World Community.

It is recommended that the Church Council:

- 1) Take note of the Minneapolis Area Synod resolution on Ethiopia;
- 2) Ask the presiding bishop to take note as well and inform the other relevant churchwide offices of the resolution’s contents; and
- 3) Ask the presiding bishop to consider and then take such actions as she may deem appropriate.

VOTED:

CC22.04.17o

To receive the resolution on “Ethiopia” from the Minneapolis Area Synod and the response from the Service and Justice home area;

*EN BLOC*

**To request that the presiding bishop consider the resolution and inform the Lutheran Office for World Community, Service and Justice home area, and other relevant churchwide home areas of the contents of the “Ethiopia” resolution;**

**To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to take the actions deemed most appropriate; and  
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

**P. Amending Gendered Constitutional Language**

*Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2022]*

Whereas the Greater Milwaukee 2021 Synod Assembly called for amendments to the binary language related to gender in this church’s and this synod’s governing documents (2021 SA Resolution 2), we, the Synod Council of the Greater Milwaukee Synod,

RESOLVE, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America consider and recommend the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and 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.

**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~~ 50 percent of the lay members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be **people who identify as: women, transgender, non-binary, gender queer, agender, bigender, gender non-conforming, or gender expansive** 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 **many genders. 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 **gender diversity 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 ~~50~~ 45 percent of the lay members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be **people who identify as: women; transgender, non-binary, gender queer, agender, bigender, gender non-conforming, or gender expansive**; 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 **many genders. 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.

~~**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.~~

**10.21.03.** In strengthening interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and in fostering relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as with ecumenical and global companions, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- b. fostering organizations for ~~people of all ages and genders youth, women, and men~~, and organizations for language or ethnic communities;
- 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 at least one of whom shall be a person who identifies as: a woman, transgender, non-binary, gender queer, agender, bigender, gender non-conforming, or gender expansive; shall be voting members. 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~~ 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women, ~~transgender, non-binary, gender queer, agender, bigender, gender non-conforming, or gender expansive~~, and, ~~as nearly as possible~~, at least 45 percent shall be men.
- 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 ~~multiple genders women and men~~ and for laypersons and rostered ministers.

And, be it further,

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Church Council, with guidance from the Office of the Secretary, shall establish a formal process to review the gender-specific language in this church’s governing documents, social statements, and policies no less than every three years.

*Executive Committee action [EC22.02.06b]*

To refer the “Amending Gendered Constitutional Language” resolution from the Greater Milwaukee Synod to the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further action; and

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

*Response from the Office of the Secretary (Spring 2022)*

The Office of the Secretary notes that the proposed amendments to constitutional provisions called for by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council were received too late to meet the constitutionally mandated notification period detailed in 22.11.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*. For the Church Council to propose to the Churchwide Assembly an amendment to a provision, there must be official notice sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments thus would have needed to be forwarded to the Church Council for consideration prior to its November 2021 meeting; if the Council chose to propose amendments to the Churchwide Assembly, notification would have had to be presented to the synods no later than Feb. 8, 2022. While bylaws and continuing resolution amendments function under different requirements, the language proposed in the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council resolution would require first that the constitutional provisions to which these refer be amended. The Office of the Secretary will take these proposed amendments under review for possible consideration by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

In regard to the request for a formal review process for gender-specific language in this church’s governing and other documents, the Office of the Secretary has been actively involved in a recent revision of the Style Guidelines for the ELCA, which addresses use of gendered language in ELCA communications and documents. In addition, many of the proposed amendments to the governing documents that have been proposed by the Church Council to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly eliminate gendered references to people and were based on an extensive review of the constitutions of this church by Office of the Secretary staff.

**VOTED:**

**CC22.04.17p**

**To receive the response on “Amending Gendered Constitutional Language” resolution from the Office of the Secretary;**

**To request that the Office of the Secretary consider the amendment to the constitutional provision 5.01. and related bylaw and continuing resolution references as it reviews possible amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly;**

*EN BLOC*

**To direct the churchwide organization to adhere to the “ELCA Style Guide” to ensure the appropriate usage of gender inclusive language in ELCA communications and documents; and  
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

**Q. Guidance on Retired/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 this 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.

*Church Council action [CC21.11.25v]*

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.

*Response from the Office of the Secretary (Spring 2022)*

In response to the resolution from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council requesting guidance in performing the triennial review required by the roster manual of all rostered ministers who are retiring or who have been granted retired status, the Office of the Secretary has been in communication with the Rev. Kurt Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod. Bishop Kusserow has offered to be part of a working group that will develop such guidelines. In addition, Bishop Shelley Wickstrom of the Alaska Synod, a member of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops, has agreed to participate in the group, along with Deacon Connie Schmucker, assistant to the bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod. The Rev. Keith Fry, executive for Office of the Secretary administration, will provide staff support for the working group. An initial meeting is being set for early April with a tentative goal of having guidelines to present for consideration by the Roster Committee and the Conference of Bishops at the conference’s Fall 2022 meeting, in hopes of having a possible revision of the roster manual for approval at the Church Council’s November 2022 meeting.

**VOTED:**

**EN BLOC**

**CC22.04.17q**

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

**To anticipate a report and a possible revision of the “Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”; and**

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

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## **RECESS**

The 110th meeting of the Church Council recessed at 10:18 a.m. and reconvened at 10:30 a.m. (CDT).

## **PRIMER: CHURCH COUNCIL ROLE AT 2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

(Agenda III.H.)

Ms. Jodi S. Slattery, executive for governance, reviewed the public schedule and registration information for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to take place Aug. 9–12, 2022, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio. The Church Council will meet jointly with the Conference of Bishops and the synod vice presidents of the ELCA on Sunday, Aug. 7, before separating into individual meetings.

Proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative COVID-19 test will be required to attend the assembly.

Registration for the Church Council and Conference of Bishops begins Apr. 8, 2022. Registration for all other voting members opens Apr. 19. Members are encouraged to use the ELCA Churchwide Assembly Guide app on their own electronic devices or an ELCA-supplied tablet at the assembly to access assembly materials.

The theme for the assembly is “Embody the Word.” Legislative business will include the election of the vice president of the ELCA, elections to churchwide committees and boards of separately incorporated ministries, amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*, and memorials forwarded from synod assemblies. Hearings will take place electronically the week before the assembly.

## **PERSONAL REFLECTION ON FAITH**

Mr. Ismael E. Danforth shared a personal reflection on his faith.

## **PROCESS OBSERVATION**

Mr. Jennings provided a process observation

## **EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING**

Vice President Peña led discussion on the evaluation and debriefing of the meeting. Members discussed the length of council meetings and the possibility of extending sessions with electronic meetings in advance of in-person sessions.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Secretary Rothmeyer made final announcements and encouraged members to share joys and prayer concerns in the council’s Microsoft Teams channel.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Church Council adjourned at 11:19 a.m. (CDT) on Saturday, Apr. 2, 2022.

## **SENDING WORD AND PRAYER**

Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb led closing worship.

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