



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

October 2022

Dear friends,

Grace and peace to you. Following is a brief overview of what you can expect and what you should be prepared for at this upcoming Church Council meeting.

We look forward to welcoming the newly elected Church Council members to your first ELCA Church Council meeting. The installation of the new members will occur during the opening worship service on Thursday, Nov. 10 at 2 p.m. in the first floor Chapel at the Lutheran Center. Also, at this first meeting of a triennium, the committees will be orienting members to your respective committee's work. This is scheduled for the morning of Friday, Nov. 11.

Many action items will be *en bloc*, in other words acted together in one block. This is to allow time for strategic and generative conversations that are needed for the wellbeing of this church. If there is any action you do wish to discuss that is in *en bloc*, please notify Secretary Sue Rothmeyer during the Church Council meeting by Saturday, Nov. 12 at 9 a.m. This is also the deadline for any new business that you wish to add to the Church Council agenda.

Other helpful schedule items to note is a gender and racial justice education to be held Friday afternoon in the Augsburg Room of the Lutheran Center. Saturday evening you are on your own for dinner. The Board Development Committee will provide some recommendations for outings. There is still caution around Covid cases, so please bring a mask as some of the places you visit may require a mask.

Here are a few important items to read and prepare:

- Consideration of timelines for certain Churchwide Assembly business. As they are proposed timelines, most will be placed in the “*En Bloc*” folder.
- Recommended process and timeline to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. Conversation on this topic will occur in plenary session five. The Conference of Bishops also discussed the commission structure at its fall meeting. You are encouraged to read the *Report from the Conference of Bishops* in “Reports of Leaders and Other Ministries” folder.
- Debrief of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Survey results will be in “Other Documents” folder.
- Last but not least, during the Church Council meeting, we will hold elections for the three remaining positions for the Executive Committee of the Church Council; the process for this will be acted upon during the first plenary session on Thursday, Nov. 10.

The agenda will be posted about two weeks prior to the meeting. If you have particular questions about any of the matters above, I encourage you to reach out to Jodi Slattery, Jodi.Slattery@elca.org. I'm certain she will be happy to help you.

The documents for the meeting will be found in the Church Council Microsoft Teams within the Files section of the “Public Current Meeting” channel. The documents will have user-friendly indicators so you can see what is required reading, discussion-based reading, and information sharing. Please contact Joseph Schmidt, Joseph.Schmidt@elca.org, if you have problems accessing the Teams site.

Your servant leadership on Church Council is a blessing for this whole church. I give thanks to God for your partnership and faithful witness to the gospel.

God's peace,

Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
CHURCH COUNCIL
November 10-13, 2022
Provisional Schedule

Wednesday, November 9

3:00 p.m. Audit Committee, Pentecost

Thursday, November 10

10:00 a.m. Executive Committee, Epiphany

12:00 p.m. Lunch for Executive Committee, Outside Epiphany

2:00 p.m. **HOLY COMMUNION**, 1st Floor Chapel
Presider: Pr. Marcus Bigott
Preacher: Pr. Tara Lynn
Assisting Minister: Lori Fedyk
Lector: David Lenz
Installation of the newly elected Church Council members

3:30 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION ONE**, Council Room
Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda
Report from the Presiding Bishop
Report from the Vice President
Report of the Executive Committee
Stewardship conversation
Recess
Report from the Conference of Bishops
Report from the Administrative Team
Ecumenical Greeting, TEC
Personal Reflection on Faith, Kevin Anderson
Hymn and Prayer

6:30 p.m. **WELCOME DINNER**, Augsburg Room
Assorted sodas (complimentary); Wine and beer available (\$5 donation)

Friday, November 11

6:00 a.m. **BREAKFAST**, O'Hare Marriott Hotel (Buffet opens at 6:00 a.m.)

7:30 a.m. Board Development Committee, Epiphany I (*working breakfast*)

9:00 a.m. Committees meet (*various locations*)
Budget and Finance, 5th Floor Screening Room
Christian Community and Leadership, Epiphany I
Faith, Society, and Innovation, Pentecost
Legal and Constitutional Review, Advent
Service and Justice, Epiphany II

- 12:15 p.m. Mid-Day Prayer, 1st Floor Chapel
- 12:30 p.m. **LUNCH**, Augsburg Room
Ecumenical Liaison Lunch, reserved tables in Augsburg Room
- 2:00 p.m. Committees continue to meet (*various locations*)
Budget and Finance, 5th Floor Screening Room
Christian Community and Leadership, Epiphany I
Faith, Society, and Innovation, Pentecost
Legal and Constitutional Review, Advent
Service and Justice, Epiphany II
- 3:30 p.m. Break; Intentional one-on-one time for mentors and mentees
- 4:00 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION TWO**, Augsburg Room
First Ballot for Executive Committee
Gender and Racial Justice Education
Process Observation
Announcements
Prayer
- 7:00 p.m. **DINNER**, Augsburg Room
Church Council Young Adult Working Group, Epiphany I (*working dinner*)

Saturday, November 12

- 6:00 a.m. **BREAKFAST**, O'Hare Marriott Hotel (Buffet opens at 6:00 a.m.)
- 8:00 a.m. Tour of Lutheran Center (meet outside 1st Floor Chapel)
- 9:00 a.m. *Deadline for Removal of Items from En Bloc*
Deadline for New Business
Deadline for removal of name from Executive Committee ballot
- 9:00 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION THREE**, Council Room
Bible Study
Report from the Secretary
Report of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee
Report of the Christian Community and Leadership Committee
Personal Reflection on Faith, Susan Boxberger
Ecumenical Greeting, Moravian Church
- 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:45 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION FOUR**, Council Room
Legal Briefing, executive session
Second ballot for Executive Committee
Report of the Service and Justice Committee
Report of the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee
Process Observation
Announcements and Table Prayer

- 12:15 p.m. **SIM (Separately Incorporated Ministry) LUNCH PRESENTATIONS** (*various locations*)
1517 Media, Epiphany I
ELCA Foundation, Epiphany II
Portico Benefit Services, Pentecost
Mission Investment Fund, 4th floor Learning Center Planning Room
Women of the ELCA, Advent
- 2:00 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION FIVE**, Augsburg Room
Conversation on Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church
- 3:30 p.m. Break
- 4:00 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION SIX**, Augsburg Room
Report of the Church Council Young Adult Working Group
Consideration of Items Removed from *En Bloc*
En Bloc Approval of Certain Items
New Business
Report of the Board Development Committee
Personal Reflection on Faith, Divine
Process Observation
Announcements
Hymn and Prayer
- 5:30 p.m. **DINNER**, Dinner on own

Sunday, November 13

- 6:00 a.m. **BREAKFAST**, O’Hare Marriott Hotel (Buffet opens at 6:00 a.m.)
- 7:30 a.m. Executive Committee, Epiphany (*working breakfast*)
- 9:00 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION SEVEN**, Council Room
Debrief of 2022 Churchwide Assembly
Report from the Treasurer
Report of the Budget and Finance Committee
Report of the Executive Committee
Unfinished business
Process Observation
Evaluation and Debriefing
Announcements
Adjournment
- 11:30 a.m. **HOLY COMMUNION**, 1st Floor Chapel
Presider: Pr. Karn Carroll
Preacher: Pr. Khader El-Yateem
Assisting Minister: Noah Roux
Lector: Cherrish Holland
Offering Designation: “Where Needed Most” priority
- 12:30 p.m. Brown bag lunch available, Augsburg Room

Report from the Presiding Bishop

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly was notable for many reasons. It was the first time the ELCA held an in-person event of this size since the pandemic started, it took place in the same venue as the constituting assembly in 1987, and significant memorials and resolutions were passed. We also elected our new vice president Imran Siddiqui and you in the Church Council class of 2028.

The ELCA is 35 years old. It is fitting that we took time in Columbus, the site of the constituting assembly, to assess governance, roster requirements, synod and churchwide election procedures, a previous social statement, as well as looking forward to our responsibility for care of creation, the stewardship of our land and buildings so that they may be used as sources of funding for ministries for Indigenous peoples, and renewed attention to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. And we worshipped together always keeping the cross at the center.

This has set before the Church Council and the churchwide staff an ambitious agenda. Any one of the actions taken at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly would necessitate the expenditure of significant resources—theological, human, and financial. But the assembly directed the churchwide organization to take them all on at once. This on top of the significant redesign into which the churchwide organization is still growing (as you'll hear in the verbal report from the Administrative Team) and all of the other work mandated by previous assemblies and the constitution.

The memorial creating the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church states, "...to direct the Church Council to establish a Commission for a New Lutheran Church that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Church Council shall reconsider the Statements of Purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the Principles of Organization, and all matters pertaining thereunto, presenting its findings to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly." [CA22.01.06] This will require a governance lens, of course, but it also demands a theological and ecclesiastical lens as well.

The church's unique and proper work is to preach the gospel purely and administer the sacraments according to the gospel. "It is also taught that at all times there must be and remain one holy, Christian church. It is the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel." (CA VII German translation) The Church, of which we are part, is the only institution on earth given this task.

The Augsburg Confession gives a clear explanation of the gospel, "Likewise they teach that human beings cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits, or works. But they are justified as a gift on account of Christ through faith." (CA IV Latin translation). My colleagues in the Conference of Bishops have noticed a trend among some seminarians and rostered ministers of a lack of ability to articulate the gospel clearly. Some seminarians and rostered ministers define the gospel as social justice – feeding the hungry, standing with the poor and marginalized, racial equity, justice for migrants. These are all vitally important ministries in which this church must be engaged, but they are not the gospel. Rather, as you will hear from Dr. Mary Streufert, the Rev. Dr Carmelo Santos, and the Rev. Dr. Roger Willer either in committees or in plenary, these works of justice and mercy flow from the gospel. There are many secular NGOs and aid agencies who do the same work we do, just as there are many compassionate atheists who work for justice. Great! Let's cooperate with them. But we must be clear that it is Christ who sets us free to serve the neighbor.

When I began nine years ago, I lifted up these four emphases: We Are Church. We Are Lutheran. We Are Church Together. We Are Church for the Sake of the World. I still think they are pretty good. I was intentional about the order. As we take on the tasks given to us by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, as we work and deliberate as the Church Council, we must be clear about the gospel and the church's unique and proper work. In this way we will guard against a confusion of law and gospel and a reliance on our own efforts.

Report from the Vice President

Hi! I'm Imran Siddiqui and I'm new.

I officially became vice president of the ELCA on November 1, so this will most likely be one of the shortest reports you'll read from me. Since the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, things have been a bit of a whirlwind. The last few months I have been getting up to speed on things while trying to wrap my head around what I've done. I have purchased (and have had purchased for me) various books on *Robert's Rules of Order*, as it is what I must learn to chair our meetings. I have participated in the last few Executive Committee meetings since the assembly, taking especially close notice of how Carlos Peña ran those meetings (and he did a fantastic job and is quite an act to follow). I have even read the last few Church Council minutes, which are helpfully posted on the ELCA's website (<https://www.elca.org/Resources/Church-Council>). I am especially grateful for all the help and assistance by Jodi Slattery, executive for governance. I am sure I asked quite a lot of dumb questions, but she and administrative assistant Joseph Schmidt treated all of my surely bafflingly obvious questions with grace and patience.

I was thankful that in September, we had a Church Council orientation, where I and the other new Church Council members were able to come to Chicago and learn about our new roles and responsibilities. I especially appreciated the fellowship we newbies had during sessions, meals, and at the hotel bar after our work for the day was over. Everyone I met was passionate to advance God's mission in our world and had innumerable gifts that will truly be a blessing to any organization. We are lucky to have them serving on Church Council and I thank God for them.

In the last few months, I also chaired my final meeting as vice president of the Southeastern Synod. It was a bittersweet moment as I had really enjoyed my time serving the Southeastern Synod and building relationships with those Synod Council members. I thanked the Synod Council for the faith they had in me and how they've helped me grow in the last four years. Though I know they are in very good hands, I will miss working together with the friends I had made.

One thing I have been struck by in the last few months is the positivity and optimism I've witnessed in people in our church. There is a sense that God is working, and people want to be a part of it. I've seen so much cynicism in this church, so I really pray this hopeful feeling continues and guides our work together. I truly believe we can do great things together when we trust in God's promises. I have faith in our church to do what needs to be done. I have faith in each of you to listen to what God would have us do and to act upon it.

I spoke constantly about listening to each other at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and I will continue to do so in my new role. You may get tired of hearing me say so (and yes, I realize the irony of talking so much about listening). I truly believe that a church that listens to each other can be a model for how our society should live. So, I hope we will be a council that listens to one another. Truly listens. Not listens just enough to make a counter point, but actually, actively listens, hearing the other person's point of view. How can we say we love one another if we don't listen to one another? And I hope we are a council that loves one another as siblings in Christ should. Right after the election, I was asked how I can merge my beloved consensus-based decision making with Robert's Rules. My answer was (and remains) that I have no idea, but I have always felt the most important part of consensus was the conversation that it promoted and the give and take it required. I feel that if we are committed to listening to each other with all our hearts and being, we'll be more than halfway there.

We are tasked with many important things in the next three years, including reviewing the Mission Development Process, considering a social message on child abuse and protection, commissioning a study on pay gaps in rostered ministry, engaging an independent auditor to perform a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) audit of our church, reviewing On Leave from Call roster

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Report from the Vice President

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status, and establishing a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, among other things. It is a lot of work, but I have faith we can do this work and much more to make our church closer to what we hope and dream it to be.

I pray for safe travels for all of you and I look forward to spending time with you. Not just in doing God's work in the very impressive Church Council chambers, but in the fellowship and holy conversation in-between sessions after the day's business is done. I cannot wait to get to know each and every one of you. This has already truly been an honor and privilege to be elected and serve as your ELCA Vice President.

Blessings and love,

Imran Siddiqui

Vice President, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Report from the Secretary

In the months following our gathering in Columbus, Ohio, the assembly theme of “Embodiment the Word” has morphed into the Office of the Secretary (OS) theme of “Engage the Work!” While OS always has significant follow-through after any Churchwide Assembly, this year we have a broader and deeper agenda as we respond to the actions taken by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Constitutional Amendments

There were a number of amendments to this church’s governing documents that were approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Notification of the amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* has been sent to all synods and the revised *Constitution for Synods* has been posted on the Office of the Secretary page of ELCA.org. We encourage synod secretaries to incorporate promptly all required amendments into synod constitutions and to file copies of the revised documents with the Office of the Secretary.

Similarly, amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* have been posted on ELCA.org, as has the updated version of the *Model Constitution*. We have received a number of inquiries from congregations eager to revise their constitutions, but we know there are others who will need some urging to bring their governing documents up to date.

The revised *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* has been posted on ELCA.org as a .pdf. Print copies are expected to be available by the time of the Church Council meeting. For all three constitutions, Office of the Secretary staff has thoroughly revised the introductions in order to make them clearer and more accessible for users.

Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC)

Assembly

Action

CA22.01.06

Yes-738; No-72

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Northeastern Ohio Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Allegheny Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, Delaware-Maryland Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod concerning the restructure of the ELCA’s governance; and

To direct the Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church comprised of leaders of diverse representation from all three expressions that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, shall reconsider the statements of purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism, and will present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.

Kevin Anderson, Church Council member and chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, and I have begun conversation about the process to name members to the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) and to clarify the scope of the commission’s task. The Office of the Secretary engaged the Conference of Bishops in conversation during their meeting, and we look forward to conversation and deliberation with the Church Council at our November meeting.

The assembly also directed the Church Council “to engage an external auditor to conduct a comprehensive audit for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and*

Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA and related governance documents and present a report of the findings by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting.” The legal team and I have been engaged in conversations with numerous leaders working in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and accessibility, as well as representatives of several of our full communion partners, to understand the scope of this project. Based on these conversations, it appears that an audit of governing documents is quite different from a typical DEI audit of policies, practices, and institutional culture. We concluded that we needed someone experienced in DEI issues, church polity and relationships, and nonprofit governance to undertake this unique task. Accordingly, we have solicited a proposal from N. Neville Reid of the Swibel Fox law firm for presentation to the Church Council in November.

Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) and On Leave from Call (OLFC) Memorial Response

In addition to conversation regarding the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) during the Conference of Bishops meeting, we also had opportunity to receive input from bishops regarding the Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) and the memorial regarding On Leave from Call (OLFC).

The assembly called for specific revisions to the Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) to remove questions pertaining to current compensation. Those changes are currently in production with the IT team. The Leadership Committee also has had preliminary discussions about other potential revisions to the RMP and Ministry Site Profile (MSP) and will be discerning those in coming months. In addition, the Conference of Bishops has been consulted about changes to the disclosure questions that are asked of all rostered ministers, and OS is exploring with IT how to implement those changes.

The assembly also directed a review process of the roster manual and governing documents to consider policies and provisions concerning interim, transition, bridge, specialized, non-parish-based, and innovative calls, as well as on-leave from call status, protocols for removal from the rosters, and communication protocols, with a report and recommendations to be brought to the Fall 2024 meeting of the Church Council. Discussion and discernment with the Conference of Bishops will be a significant part of this process.

CWA Evaluation

The Churchwide Assembly Planning Team used three research questions to help evaluate this past assembly:

1. How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?
2. How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?
3. How connected to the mission and ministry of the wider church did voting members feel? What do they intend to share about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly with their home congregations?

Overall, the survey results indicated that voting members were inspired by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly (88%) and greatly valued being in fellowship with other Lutherans from around the country (97%).

Meeting at least twice with their synods prior to the assembly seemed to have contributed to voting members' feelings of preparedness, as that was the most common number of meetings reported, although 38% of voting members indicated they wanted to meet more than they did. The numbers were high regarding the nominations and elections process at the assembly. 95% of respondents indicated that they

were satisfied with the vice president election process. They were also satisfied with the process for electing members of churchwide boards, Church Council, and committees (76% agreed). 98% of respondents said there is important work being carried out across the ELCA, and 86% said they felt that the assembly accomplished much. As we look to future assemblies, the Office of the Secretary hopes to improve upon the experience of voting members so they feel better prepared and continue to leave the assembly with a strong sense of connection and engagement with the mission and ministry of the wider church.

Churchwide Assembly Common Ballot Elections

The Office of the Secretary sent letters immediately following the assembly to those who were elected (and those not elected) to the various churchwide committees. On September 13, we hosted introductory Zoom meetings for those elected to the Nominating Committee and the Committee on Discipline. An orientation for those newly elected to the Church Council was held September 23. The Committee on Appeals will meet virtually November 1.

2022 Congregation Reports

Looking ahead to the 2022 annual congregation report, the process by which each ELCA congregation receives a packet through the mail will remain the same. This packet contains a letter from the secretary, paper copies of Form A and Form C, instructional documents and the password congregations need to file their reports online.

It is particularly important that congregations file their reports this year, as the data from the 2022 report determines the number of voting members that each synod will be allocated for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

We will be implementing several changes in our communication strategy, specifically adding electronic communication. Congregations will receive the first communication about the annual report via email in mid-December. This email will inform congregations about the process and due dates for the annual report. Key steps and due dates include:

- **Early- to mid-January 2023:** The annual congregation report packet arrives through the mail
- **Mid-January 2023:** Congregations can begin submitting their forms online at www.elca.org/congregationreport
- **March 1, 2023:** Date by which all congregations should have submitted their report forms

For those congregations that want to get started before receiving their forms through the mail, an initial email will provide a link to a page containing electronic versions of the forms, instructions, and FAQs about the process.

As the March 1, 2023, due date approaches, congregations will receive an email reminder. Additional reminders will come in the forms of a *Seeds Monthly* article and a postcard through the mail.

Webinar for Synod Secretaries

We continue to host an annual Zoom gathering for those elected as synod secretaries. Twenty-three secretaries, one third of the total, joined us on September 20 to learn more about the duties of synod secretaries, the process for updating synod constitutions, reporting of synod actions, resolutions, and memorials, and archiving of documents. There were great questions and good discussion. As always, we in the Office of the Secretary stand ready to assist in training and informing synod officers.

While I am always grateful for the staff members of the Office of the Secretary, in the months leading up to and following an assembly this entire church has opportunity to witness the care and competence they bring to their work. Jodi Slattery chaired the Churchwide Assembly Committee with her usual attentiveness and commitment and worked with Adam DeHoek to create a helpful evaluation process. Dana Adams, together with Christina Ptack, Deanna Brend, and Rosa Perez, generously provided a hospitable presence both prior to and at the event. Keith Fry, along with Cathy Lundeen, Marit Johnson, Dan Eppley, and Joel Thoreson, graciously assisted the assembly with its work. (A special shout out to Dan, who joined the OS staff in July, and to Marit, who completed her time with OS on the final day of the assembly!) Tom Cunniff, Aja Favors, and Natalie Young made sure that the nomination and election processes went smoothly. MaryAnn Schwabe and Jennifer Johnson took seriously their role in “synod relations” by ensuring that not only synod bishops but other synod officers had the opportunity for meaningful connecting opportunities. On behalf of all of us in OS, I want to offer a special word of thanks to Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt and her staff, who welcomed us so warmly to Columbus and coordinated the wonderful work of the Local Arrangements Committee. It is indeed good to be church together!

Submitted by Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, ELCA Secretary

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER
FOR THE EIGHT MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2022**

Unrestricted Operating Results

For the first eight months of fiscal year 2022, unrestricted operating revenues are behind expenses by \$1.7 million compared to a budget loss of \$3.5 million. Despite an annual breakeven budget, the organization budgets a loss earlier in the year as our income streams are greater during the last quarter of the year. Compared to prior year through September; however, we are \$10 million behind. There are three primary reasons for this which will be discussed in more detail below: 1) investment performance, 2) increased expenses, 3) tightening of the budget in 2022.

While the churchwide organization benefitted from significant market appreciation in recent years, 2022 has yielded dismal results, consistent with the market in general. Continued geopolitical factors such as supply chain and inflation have resulted in market volatility. Investment losses for the first eight months were \$1.2 million compared to income in 2021 of \$2.2 million, reflecting a \$3.4 million swing. While this negatively impacts our income statement this year, these are unrealized losses, which as long-term investors, should rebound over time. It is important to note that we are in compliance with our investment policies.

Spending to date was at 88.3% of the authorized budget through September as compared to 80.8% at this time last year (an increase of \$8.7 million in 2022). We also know that similar to last year, some of the expenses that were budgeted earlier in the year will still be realized later this year. As it relates to the variance to budget of \$5.2 million, \$1.9 million is in compensation and benefits and relates to staff vacancies while \$2.3 million relates to grants which have been delayed. Travel costs have certainly increased over the past two years, both due to increased volume and inflation.

Also contributing to less favorability to prior year (higher spending as a percent of budget) is that in order to balance the 2022 budget, we reduced the programmatic budgets by 5% across the board versus 2021, based on historical spending trends. Even with similar year-to-year performance, the gap to between budget and actual will be smaller because there was less flexibility.

Operating revenues (before releases from restricted and designated funds) were \$2.0 million below plan, representing shortfalls in investment income (as discussed above), mission support, and endowment income. Mission Support through September was \$585K below budget and \$772K below prior year. The represents a shortfall to budget of 2.3%. Fundraising efforts which directly support our unrestricted budget, including Direct Gifts, Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission were \$309K over plan. The line entitled Total Designated and Restricted Funds released reflects only the releases from restriction to support work in Japan and

International Women's Leaders work in 2022; any release from the designated fund to cover budget shortfalls will not be done until year-end.

Given the current trends in mission support and investment income, we have asked the programmatic units to spend at 95% of budgeted spending for the year.

ELCA World Hunger

Individuals, congregations, and synods have generously supported ELCA World Hunger with nearly \$8 million in gifts over the eight-month period. These gifts, along with bequest and endowment income, has provided resources totaling \$10.6 million so far this year. Spending from World Hunger totals \$12.8 million. 2022 spending includes 156 international grants to companion churches, ecumenical and faith-based partners in 53 countries and 201 domestic grants to congregations and faith-based partners in 34 states and territories. 55 congregations in 32 states will receive Daily Bread matching grants and over \$300K has been awarded to the Pine Ridge Reservation for work on homelessness and programmatic needs at the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center.

Lutheran Disaster Response

Over \$17.3 million has been received through September, with over \$11.3 million for the Eastern Europe appeal and \$3.6 million for general disaster. The current plan for supporting Eastern Europe will span five years as well as a 5-year plan for continued hurricane rehabilitation and resiliency support in Puerto Rico. Domestically we have provided support for those impacted by wildfires, tornadoes, floods, and hurricanes.

From many perspectives, the world has been challenged in 2022 – inflation, investment performance, competition for employees, natural disasters, violence, white supremacy, life after the pandemic, and much more. But we are reminded in Isaiah 40:31, “But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” The good news is that we do not journey alone and for this, we give thanks. We continue to be grateful for the generous support of our members, congregations, and synods and work tirelessly in our efforts to make Jesus known in all we do. It is my privilege and pleasure to serve.

SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
For the Period Ending September 30, 2022

| | Year-to-Date Variance | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 2022 ACTUAL | 2022 BUDGET | 2021 ACTUAL | ACTUAL vs. BUDGET | CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/ (Unfavorable) |
| UNRESTRICTED | | | | | |
| Mission Support | \$ 24,475,976 | \$ 25,060,905 | \$ 25,247,599 | \$ (584,929) | \$ (771,623) |
| Other | 12,677,362 | 14,140,468 | 13,995,801 | (1,463,106) | (1,318,438) |
| TOTAL UNRESTRICTED | <u>37,153,338</u> | <u>39,201,373</u> | <u>39,243,400</u> | <u>(2,048,035)</u> | <u>(2,090,061)</u> |
| TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds Released | 437,655 | 1,866,829 | 622,000 | (1,429,174) | (184,345) |
| TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT | 37,590,993 | 41,068,202 | 39,865,400 | (3,477,209) | (2,274,407) |
| LESS TOTAL EXPENSES | 39,355,522 | 44,583,455 | 30,660,983 | (5,227,932) | 8,694,539 |
| NET REVENUE OVER (UNDER) EXPENSES | <u>\$ (1,764,529)</u> | <u>\$ (3,515,253)</u> | <u>\$ 9,204,417</u> | <u>\$ 1,750,723</u> | <u>\$ (10,968,946)</u> |

REVENUE SUMMARY
For the Period Ending September 30, 2022

| | Year-to-Date Variance | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| | 2022 | | 2021 | |
| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | ACTUAL | |
| UNRESTRICTED | | | | |
| Mission Support | \$ 24,475,976 | \$ 25,060,905 | \$ 25,247,599 | |
| Direct Gifts | 3,551,296 | 2,965,987 | 2,674,365 | |
| Investment Income | (1,204,802) | 1,528,000 | 2,180,924 | |
| Bequests and Trusts | 2,574,607 | 1,600,000 | 1,743,674 | |
| Endowment | 2,619,094 | 2,785,614 | 2,955,357 | |
| Rent | 1,161,229 | 1,195,562 | 1,230,846 | |
| Service Level Agreements/Other | 1,418,823 | 1,232,533 | 1,353,816 | |
| Missionaries | 1,006,174 | 1,125,362 | 773,164 | |
| YAGM | 550,940 | 707,411 | 83,654 | |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$ 37,153,338 | \$ 39,201,373 | \$ 39,243,400 | |
| TOTAL Designated and Restricted Funds | 437,655 | 1,866,829 | 622,000 | |
| Net Operating Revenue and Support | \$ 37,590,993 | \$ 41,068,202 | \$ 39,865,400 | |
| | | | | ACTUAL vs. BUDGET |
| | | | | Favorable/ (Unfavorable) |
| | | | | \$ (584,929) |
| | | | | 585,309 |
| | | | | (2,732,802) |
| | | | | 974,607 |
| | | | | (166,520) |
| | | | | (34,333) |
| | | | | 186,290 |
| | | | | (119,187) |
| | | | | (156,470) |
| | | | | - |
| | | | | \$ (2,048,035) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | (1,429,174) |
| | | | | \$ (3,477,209) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | \$ (771,623) |
| | | | | 876,931 |
| | | | | (3,385,726) |
| | | | | 830,933 |
| | | | | (336,263) |
| | | | | (69,617) |
| | | | | 65,007 |
| | | | | 233,010 |
| | | | | 467,287 |
| | | | | - |
| | | | | \$ (2,090,061) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | (184,345) |
| | | | | \$ (2,274,407) |

ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION
For the Period Ending September 30, 2022

| | <u>Actual</u> <u>Expenses</u> | <u>Spending</u> <u>Authorization</u> | Variance Favorable (Unfavorable) | Percent of Budget |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Home Areas | | | | |
| Christian Community & Leadership | 12,393,672 | 15,278,091 | 2,884,420 | 81.12% |
| Service and Justice | 7,369,546 | 8,698,013 | 1,328,467 | 84.73% |
| Innovation | 334,071 | 1,325,928 | 991,857 | 25.20% |
| Operations | 17,287,068 | 17,318,092 | 31,024 | 99.82% |
| Presiding Bishop | 7,701,882 | 7,591,658 | (110,224) | 101.45% |
| Treasurer | 6,103,921 | 6,204,149 | 100,228 | 98.38% |
| Secretary | 3,481,265 | 3,522,285 | 41,021 | 98.84% |
| OTHER | | | | |
| General Treasury | 171,528 | 108,664 | (62,864) | 157.85% |
| Depreciation | 1,799,638 | 1,854,667 | 55,028 | 97.03% |
| TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES | <u>39,355,522</u> | <u>44,583,455</u> | <u>5,227,932</u> | <u>88.27%</u> |

2023 Revised Budget Proposal Highlights

Narrative re: Revisions to 2023 Current Fund Budget

The ELCA constitution includes a Churchwide Assembly (CWA) action which authorizes the Church Council to revise (or establish, as applicable) spending authorizations. This includes changes to spending authorizations that were previously approved by the Churchwide Assembly. Last April, the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) approved and forwarded to Church Council (CC), who approved, a 3-year income projection (2023 – 2025) and a one-year spending authorization (2023) for approval. This was then recommended to the CWA for approval in August. The budgets were approved as recommended by the CWA.

However, since April, events/actual results have occurred which have resulted in the recommendation from staff that the approved 2023 budgets be considered for modification. Any changes to approved 2024 and 2025 will occur at a later date. Specifically, we have seen further trends in Mission Support and investment performance related to the markets. We have also re-analyzed fundraising performance including unrestricted direct gifts, missionaries, and young adults in global mission, as well as the projected bequest income. Below are the recommended changes which are coming to BFC for your consideration. Any action on budgets taken by BFC will be forwarded to CC for consideration and action.

Mission Support

Mission Support is currently running at 97.7% of budget with full year projections falling below the CWA-approved mission support budget for 2023. While some synods are projecting improvement in mission support, there are more synods that are projecting flat to declines. Based on consultation with the Sr. Director of Mission Support and a review of the 2023 Synod Mission Support plans, we are proposing a 1.3% decline from the projected 2022-year end. This equates to a decrease of \$650,000 from the CWA-approved amount.

Direct Gifts

The increase of \$249,000 or 3.4% is based on a recommendation from the Development team based on current trends. In addition, while it is unfortunate occurrence, we have realized an increase in gifts related to Holy Closures and the related sale of property. From informal information that is shared with us, we believe these trends may continue; however, there is also encouragement from a memorial passed at the churchwide assembly to consider returning these properties to the indigenous peoples or to make a gift to the Native American endowment. CWO recognizes that this may reduce our portion of these gifts.

Investment Income

Negative trends in market performance are expected to continue with predictions that 2023 will be a recessionary environment. Positive results relate to our investment returns from mineral rights. We will continue to monitor this to see if the proposed reduction of \$500K in income is enough. Our cash flow is sufficient to allow us to stay in the market until favorable market conditions return.

Bequest and Trust Income

While this category is very difficult to predict and can swing widely from year-to-year, based on a 5-year history (\$3.1 million), also giving recognition to demographics of our church, we feel comfortable with increasing this by \$200,000 to \$2.6 million. We chose not to increase this further as any bequest income

that exceeds plan is transferred to the Mission Development Fund which is supporting Future Church Innovation work, and we believe continuing to build that endowment is important from a sustainability perspective.

Endowment Income

This represents quarterly distributions of unrestricted endowments for which the Churchwide Organization is the beneficiary. The current distribution rate, as established by the ELCA Foundation, is 4% and the calculation is based on the average of the unit values for the preceding 5 years. Given the market downturn in 2022, we expect there may be a small impact on endowment distribution income in 2022; however, the impact will likely be greater in future years. We have reduced this line in the budget by \$100,000 or 3%.

Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGMs)

These numbers have been reduced by a combined \$456,000, a reduction of 14% for missionaries and 10% for YAGMs, is based on current trends as well as reduced numbers of participants in the programs. Because participants are responsible for some fundraising, reduced participation often correlates to reduced income streams.

The net total of these changes is a reduction in current fund (unrestricted) income of \$1,257,000. Reducing spending by \$1.2 million (in light of the inflationary environment and labor markets, along with the fact that staffing represents the single largest expense of the organization) along with trying to begin implementation of Future Church priorities would be difficult to accomplish and potentially disruptive for 2023. Instead, we are recommending a 4 -tiered approach.

- 1) Reduction in benefits expense by 2 basis points, or \$472,562. This is possible because our benefits pool is currently overfunded, based on a desire to maintain 3 months of benefit cost in the pool.
- 2) Releasing \$400,000 or approximately 20% of a Church Council Designated Fund, functioning as an endowment. This period of specified use for this endowment has long passed, therefore it is eligible for unrestricted support.
- 3) The home areas and offices will be asked to proportionally reduce spending by \$384,438.
- 4) The fourth approach is explained below, but the intention will be to bring clarity to the priorities of the churchwide organization which will help us to better invest and align resources in future years, in light of budget gaps that were identified in the triennium budget that was approved the CWA. This may reduce some of the 10% investment in innovation in 2023, but we believe this pause on new work will be beneficial in the long run.

Background:

Budgets are expressions of mission and, as such, they invite us to be clear about our priorities: What will we fund? What will we staff? What will we stop doing? While Future Church laid out a clear vision, a compelling goal, and three priorities, it layered these on top of existing priorities. There was minimal effort to determine what we stop doing. As we have worked with our staff to shift the first 10% of our work toward engaging new, young, and diverse people, we are facing understandable resistance. Our staff are already overtaxed and underfunded with respect to earlier priorities and mandates and at a loss with how to shift their work and budgets toward this new initiative. How can we stop doing things that we have been charged to do by the Churchwide Assembly, requested by the Conference of Bishops, or identified in the constitution as a purpose/priority? These questions are exacerbated as we face declining revenue projections.

Moving Forward:

In a sense, what we are discovering is that we need step back from a full-court press on the Future Church goal to determine, narrow, and focus our priorities. The church together needs to determine what of the many, important priorities get our fullest attention and resources. We are proposing that we:

1. Identify and provide estimated timelines and budgets for:
 - a. Outstanding CWA memorials
 - b. Outstanding CWO priorities from past Strategic Planning Processes
 - c. Other outstanding mandates, programs, or priorities (such as Future Directions 2025)
2. Map the current constitutional mandates and priorities, including existing staff and program budgets.
3. Work with the church council to identify a process for determining our priorities (and what we will NOT do) as a church that includes (but is not limited to) the CWO, the COB, and the CC.
4. Align our resources (staffing and budget) to reflect our priorities.

Still some parts of Future Church are in motion. There are program areas of our church, partner organizations, synods, and congregations that are already engaging this work. And we are embarking on a three-year, donor-funded process with key consultants from the Barna Group and Fuller Seminary to move forward with our goal to engage one million, new, young, and diverse people. Broadly, we will work with key stakeholders from our congregations, synods, and other organizations to learn:

- What is going on? (defining current reality)
- Why is this going on? (diagnosing the current reality)
- Where is God leading us? (theological imagination)
- How do we respond? (crafting a clear plan)

In addition to this process, the Innovation Home area is pursuing work to learn more about the people we hope to engage, to learn from and teach congregations the process of innovation, and to build capacity for experimentation in the churchwide organization.

Finally, there are several important and strategic experiments and initiatives under way, led by several important leaders in the CWO who have vision and imagination for engaging new people. We will continue to support them and their work as we learn.

Impact

The net impact of these recommended changes is to reduce the current fund spending authorization for 2023 from \$68,814,000 to \$68,429, 562.

Changes to ELCA World Hunger Spending Authorization

We are recommending an increase in the spending authorization for ELCA World Hunger from \$22,869,000 to \$25,250,000 due to an increase in the Direct Gifts projected revenue of \$381,000 and \$2.0 million to be spent from accumulated fund balance, in order to support a multi-year commitment to additional funding of work around homelessness at the Pine Ridge Reservation and a grant to the Lutheran Services in America Results Innovation lab to address racial bias in the child welfare system.

| Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2023 Revised Income Projections | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | | 2023 | | |
| | Actual | Actual | Approved Budget | Projection | Approved by CWA | Adjustments | Proposed Budget |
| Current Fund Budget | | | | | | | |
| Mission Support | \$ 40,739,221 | \$ 40,613,722 | \$ 40,000,000 | \$ 39,000,000 | \$ 39,150,000 | \$ (650,000) | \$ 38,500,000 |
| Direct Gifts/Other Temp Restr | 5,355,499 | 6,142,628 | 6,253,000 | 6,800,000 | 7,251,000 | 249,000 | 7,500,000 |
| Investment Income | 1,100,091 | 3,411,710 | 2,075,380 | - | 2,101,000 | (500,000) | 1,601,000 |
| Bequests & Trusts | 2,258,643 | 5,135,498 | 2,400,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,400,000 | 200,000 | 2,600,000 |
| Endowment | 3,349,445 | 3,282,544 | 3,714,152 | 3,475,000 | 3,364,000 | (100,000) | 3,264,000 |
| Rent | 1,849,989 | 1,820,705 | 1,844,855 | 1,825,000 | 1,301,000 | | 1,301,000 |
| Service Level Agreements/Other | 2,896,653 | 2,795,336 | 1,803,519 | 2,000,000 | 2,204,000 | | 2,204,000 |
| Total Unrestricted | \$ 57,549,541 | \$ 63,202,143 | \$ 58,090,906 | \$ 56,100,000 | \$ 57,771,000 | \$ (801,000) | \$ 56,970,000 |
| Global Mission Missionaries | 577,768 | 1,713,426 | 2,290,000 | 1,700,000 | 2,337,000 | (337,000) | 2,000,000 |
| Global Mission - YAGM's | 177,902 | 189,301 | 1,135,000 | 875,000 | 1,156,000 | (119,000) | 1,037,000 |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,500,000 | 1,500,000 | 1,500,000 | 2,050,000 | 1,500,000 | - | 1,500,000 |
| Other Gifts | \$ 2,255,670 | \$ 3,402,727 | \$ 4,925,000 | \$ 4,625,000 | \$ 4,993,000 | \$ (456,000) | \$ 4,537,000 |
| Total Unrestricted | \$ 59,805,211 | \$ 66,604,870 | \$ 63,015,906 | \$ 60,725,000 | \$ 62,764,000 | \$ (1,257,000) | \$ 61,507,000 |
| Designated Funds Released | \$ 750,000 | \$ - | \$ 3,517,515 | \$ 2,297,933 | 5,117,000 | 400,000 | 5,517,000 |
| Restricted Funds Released: Japan/Int'l Women Leaders | 937,533 | 798,871 | 933,000 | 800,000 | 933,000 | - | 933,000 |
| Total Revenues | \$ 61,492,744 | \$ 67,403,741 | \$ 67,466,421 | \$ 63,822,933 | \$ 68,814,000 | \$ (857,000) | \$ 67,957,000 |

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Revised 2023 Spending Authorization Proposal**

CURRENT FUNDS

| | | | 2023 | | | | Adjusted Spending Request |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | 2023 Approved by Churchwide Assembly | Proportional Revisions (1) | Nonrecurring Support (2) | | |
| | 2022 Budget | 2022 Projected | | | | | |
| Christian Community & Leadership | \$ 22,690,464 | \$ 21,555,941 | \$ 23,144,000 | \$ (422,763) | \$ 265,336 | \$ 22,986,573 | |
| Service & Justice | 12,544,376 | 11,917,158 | 12,795,000 | (233,722) | 115,914 | 12,677,193 | |
| Innovation | 2,971,917 | 1,040,171 | 3,031,000 | (55,366) | 38,614 | 3,014,247 | |
| | | | | | | - | |
| Office of the Presiding | 11,780,430 | 11,780,430 | 12,016,000 | (219,492) | 212,921 | 12,009,429 | |
| Office of the Secretary | 5,218,927 | 5,218,927 | 5,323,000 | (97,233) | 66,600 | 5,292,367 | |
| Office of the Treasurer | 9,310,306 | 9,310,306 | 9,496,000 | (173,460) | 155,686 | 9,478,226 | |
| | | | | | | - | |
| General Treasury | 150,000 | 200,000 | 153,000 | (2,795) | 889 | 151,095 | |
| Depreciation | 2,800,000 | 2,800,000 | 2,856,000 | (52,170) | \$ 16,601 | 2,820,432 | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$ 67,466,421 | \$ 63,822,933 | \$ 68,814,000 | \$ (1,257,000) | \$ 872,562 | \$ 68,429,562 | |

(1) This reflects the proportional reduction in spending which will be necessary to have a breakeven budget given the reduction in revenues.

(2) This reflects a 2023 reduction of 2 basis points in the benefits contribution rate as the benefits pool is sufficiently funded. This is considered nonrecurring as this is dependent on future rate increases by Portico. This also includes utilization of approximately 20%, or \$400,000, of an unrestricted Church Council endowment fund.

Net decrease in Spending Authorization request from Churchwide Assembly is \$384,438.

| Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| ELCA World Hunger | | | | | |
| 2023 Proposed Budget Revisions | | | | | |
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | | |
| | Actual | Budget | Per CWA | Adjustments | Revised Budget |
| ELCA WORLD HUNGER | | | | | |
| Direct Gifts | \$ 20,762,496 | \$ 20,000,000 | \$ 20,119,000 | \$ 381,000 | \$ 20,500,000 |
| Endowment | 855,201 | 750,000 | 750,000 | | 750,000 |
| Bequests and Miscellaneous | 1,306,360 | 1,500,000 | 1,500,000 | | 1,500,000 |
| Release - Covid-19 Appeal | | | - | | - |
| Release of Bequest income | | 415,000 | 500,000 | 2,000,000 | 2,500,000 |
| Total ELCA World Hunger Income | \$ 22,924,057 | \$ 22,665,000 | \$ 22,869,000 | \$ 2,381,000 | \$ 25,250,000 |
| EXPENDITURES | | | | | |
| Service & Justice | | | | | |
| <i>WH Domestic Program (part of S & J)</i> | \$ 3,101,633 | 6,246,593 | | | 5,001,036 |
| <i>WH International Program (part of S & J)</i> | 14,522,312 | 15,844,143 | | | 16,271,454 |
| <i>WH Witnessing in Society (part of S & J)</i> | 1,654,291 | 1,600,000 | | | 1,722,510 |
| <i>WH Fundraising (part of S & J)</i> | 2,076,483 | 2,295,965 | | | 2,255,000 |
| Total ELCA World Hunger Expenses | \$ 21,354,719 | \$ 25,986,701 | \$ 22,869,000 | \$ 2,381,000 | \$ 25,250,000 |

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Church Council
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Churchwide Organization

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Churchwide Organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Church), which comprise the statements of financial position as of January 31, 2022 and 2021, and the related statements of activities, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Church as of January 31, 2022 and 2021, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Church and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 1, the financial statements being presented are only for the Churchwide Organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and do not include the assets, liabilities and net assets, and the revenue and expenses of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that are recorded in the accounts of the other organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present the financial position of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2022 and 2021, or the change in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern for one year from the date the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Church's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.


Crowe LLP

Chicago, Illinois
July 29, 2022

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
 STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 January 31, 2022 and 2021

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 66,552,968 | \$ 45,970,823 |
| Accounts receivable (Note 2) | 8,303,215 | 8,399,360 |
| Interest receivable | 135,074 | 202,652 |
| Due from related organizations (Note 8) | 9,034,441 | 7,627,882 |
| Investments (Note 3) | 550,905,665 | 525,089,347 |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | 7,700,919 | 8,164,207 |
| Mortgages and notes (Note 4) | 265,110 | 250,952 |
| Overseas church construction loans (Note 5) | 392,692 | 592,210 |
| Property, furniture, and equipment, net (Note 6) | 18,933,114 | 21,046,293 |
| Beneficial interest in irrevocable, split-interest agreements, held by ELCA Foundation (Note 3) | 18,671,091 | 19,041,051 |
| Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts (Note 3) | <u>21,700,986</u> | <u>20,081,297</u> |
| Total assets | <u>\$ 702,595,275</u> | <u>\$ 656,466,074</u> |
| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | | |
| Liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable | \$ 2,190,686 | \$ 1,855,407 |
| Deferred revenue | 3,599,141 | 778,027 |
| Due to related organizations (Note 8) | 2,239,563 | 2,742,884 |
| Accrued liabilities | 7,540,402 | 3,691,963 |
| Annuities payable (Note 7) | 3,189,371 | 6,138,120 |
| Note payable (Note 22) | - | 7,506,200 |
| Funds held for others (Note 1) | 6,320,083 | 7,038,297 |
| Funds held for others in perpetuity (Note 1) | <u>107,977,035</u> | <u>101,447,294</u> |
| Total liabilities | <u>133,056,281</u> | <u>131,198,192</u> |
| Net assets | | |
| Without donor restrictions (Note 16) | 143,861,022 | 123,220,311 |
| With donor restrictions (Note 17) | <u>425,677,972</u> | <u>402,047,571</u> |
| Total net assets | <u>569,538,994</u> | <u>525,267,882</u> |
| Total liabilities and net assets | <u>\$ 702,595,275</u> | <u>\$ 656,466,074</u> |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
Years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021

| | 2022 | | | 2021 <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | <u>Without Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>With Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>Total</u> | |
| Operating revenue and support | | | | |
| Contributed support | | | | |
| Synod mission support (Note 14) | \$ 40,613,722 | \$ - | \$ 40,613,722 | \$ 40,737,461 |
| World Hunger Appeal | - | 20,854,710 | 20,854,710 | 19,286,542 |
| Global Church sponsorship | 1,997,064 | 61,648 | 2,058,712 | 2,119,407 |
| Disaster response | - | 14,371,460 | 14,371,460 | 8,348,438 |
| Deferred gift contributions | - | - | - | 35,486 |
| Endowment distributions | 4,331,336 | 3,536,350 | 7,867,686 | 7,468,768 |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,625,000 | - | 1,625,000 | 1,750,000 |
| Bequests, trusts, and residuums | 4,974,101 | 1,344,849 | 6,318,950 | 10,055,275 |
| Grants—corporate and other | 67,767 | 136,771 | 204,538 | 1,753,561 |
| Other gifts | 5,923,068 | 3,099,324 | 9,022,392 | 7,693,819 |
| Total contributed revenue | <u>59,532,058</u> | <u>43,405,112</u> | <u>102,937,170</u> | <u>99,248,757</u> |
| Other revenue | | | | |
| Net investment return on operating investments | 1,911,663 | 3,124 | 1,914,787 | 939,858 |
| SPPO offices' revenue | 484,762 | - | 484,762 | 288,892 |
| Services and other revenue | 5,294,615 | 182,269 | 5,476,884 | 4,798,714 |
| Lease income | 1,821,611 | - | 1,821,611 | 1,843,939 |
| Gain on extinguishment of debt, net | 5,696,814 | - | 5,696,814 | - |
| Miscellaneous income | - | - | - | 326,198 |
| Total other revenue | <u>15,209,465</u> | <u>185,393</u> | <u>15,394,858</u> | <u>8,197,601</u> |
| Net assets released from restrictions | | | | |
| Satisfaction of restrictions (Note 15) | 40,929,196 | (40,929,196) | - | - |
| Income expended from investments held in perpetuity | 3,766,598 | (3,766,598) | - | - |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>44,695,794</u> | <u>(44,695,794)</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Total operating revenue and support | <u>119,437,317</u> | <u>(1,105,289)</u> | <u>118,332,028</u> | <u>107,446,358</u> |
| Operating expenses | | | | |
| Program services | | | | |
| Christian Community Leadership | 24,595,086 | - | 24,595,086 | 24,385,399 |
| Service and Justice | 41,057,578 | - | 41,057,578 | 43,831,758 |
| OB, Development | 5,735,965 | - | 5,735,965 | 6,385,243 |
| Church periodicals | 1,066,655 | - | 1,066,655 | 1,809,747 |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | 948,765 | - | 948,765 | 1,262,938 |
| Innovation | 1,432,969 | - | 1,432,969 | 1,118,852 |
| SPPO offices' expense | 453,945 | - | 453,945 | 223,604 |
| Post-retirement health care benefits (Note 10) | - | - | - | 917,718 |
| Total program services | <u>75,290,963</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>75,290,963</u> | <u>79,935,259</u> |

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
 STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
 Years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021

| | 2022 | | | 2021 <u>Total</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>Without Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>With Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>Total</u> | |
| Operating expenses (Continued) | | | | |
| Management and general | | | | |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | \$ 4,169,284 | \$ - | \$ 4,169,284 | \$ 3,537,914 |
| Office of the Treasurer | 9,982,816 | - | 9,982,816 | 9,203,042 |
| Office of the Secretary | 6,447,416 | - | 6,447,416 | 4,205,989 |
| OB, Development | 1,807,569 | - | 1,807,569 | 2,199,079 |
| Total management and general | <u>22,407,085</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>22,407,085</u> | <u>19,146,024</u> |
| Fundraising | | | | |
| Development | 3,315,680 | - | 3,315,680 | 3,115,043 |
| Total fundraising | <u>3,315,680</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>3,315,680</u> | <u>3,115,043</u> |
| Total operating expenses | <u>101,013,728</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>101,013,728</u> | <u>102,196,326</u> |
| Net operating revenue and support less operating expenses | 18,423,589 | (1,105,289) | 17,318,300 | 5,250,032 |
| Non-operating transactions | | | | |
| Endowment contributions | 740 | 5,941,569 | 5,942,309 | 8,343,104 |
| Net investment return on endowment and other deferred gifts | 2,216,382 | 17,673,207 | 19,889,589 | 27,314,794 |
| Change in value of beneficial interests and split interest agreements | - | 1,120,914 | 1,120,914 | (2,342,285) |
| Total non-operating transactions | <u>2,217,122</u> | <u>24,735,690</u> | <u>26,952,812</u> | <u>33,315,613</u> |
| Changes in net assets | 20,640,711 | 23,630,401 | 44,271,112 | 38,565,645 |
| Net assets at beginning of year | <u>123,220,311</u> | <u>402,047,571</u> | <u>525,267,882</u> | <u>486,702,237</u> |
| Net assets at end of year | <u>\$ 143,861,022</u> | <u>\$ 425,677,972</u> | <u>\$ 569,538,994</u> | <u>\$ 525,267,882</u> |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
Year ended January 31, 2021

| | 2021 | | Total |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | |
| Operating revenue and support | | | |
| Contributed support | | | |
| Synod mission support (Note 14) | \$ 40,737,461 | \$ - | \$ 40,737,461 |
| World Hunger Appeal | - | 19,286,542 | 19,286,542 |
| Global Church sponsorship | 2,119,407 | - | 2,119,407 |
| Disaster response | - | 8,348,438 | 8,348,438 |
| Deferred gift contributions | - | 35,486 | 35,486 |
| Endowment distributions | 3,452,416 | 4,016,352 | 7,468,768 |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,500,000 | 250,000 | 1,750,000 |
| Bequests, trusts, and residuums | 2,490,506 | 7,564,769 | 10,055,275 |
| Grants—corporate and other | 7,000 | 1,746,561 | 1,753,561 |
| Other gifts | 4,392,908 | 3,300,911 | 7,693,819 |
| Total contributed revenue | <u>54,699,698</u> | <u>44,549,059</u> | <u>99,248,757</u> |
| Other revenue | | | |
| Net investment return on operating investments | 870,959 | 68,899 | 939,858 |
| SPPO offices' revenue | 288,892 | - | 288,892 |
| Services and other revenue | 4,634,222 | 164,492 | 4,798,714 |
| Lease income | 1,843,939 | - | 1,843,939 |
| Miscellaneous income | - | 326,198 | 326,198 |
| Total other revenue | <u>7,638,012</u> | <u>559,589</u> | <u>8,197,601</u> |
| Net assets released from restrictions | | | |
| Satisfaction of restrictions (Note 15) | 45,482,945 | (45,482,945) | - |
| Income expended from investments held in perpetuity | 3,883,044 | (3,883,044) | - |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>49,365,989</u> | <u>(49,365,989)</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Total operating revenue and support | <u>111,703,699</u> | <u>(4,257,341)</u> | <u>107,446,358</u> |
| Operating expenses | | | |
| Program services | | | |
| Christian Community Leadership | 24,385,399 | - | 24,385,399 |
| Service and Justice | 43,831,758 | - | 43,831,758 |
| OB, Development | 6,385,243 | - | 6,385,243 |
| Church periodicals | 1,809,747 | - | 1,809,747 |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | 1,262,938 | - | 1,262,938 |
| Innovation | 1,118,852 | - | 1,118,852 |
| SPPO offices' expense | 223,604 | - | 223,604 |
| Post-retirement health care benefits (Note 10) | 917,718 | - | 917,718 |
| Total program services | <u>79,935,259</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>79,935,259</u> |

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
 Year ended January 31, 2021

| | 2021 | | Total |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | |
| Operating expenses (Continued) | | | |
| Management and general | | | |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | \$ 3,537,914 | \$ - | \$ 3,537,914 |
| Office of the Treasurer | 9,203,042 | - | 9,203,042 |
| Office of the Secretary | 4,205,989 | - | 4,205,989 |
| OB, Development | 2,199,079 | - | 2,199,079 |
| Total management and general | <u>19,146,024</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>19,146,024</u> |
| Fundraising | | | |
| Mission Advancement | 3,115,043 | - | 3,115,043 |
| Total fundraising | <u>3,115,043</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>3,115,043</u> |
| Total operating expenses | <u>102,196,326</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>102,196,326</u> |
| Net operating revenue and support less operating expenses | 9,507,373 | (4,257,341) | 5,250,032 |
| Non-operating transactions | | | |
| Endowment contributions | 511,301 | 7,831,803 | 8,343,104 |
| Net investment return on endowment and other deferred gifts | 2,648,251 | 24,666,543 | 27,314,794 |
| Change in value of beneficial interests and split interest agreements | - | (2,342,285) | (2,342,285) |
| Total non-operating transactions | <u>3,159,552</u> | <u>30,156,061</u> | <u>33,315,613</u> |
| Changes in net assets | 12,666,925 | 25,898,720 | 38,565,645 |
| Net assets at beginning of year | <u>110,553,386</u> | <u>376,148,851</u> | <u>486,702,237</u> |
| Net assets at end of year | <u>\$ 123,220,311</u> | <u>\$ 402,047,571</u> | <u>\$ 525,267,882</u> |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
 STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
 Years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Cash flows from operating activities | | |
| Change in net assets | \$ 44,271,112 | \$ 38,565,645 |
| Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities: | | |
| Depreciation | 2,472,239 | 2,449,427 |
| Change in fair value of investments | (27,757,275) | (34,248,083) |
| Gain on beneficial interest in perpetual trusts | (1,249,729) | (549,066) |
| Change in value of deferred gifts | (2,293,409) | (743,287) |
| Gain on extinguishment of debt | (7,506,200) | - |
| Changes in | | |
| Accounts receivable | 96,145 | (562,753) |
| Interest receivable | 67,578 | 18,128 |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | 463,288 | 680,021 |
| Accounts payable | 335,279 | (3,415,626) |
| Deferred revenue | 2,821,114 | (85,857) |
| Due to/from related organizations | (1,909,880) | (9,512,861) |
| Accrued liabilities | 3,848,439 | (657,819) |
| Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities | 13,658,701 | (8,062,131) |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | |
| Purchase and acquisition of equipment | (359,060) | (753,300) |
| Net change on mortgages, notes and construction loans | 185,360 | (42,858) |
| Purchase of investments | (1,592,204) | (7,564,549) |
| Proceeds from sale of investments | 9,344,689 | 12,610,677 |
| Net cash provided by investing activities | 7,578,785 | 4,249,970 |
| Cash flows from financing activities | | |
| Annuities payable | (655,340) | 93,743 |
| Net proceeds from notes payable | - | 7,506,200 |
| Net cash (used in) provided by financing activities | (655,340) | 7,599,943 |
| Increase in cash and cash equivalents | 20,582,145 | 3,787,782 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year | 45,970,823 | 42,183,041 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of year | \$ 66,552,968 | \$ 45,970,823 |
| Noncash transactions | | |
| Transfer of assets related to charitable gift annuities to the ELCA Foundation | \$ - | \$ 3,283,525 |
| Transfer of obligations related to charitable gift annuities to the ELCA Foundation | \$ - | \$ 3,283,525 |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Organization: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the ELCA) is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation that functions interdependently with the congregations and synods of the ELCA. The ELCA serves on behalf of and in support of the ELCA's members, congregations, and synods. To fulfill its purpose, the ELCA receives, establishes, and supports congregations and ministries necessary to carry out its mission. The ELCA has constituent Lutheran congregations in 65 synods throughout the United States and the Caribbean. The ELCA's principal source of revenue is contributions.

The accompanying financial statements include all administrative and program offices and units of the Churchwide Organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (collectively, the Church). These financial statements do not include the accounts of organizations, such as the ELCA Foundation, Board of Pensions (Portico Benefit Services), Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Mission Investment Fund), Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1517 Media), Lutheran Men in Mission, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA Federal Credit Union (Credit Union), congregations, synods, schools, cemeteries, homes, seminaries, or any other institution owned and operated by religious orders of men or women, except insofar as financial transactions have taken place between them and the Church (e.g., subsidies, loans, and deposits). These organizations may or may not be separate corporations under civil law and may or may not be under the control of the ELCA; however, each is an operating entity distinct from the Church, maintains separate accounts, carries on its own services and programs, and reports annually to its respective constituency.

Effective January 1, 2018, the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, doing business as the ELCA Foundation (ELCA Foundation), is a separately incorporated ministry/corporation of the ELCA. This corporation manages the endowments of the ELCA, the Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT), and the Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) programs. The Church's beneficial interest in CRTs and CGAs are included in the Church financial statements for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021. Trusteeship of the existing CRTs has been transferred from the Church to the ELCA Foundation, effective February 1, 2018. The CGAs are being moved from the Church to the ELCA Foundation in stages and in compliance with applicable state regulations.

Basis of Presentation: The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

To ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available, the Church maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting.

The financial statements focus on the organization as a whole and present balances and transactions classified based upon the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets, revenue, contributed support, expenses, gains, and losses have been classified into two net asset classes based on these donor-imposed restrictions. A description of each net asset class follows:

Without Donor Restrictions – Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions including the carrying value of all property, furniture, and equipment. Items that affect this category of net assets include contributions and bequests without donor restrictions, contributions with donor restrictions and bequests whose donor-imposed restrictions were met during the fiscal year and investment income whose use is without donor restrictions, as well as all expenses incurred in connection with the operations of the Church. Certain funds, generally set aside by Church Council action, function as endowments and are included in net assets without donor restrictions.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

With Donor Restrictions – Net assets subject to donor-imposed restrictions that will be met either by actions of the Church or the passage of time. Items in this net asset category are contributions, bequests, and investment income whose use is limited to specific purposes by the donor. These amounts are reclassified when such restrictions are met or when time restrictions have expired.

Also included are net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions which require them to be maintained permanently by the Church. Items in this net asset category include gifts wherein donors stipulate that the corpus be held in perpetuity and only the income be made available for purposes without donor restrictions or with donor restrictions (primarily gifts for endowments and gifts solicited by the Church that will fund perpetual endowments).

Cash and Cash Equivalents: Cash and cash equivalents include investments in money market accounts, commercial paper, and other short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of purchase. Cash and cash equivalents used by the Church in managing its investments are reported in investments. The Church maintains cash balances at several financial institutions in excess of the insurance limits provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Beneficial Interest in Irrevocable, Split-Interest Agreements, Held by ELCA Foundation: The Church holds a beneficial remainder interest in various charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts, commonly referred to as split-interest agreements. These agreements are administered by the ELCA Foundation on behalf of the Church and other beneficiaries. The Church records the fair value of the beneficial interest as a receivable and as revenue when documentation of the beneficial interest is received.

Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts Administrated by Outside Organizations: The Church has been granted a beneficial interest in various irrevocable trust accounts created under wills or deeds of trust. These trust accounts are administered and held by outside trustees. The Church records the fair value of the beneficial interest as a receivable and as revenue when documentation of the beneficial interest is received.

Investments and Related Income, Gains, and Losses: Investments are reported at fair value, except for certain equity and real estate investments, which are reported at cost. Investments carried at fair value consist primarily of equity mutual funds, corporate and government obligations, term deposit accounts and investments in pools. The cost of securities sold is based on either the specific-identification or average-cost method. Investment income, gains and losses, and any investment-related expenses are recorded net of investment fees as changes in net assets without donor restrictions in the statement of activities unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulations.

Property, Furniture, Equipment, and Depreciation: Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation to date. On an ongoing basis, the Church reviews long-lived assets for impairment whenever events or circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may be overstated. Depreciation is provided over the following useful lives on a straight-line basis:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Building | 50 years |
| Building improvements | 10-25 years |
| Hardware, software and related components | 3-5 years |
| Furniture, fixtures and improvements | 5-7 years |
| Tenant improvements | Lesser of length of lease or useful life |
| Transportation | 5-7 years |

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Funds Held for Others: Funds held for others consist of contributions received on behalf of and other resources held for other Lutheran organizations that are separate, nonconsolidated entities. The Church does not have variance power over these funds. In the case of funds held for others in perpetuity, the earnings are distributed per the donor's specifications, but the corpus or principal are held in perpetuity or intact and reflected as a liability of the Church.

Deferred Revenue: Deferred revenue consists of funds received relating to subsequent periods. Additionally, the Church also recognizes its remainder interest in the assets received from donors under pooled income fund agreements and life income fund agreements as contribution revenue in the period in which the assets are received from the donor. The difference between the assets recognized and the revenue recognized is recorded as deferred revenue, representing the amount of the discount for future interest.

Vacation Pay: The Church recognizes vacation pay expense when earned by its non-missionary personnel. The liability for vacation pay of missionary personnel cannot be reasonably estimated, and such amounts are recognized when paid.

Revenue and Expenses: Revenues are reported as increases in net assets without donor restrictions unless use of the related assets is limited by donor-imposed restrictions. Expenses are reported as decreases in net assets without donor restrictions. Gains and losses on investments and other assets or liabilities are reported as increases or decreases in net assets without donor restrictions unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulation. Expirations of net assets with donor restrictions (i.e., the donor-stipulated purpose has been fulfilled and/or the stipulated time period has elapsed) are reported as reclassifications between applicable classes of net assets.

Contributed Support: Contributions, including unconditional promises to give, are recognized in the period received. Conditional contributions are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend are met.

Contributions to be received after one year are discounted at an appropriate discount rate commensurate with the risk involved. Amortization of discount is recorded as additional contribution revenue in accordance with donor-imposed restrictions, if any, on the contributions.

Contributions received with donor-imposed restrictions are reported as revenue of the net asset class with donor restrictions, as appropriate. Contributions of land, buildings, and equipment without donor-imposed restrictions concerning the use of such long-lived assets are reported as revenue of net assets without donor restrictions.

Services and Other Revenue: Revenues from separately incorporated ministries and unincorporated self-supporting ministries for services provided by the Church (e.g., human resources, information technology, financial services, building management) relate to agreements to provide such services negotiated on an annual basis. These revenues are recognized throughout the year as these services are performed. Subscription revenue relates to publications and is recognized as the related publications are distributed. Registration revenue relates to events and is recognized as the events are held. Amounts paid for events that have not yet been held at January 31 are included in deferred revenues.

Income Tax: The Church has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating that it is exempt from Federal income taxes on income related to its exempt purpose under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. There were no significant unrelated business income activities during the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF BUSINESS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Uncertainty in Income Taxes: The ELCA follows guidance issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) with respect to accounting for uncertainty in income taxes. A tax position is recognized as a benefit only if it is more likely than not that the tax position would be sustained in a tax examination, with a tax examination being presumed to occur. The amount recognized is the largest amount of tax benefit that is greater than 50% likely of being realized on examination. For tax positions not meeting the more likely than not test, no tax benefit is recorded.

The Church recognizes interest and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits in interest and income tax expense, respectively. The Church has no amounts accrued for interest or penalties as of January 31, 2022 and 2021.

Due to its tax-exempt status, the Church is not subject to U.S. federal income tax or state income tax. The Church is no longer subject to examination by U.S. federal or state taxing authorities for years before January 31, 2017. The Church does not expect the total amount of unrecognized tax benefits to significantly change in the next 12 months.

Use of Estimates: The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from estimates.

Reclassifications: On February 1, 2021, the organization implemented a reorganization of some areas to better align with the strategic focus of the organization. As a result, certain amounts in the prior year financial statements have been reclassified, with no effect on net assets or change in net assets, to conform to the current year presentation.

Adoption of New Accounting Standard: During the year ended January 31, 2021, the Church adopted Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2018-13 *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Disclosure Framework – Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Fair Value Measurement* issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). This update is intended to improve the effectiveness of disclosures as it relates to fair value measurements.

Upcoming Accounting Guidance: In February 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-02, *Leases*. This ASU affects any entity that enters into a lease, with some specified scope exemptions. The main difference between previous GAAP and this ASU is the recognition of lease assets and lease liabilities by lessees for those leases classified as operating leases under previous GAAP. This ASU is effective for the Church's fiscal year beginning February 1, 2022. The Church has not yet implemented this ASU and is in the process of assessing the effect on the Church's financial statements.

NOTE 2 - ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Included in accounts receivable at January 31, 2022 and 2021, were \$5,809,225 and \$6,963,586, respectively, relating to synods' contributions for mission support, world hunger appeal, global church sponsorship and other programs that have been collected subsequent to year end. Interest is not normally charged on receivables. Management reviews all of the receivables on an individual basis for collectability and determines whether an allowance is necessary. No allowance for bad debts has been established because management considers all accounts receivable to be collectible.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Investments at January 31, 2022 and 2021, consist of the following:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Equity mutual fund | \$ 15,158,670 | \$ 12,392,265 |
| Fixed income securities | | |
| U.S. government obligations | 13,691,102 | 15,124,616 |
| Corporate bonds | 25,432,434 | 25,415,856 |
| Term investments | 594,386 | 874,303 |
| Equity securities and physical real estate held at cost | 1,731,825 | 1,836,748 |
| Investments held in pools | 493,284,368 | 468,435,637 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | <u>1,012,880</u> | <u>1,009,922</u> |
| | <u>\$ 550,905,665</u> | <u>\$ 525,089,347</u> |

The following schedule summarizes the investment return reported in the statement of activities for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Endowment distributions | \$ 7,867,686 | \$ 7,468,768 |
| Realized and unrealized gains on pooled investments | 19,889,589 | 27,314,794 |
| Dividend and interest income | <u>1,914,787</u> | <u>939,858</u> |
| Investment return, net | <u>\$ 29,672,062</u> | <u>\$ 35,723,420</u> |

Investments are reported at fair value except for certain equity securities and certain investments in real estate which are reported at cost. Investments carried at fair value consist primarily of corporate and government obligations, inflation-indexed and high-yield securities and investments in ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust.

Fair value is the price that would be received for an asset (an exit price) in the principal or most advantageous market for the asset in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date. Investments that have readily determinable market values are determined using quoted market prices. Fair values of investments for which market prices are not readily available are determined based upon quoted market close prices for similar issues, dealer quotes, appraisals, or pricing models utilizing market-observable inputs from comparable securities.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The fair value hierarchy is based on maximizing observable inputs and minimizing unobservable inputs when measuring fair value. Three levels of inputs may be used to measure fair value.

Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) for identical assets in active markets that the Church has the ability to access as of the measurement date.

Level 2: Significant other observable inputs other than Level 1 prices, such as quoted prices for similar assets, quoted prices in markets that are not active, or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

Level 3: Significant unobservable inputs that reflect the Church's own assumptions that the market participants would use in pricing an asset.

In many cases, a valuation technique used to measure fair value includes inputs from multiple levels of the fair value hierarchy. Investments are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The Church's investments which are reported at fair value are valued using the following inputs and valuation techniques:

Equity mutual fund: The fair values of equity mutual fund investments reflect quoted prices on nationally recognized securities exchanges (Level 1 inputs).

Fixed income securities: Fair values of U.S. Government securities reflect closing prices reported in the active markets in which the securities are traded (Level 1 inputs). Fair values of corporate bonds are determined based on quoted prices for similar instruments in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active and other market-corroborated sources, such as indices, yield curves and matrix pricing (Level 2 inputs – market approach).

Term Investments: Demand accounts are estimated to approximate deposit-account balances. Term certificates are estimated to approximate principal amounts plus capitalized interest as of the reporting date. No discounts for credit quality or liquidity were determined to be applicable. Term certificates have varying maturity dates, may be redeemed prior to maturity at the discretion of the Mission Investment Fund, and are subject to an early redemption penalty. (Level 2 inputs – income approach).

Investments Held in Pools: The underlying investments within the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, as well as certain other pooled investments held by the Church, have observable inputs and market activity that allow for fair values based on the underlying market prices of the securities in the pools. The Church has the ability to redeem their pooled investments at any time at the monthly per unit net asset value (NAV).

Beneficial Interests in Trusts: The fair value of beneficial interests in trusts is determined based upon the Church's proportional interest in the fair value of the underlying trust assets. The underlying trust assets are readily marketable and have fair values which are determined by obtaining quoted market prices in active markets. This valuation method has been estimated to represent the present value of future distributed income. The liquidation of these assets is contingent upon circumstances that are out of the Church's control and cannot be liquidated on a periodic basis (Level 3 inputs).

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

Beneficial interest in irrevocable, split-interest agreements, held by the Church: The beneficial interest in these agreements are measured at the present value of future cash flows considering the fair value of invested assets, the present value of contractual payment obligations under the agreement and the Church's ownership interest in the split-interest agreement (Level 3 inputs - income approach).

The following table sets forth, by level within the fair value hierarchy, financial instruments owned, at fair value as of January 31, 2022 and 2021:

| | 2022 | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>Level 1</u> | <u>Level 2</u> | <u>Level 3</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Equity mutual fund | \$ 15,158,670 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 15,158,670 |
| Fixed income securities | | | | |
| U.S. government obligations | 13,691,102 | - | - | 13,691,102 |
| Corporate bonds | - | 25,432,434 | - | 25,432,434 |
| Term investments | - | 594,386 | - | 594,386 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 1,012,880 | - | - | 1,012,880 |
| Investments held at fair value | <u>\$ 29,862,652</u> | <u>\$ 26,026,820</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>55,889,472</u> |
| Investments at net asset value per share | | | | <u>493,284,368</u> |
| Total investments at fair value | | | | 549,173,840 |
| Equity securities and physical real estate held at cost* | | | | <u>1,731,825</u> |
| Total investments | | | | <u>\$ 550,905,665</u> |
| | | | | |
| Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts, fair value | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ 21,700,986</u> | <u>\$ 21,700,986</u> |
| | | | | |
| Beneficial interest in irrevocable split interest agreements, held by ELCA Foundation, fair value | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ 18,671,091</u> | <u>\$ 18,671,091</u> |
| | | | | |
| | 2021 | | | |
| | <u>Level 1</u> | <u>Level 2</u> | <u>Level 3</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Equity mutual fund | \$ 12,392,265 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 12,392,265 |
| Fixed income securities | | | | |
| U.S. government obligations | 15,124,616 | - | - | 15,124,616 |
| Corporate bonds | - | 25,415,856 | - | 25,415,856 |
| Term investments | - | 874,303 | - | 874,303 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 1,009,886 | - | - | 1,009,922 |
| Investments held at fair value | <u>\$ 28,526,767</u> | <u>\$ 26,290,159</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>54,816,962</u> |
| Investments at net asset value per share | | | | <u>468,435,637</u> |
| Total investments at fair value | | | | 523,252,599 |
| Equity securities and physical real estate held at cost* | | | | <u>1,836,748</u> |
| Total investments | | | | <u>\$ 525,089,347</u> |
| | | | | |
| Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts, fair value | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ 20,081,297</u> | <u>\$ 20,081,297</u> |
| | | | | |
| Beneficial interest in irrevocable split interest agreements, held by ELCA Foundation, fair value | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ -</u> | <u>\$ 19,041,051</u> | <u>\$ 19,041,051</u> |

* Physical real estate investments, comprised of land and buildings held by the Church at cost, was \$640,820 at both January 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively was not included in the fair value tables above. Additionally, equity securities, comprised of closely held stock held by the Church at cost, of \$1,091,005 and \$1,195,928 respectively at January 31, 2022 and 2021 was not included in the fair value tables above.

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NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The table below rolls forward balances for Level 3 beneficial interest in perpetual trusts from February 1, 2020, through January 31, 2022:

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Balance as of February 1, 2020 | \$ 19,817,846 |
| Unrealized gains | |
| Funds held for others | 10,228 |
| Outside trusts held in perpetuity | <u>253,223</u> |
| Balance as of January 31, 2021 | 20,081,297 |
| Unrealized gains | |
| Funds held for others | - |
| Outside trusts held in perpetuity | <u>1,619,689</u> |
| Balance as of January 31, 2022 | <u><u>\$ 21,700,986</u></u> |

The table below rolls forward balances for Level 3 beneficial interest in split-interest agreements from February 1, 2020, through January 31, 2022:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Balance as of February 1, 2020 | \$ 18,755,436 |
| Increase in beneficial interest resulting from: | |
| Change in value of beneficial interests | <u>285,615</u> |
| Balance as of January 31, 2021 | 19,041,051 |
| Decrease in beneficial interest resulting from: | |
| Change in value of beneficial interests | <u>(369,960)</u> |
| Balance as of January 31, 2022 | <u><u>\$ 18,671,091</u></u> |

Strategies Employed for Achieving Objectives of ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust: Investments held in endowment funds are stated at fair value. Certain endowment funds are classified by the Church as “Funds Held for Others” or “Funds Held for Others in Perpetuity” and are invested in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (“EFPT”) administered under the terms of that Trust by its Trustee.

The EFPT investment objective is to provide participants with a stable stream of distributable investment income with long-term capital appreciation, while assuming a moderate level of investment risk. The assets of the EFPT are invested in a diversified portfolio that places an emphasis on equity-based and fixed income investments selected in accordance with the criteria of social responsibility that is consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

The target asset allocation ranges are 22% to 32% in U.S. equity securities, 25% to 35% in Non-U.S. equity securities, 4% to 14% in investment grade fixed income securities, 0.0% to 10.0% in high yield fixed income securities, 0% to 10% in global real estate securities, 0% to 8% in hedge funds, 0% to 8% in infrastructure, 0% to 20% in private markets, and 0% to 10% in U.S. inflation-indexed securities, with the balance in cash and cash equivalents.

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NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

Ownership interests in the EFPT are initially assigned through unitization of participants' investment additions. The total value of the EFPT net assets at the end of each month is used to determine the number of units allocated to participants' additions placed in the EFPT and to value withdrawals from the pool. Distributions from the pool are first made from dividend and interest income and net realized gains. If distributions exceed the actual dividends, interest, and net realized gains, the excess is distributed first from accumulated undistributed earnings and gains, then from capital.

Quarterly distributions from the EFPT are made at a rate established annually by the Trustee of the EFPT that reflects the Trustee's consideration of anticipated returns of the EFPT and anticipated changes in the purchasing power of the EFPT. The rate established for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020 was 4%. It was applied each year to the average unit value of the assets in the EFPT at December 31 of the five preceding years. The rate established for 2022 is 4%.

NOTE 4 - MORTGAGES AND NOTES

Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed as of January 31, 2022 are summarized as follows:

| | <u>Interest Rate</u> | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Partnership support loans to congregations | 0% | \$ 265,110 | \$ 250,952 |

There is one segment and one class in this portfolio.

Partnership support loans to congregations relate to Partnership Support grants, which are given for new starts, strategic renewal and transformation. Congregations that receive these grants sign a covenant where they agree to return the funds if the congregation leaves the Church.

Concentration of Credit Risk: There are no delinquencies with the mortgage notes as of January 31, 2022 and 2021. The Church does not believe that an allowance is necessary for these mortgage notes. If a Congregation decides to leave and is not able to pay the full amount received, the Church provides the opportunity for them to repay in installments.

NOTE 5 - OVERSEAS CHURCH CONSTRUCTION LOANS

Overseas church construction loans bear interest at rates ranging from 2% to 5% and mature at various dates through October 15, 2029. The balances of overseas church construction loans outstanding as of January 31, 2022 and 2021 is \$392,692 and \$592,210, respectively.

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NOTE 5 - OVERSEAS CHURCH CONSTRUCTION LOANS (Continued)

Concentration of Credit Risk: The loan portfolio consists of one segment and one class. The Church's overseas lending activities are primarily conducted with companion churches. Notes receivable are generally not collateralized with real estate but are secured by the grants from the Church. At January 31, 2022 and 2021, there was no amount past due for a period greater than one year. The following is a summary of notes by region for the years ended January 31:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Africa | \$ 93,199 | \$ 249,232 |
| Latin America/Caribbean | <u>299,493</u> | <u>342,978</u> |
| Total overseas construction loans | <u>\$ 392,692</u> | <u>\$ 592,210</u> |

NOTE 6 - PROPERTY, FURNITURE, AND EQUIPMENT

Property, furniture, and equipment are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation. Details relating to these assets as of January 31, 2022 and 2021 is presented below:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Land | \$ 133,000 | \$ 133,000 |
| Buildings and improvements | 51,994,321 | 51,844,593 |
| Furniture and equipment | 14,554,705 | 14,538,070 |
| Work in progress | <u>325,701</u> | <u>135,420</u> |
| | 67,007,727 | 66,651,083 |
| Less accumulated depreciation | <u>(48,074,613)</u> | <u>(45,604,790)</u> |
| Totals | <u>\$ 18,933,114</u> | <u>\$ 21,046,293</u> |

Depreciation expense for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021 was \$2,472,239 and \$2,449,427, respectively.

NOTE 7 - SPLIT-INTEREST AGREEMENTS

Charitable Gift Annuities: Charitable gift annuities are arrangements between a donor and the Church in which the donor contributes assets to the Church in exchange for a promise by the Church to pay a fixed amount for the life of the donor or other individuals designated by the donor. Due to state insurance regulations, the assets received are held as segregated assets. The annuity liability is a general obligation of the Church. Assets are recognized at fair value on the date of the contribution. An annuity payment liability is recognized for the present value of future cash flows expected to be paid to the donor or to the designated individual. The discount rate is the appropriate risk adjusted rate on the date of the contract. The 2012 IAR Tables are used to calculate the life expectancies of the annuity beneficiaries. At the death of the donor or designated individual, the book value of the contract is distributed to the Church or related organization either with or without donor restricted use depending upon the donor restrictions.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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NOTE 7 - SPLIT-INTEREST AGREEMENTS (Continued)

Pooled Income Funds and Life Income Contracts: Donors contribute assets to an investment pool and are assigned a specific number of units based on the proportion of the fair value of their contribution to the total fair value of the pooled income fund on the date of the donor's entry to the pooled fund. Until a donor's death, the donor or designated beneficiary is paid the actual ordinary income earned on the donor's units. Realized gains or losses are added to each unit's principal. Upon the donor's death, the value of the units is released to the Church or a related organization to be used as specified by the donor.

The contributed assets are recorded at fair value. A contribution is recorded at the fair value of the assets discounted for the estimated time period until the donor's death. The appropriate risk adjusted rate at the date of the contribution is used for the discount rate, and the 2012 IAR Tables are used to calculate life expectancies. The difference between the fair value of the assets received and the revenue recognized is recorded as deferred revenue, representing the amount of the discount for future revenue.

A summary of recorded amounts related to these arrangements as of January 31, 2022 and 2021, is as follows:

| | 2022 | | 2021 | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | Deferred Revenue | Annuities Payable | Deferred Revenue | Annuities Payable |
| Charitable remainder annuity trusts | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Charitable remainder unitrusts | - | - | - | 1,578,093 |
| Charitable gift annuities | - | 3,189,371 | - | 4,560,027 |
| Pooled income funds | 743,636 | - | 457,382 | - |
| Life income funds | 984 | - | 52,123 | - |
| Life income estates | 98,676 | - | 98,676 | - |
| | \$ 843,296 | \$ 3,189,371 | \$ 608,181 | \$ 6,138,120 |

Adjustments to the liability, to reflect amortization of the discount and changes in actuarial assumptions are recognized in the statements of activities as a change in the value of split-interest agreements in net assets with donor restrictions.

NOTE 8 - RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The ELCA Churchwide Organization is the beneficiary of endowment, trust and annuity accounts with a fair value of \$513,173,550 and \$488,377,752 at January 31, 2022 and 2021. These are managed by the ELCA Foundation.

The Church had a net receivable due from related organizations in the amount of \$6,794,878, at January 31, 2022, and \$4,884,998 at January 31, 2021. The net receivable represents expenses related to service level agreements between the Church and certain affiliated organizations for building space, accounting and management services performed on their behalf.

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NOTE 9 - DEFINED-CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN

Substantially all active employees of the Church are enrolled in the noncontributory defined-contribution pension plan administered by Portico Benefit Services. The employer contributions to the plan for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021 were \$3,353,679 and \$3,685,409, respectively. All contributions to the plan are funded on a current basis.

NOTE 10 - PENSION AND POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS

Post-Retirement Medical Benefits: Members with service in a predecessor organization may be eligible to receive a post-retirement health contribution subsidy from Portico Benefit Services and in some cases a monthly reimbursement of their SMI (Medicare Part B) premiums. These subsidies are expressed as a percentage of the monthly cost for coverage paid by eligible retirees under the Church Medical and Dental Benefits Plan. Subsidies are based on age or a combination of age and service. Approximately 6,400 active or retired members and spouses are eligible or potentially eligible for these subsidies.

These post-retirement medical subsidies are funded through trust funds set aside for that purpose. The trust funds are held and reported by Portico. The full actuarial valuation of the obligation is reported on the financial statements of Portico. Portico financial statements include the trust assets of approximately \$88,610,000 and \$97,499,000, as well as Expected Post-Retirement Benefit Obligation (EPBO) as actuarial liabilities of approximately \$81,006,000 and \$90,929,000 at December 31, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

The Church contributed \$0 and \$917,718 during the fiscal years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021 toward the funding of this post-retirement health care benefit. No additional funding in the future is expected at this time based on current projections.

NOTE 11 - LEASES

Operating Leases: The Church leases certain office facilities and equipment under various operating leases. The facilities' leases generally provide for renewal options and include escalator clauses based on increases in real estate taxes and operating expenses. Total rent expenses for operating leases was approximately \$362,587 and \$338,323 for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively.

Minimum annual rental commitments under non-cancelable leases for the years ending January 31 are as follows:

| | <u>Office Facilities</u> | <u>Office Equipment</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 2023 | 253,398 | 109,189 | 362,587 |
| 2024 | - | 108,796 | 108,796 |
| 2025 | - | 72,792 | 72,792 |
| | \$ 253,398 | \$ 290,777 | \$ 544,175 |
| Total | \$ 253,398 | \$ 290,777 | \$ 544,175 |

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NOTE 12 - COLLECTIONS

The Church's art collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions, are not recognized as assets on the statement of financial position. The collections represent a wide variety of art mediums: collagraph, etching, intaglio, dry-point engraving, katazome, linocut, oil, serigraph/silk-screen, stained glass, watercolor, and woodcut. The art is intended to share the Gospel visually with many of the pieces having biblical references. Purchases of collection items, if any, are recorded as decreases in net assets without donor restrictions in the year in which the items are acquired. Contributed collection items, if any, are not reflected on the financial statements. Proceeds from de-accessions or insurance recoveries, if any, are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes and used according to the applicable restrictions.

NOTE 13 - LINE OF CREDIT

At January 31, 2022 and 2021, the Church had a \$10,000,000 unsecured and uncommitted line of credit with no termination date. Interest on outstanding borrowings is charged at the greatest of: (i) the bank's prime commercial rate plus 1.0%; (ii) the quoted federal funds rate in the secondary market plus 1.5%; or (iii) one-month LIBOR plus 2.0%. There were no borrowings outstanding under the line of credit at January 31, 2022 and 2021, or during the years then ended.

NOTE 14 - CONCENTRATIONS OF RISK

The Church's primary sources of revenue are contributions from synods. The synod contributions are dependent upon contributions from the membership of congregations of the ELCA. There are 9 regions comprising a total of 65 synods. The following is a summary of the contributions by synods in each of the regions during the years ended January 31:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Region 1 – Northwest | \$ 2,117,630 | \$ 2,061,499 |
| Region 2 – Southwest | 3,491,076 | 3,630,572 |
| Region 3 – Northwest Midwest | 6,768,165 | 6,788,186 |
| Region 4 – Southwest Midwest | 3,773,642 | 3,833,428 |
| Region 5 – Northeast Midwest | 8,362,318 | 8,510,086 |
| Region 6 – Southeast Midwest | 3,829,617 | 3,678,531 |
| Region 7 – Northeast | 3,921,606 | 3,899,002 |
| Region 8 – East | 3,819,018 | 3,733,388 |
| Region 9 – Southeast | <u>4,530,650</u> | <u>4,602,769</u> |
| Total synod mission support | <u>\$ 40,613,722</u> | <u>\$ 40,737,461</u> |

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NOTE 15 - NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS

Net assets that were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors were as follows during the years ended January 31:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Satisfaction of program restrictions: | | |
| World Hunger | \$ 21,656,129 | \$ 20,111,463 |
| Disaster Relief | 9,407,075 | 12,083,169 |
| Christian Community Leadership | 1,706,319 | 1,158,796 |
| Service & Justice | 2,799,183 | 2,688,975 |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | 2,112,166 | 75,422 |
| Other programs | <u>3,248,324</u> | <u>9,365,120</u> |
| Satisfaction of program restrictions | 40,929,196 | 45,482,945 |
| Income expended from investments held in perpetuity | <u>3,766,598</u> | <u>3,883,044</u> |
| Total releases from restriction | <u>\$ 44,695,794</u> | <u>\$ 49,365,989</u> |

NOTE 16 - NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets without donor restrictions consist of the following at January 31:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| General | \$ 92,421,214 | \$ 71,514,045 |
| Funds functioning as endowment (Note 18) | 32,506,694 | 30,659,973 |
| Net investment in property, furniture and equipment (Note 6) | <u>18,933,114</u> | <u>21,046,293</u> |
| Ending balance | <u>\$ 143,861,022</u> | <u>\$ 123,220,311</u> |

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NOTE 17 - NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTION

Net assets with donor restrictions are available for the following purposes or periods at January 31:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Program-restricted: | | |
| Disaster Relief | \$ 26,549,055 | \$ 21,958,433 |
| World Hunger | 11,860,013 | 10,107,048 |
| Office of the Presiding Bishop | 1,066,569 | 898,161 |
| Christian Community Leadership | 5,260,458 | 7,080,640 |
| Service & Justice | 9,149,507 | 9,285,564 |
| Mission Advancement | 828,077 | 2,848,777 |
| Other Programs | 2,517,681 | 2,152,990 |
| | <u>57,231,360</u> | <u>54,331,613</u> |
| Time-restricted, expendable in subsequent years | <u>144,759,845</u> | <u>137,763,816</u> |
| | 201,991,205 | 192,095,429 |
| Investments in perpetuity, the income from which is expendable | 210,209,354 | 197,797,817 |
| Deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of annuitant for a permanent endowment | 10,960,668 | 9,849,952 |
| Paid-up life insurance policies that will provide proceeds upon death of insured for permanent endowments | 2,516,745 | 2,304,373 |
| | <u>223,686,767</u> | <u>209,952,142</u> |
| Total net assets with donor restriction | <u>\$ 425,677,972</u> | <u>\$ 402,047,571</u> |

NOTE 18 - ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Interpretation of Relevant Law: The Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) modernizes the laws governing a not-for-profit organization's investment and management of donor-restricted endowment funds. The Board of Trustees of the ELCA Foundation, serving as the body delegated to manage the Church's endowments, has interpreted UPMIFA as allowing, but not requiring, the preservation of the historic dollar value of the original gift of donor-restricted endowment funds, absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Church has chosen to classify as net assets with donor restrictions (a) the original value of gifts donated to the permanent endowment, (b) the original value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment, and (c) accumulations to the permanent endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added to the fund.

In accordance with accounting principles governing not-for-profit organizations subject to an enacted version of UPMIFA, the portions of donor-restricted endowments not classified as net assets with donor restrictions are classified as net assets with donor restrictions until appropriated for expenditure. Realized and unrealized gains and losses on all Church endowments with donor restrictions are being recognized in net assets with donor restrictions, except for unrealized gains and losses on deferred gifts that will provide proceeds upon death of the annuitant for a permanent endowment.

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NOTE 18 - ENDOWMENT FUNDS (Continued)

The Church classifies as net assets with donor restrictions all donor-restricted endowment funds where donor stipulation allows for the release of such funds according to an event or time restriction. In the absence of donor stipulations to the contrary, losses on the investment of such a donor-restricted endowment fund reduce net assets with donor restrictions to the extent that the donor-imposed temporary restrictions on net appreciation of the fund have not been met before the loss occurs. Any remaining loss is recorded as a reduction of net assets without donor restrictions.

There were no funds for which the fair value of the assets held was less than the level required by donor stipulation or law at January 31, 2022 and 2021. At January 31, 2022 and 2021, \$32,506,694 and \$30,659,973 was reported in net assets without donor restrictions. During the year, \$4,127,884 and \$4,114,907 has been released from net assets with donor restrictions to net assets without donor restrictions.

Endowment Spending Policies: Endowment pool distributions are made quarterly at a rate established annually by the Trustee. The distribution rate reflects the Trustee's consideration of the anticipated returns of the Trust and anticipated changes in the purchasing power of the Trust. The rates established for fiscal years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021 were 4%, respectively, and is normally less than the anticipated total return of the Trust. The distribution unit value is equal to the average of the unit values on December 31 of the five preceding years multiplied by the annual distribution rate.

Earnings in excess of the distribution rate are allocated among the endowment accounts in proportion to the number of units assigned to each account as undistributed earnings. If the quarterly distribution exceeds the actual dividend, interest, and net realized gains earned in the quarter, the excess is distributed from accumulated undistributed earnings or participant capital. At January 31, 2022, 31 of 1221 accounts had accumulated undistributed earnings. At January 31, 2021, 28 of 1090 accounts had accumulated undistributed earnings.

In consideration of donor request or intent, certain donor-restricted endowments are invested through instruments held outside of the Trust. Investment income is distributed or reinvested according to the donor-imposed restriction(s) for the usage of endowment distributions.

Endowment Investment Policies: The Trust's investment objective is to provide a stable stream of investment income with long-term capital appreciation, while assuming a moderate level of investment risk. In accordance with guidelines approved by the Trustee, the Trust's assets are invested in a manner that is intended to produce results that exceed the investment's benchmark by 40 basis points over rolling five-year time periods. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this objective.

Certain donor-restricted endowments that are held outside of the Trust are generally invested in term certificates intended to provide interest income and preserve principal amounts while assuming a low level of investment risk.

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NOTE 18 - ENDOWMENT FUNDS (Continued)

Net asset composition by type of endowment fund as of January 31, 2022 and 2021:

| | 2022 | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | Total |
| Donor-restricted funds* | \$ - | \$ 355,314,847 | \$ 355,314,847 |
| Funds functioning as endowment | 32,506,694 | - | 32,506,694 |
| | \$ 32,506,694 | \$ 355,314,847 | \$ 387,821,541 |
| | 2021 | | |
| | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | Total |
| Donor-restricted funds* | \$ - | \$ 338,317,336 | \$ 338,317,336 |
| Funds functioning as endowment | 30,659,973 | - | 30,659,973 |
| | \$ 30,659,973 | \$ 338,317,336 | \$ 368,977,309 |

* With the exception of certain investments held by outside trusts, Church net assets with donor restrictions are based on the historic dollar value of donor-stipulated net assets with donor restrictions.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 18 - ENDOWMENT FUNDS (Continued)

| | <u>Without Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>With Donor Restrictions</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Net assets, February 1, 2020 | \$ 27,500,421 | \$ 306,915,742 | \$ 334,416,163 |
| Net investment return | 1,985,760 | 29,396,677 | 31,382,437 |
| New gifts | 511,301 | 7,831,803 | 8,343,104 |
| Net assets released from restriction | 4,114,907 | (4,114,907) | - |
| Other changes | | | |
| Endowment distribution of income | <u>(3,452,416)</u> | <u>(4,016,352)</u> | <u>(7,468,768)</u> |
| Total other changes | <u>(3,452,416)</u> | <u>(4,016,352)</u> | <u>(7,468,768)</u> |
| Net assets, January 31, 2021 | <u>30,659,973</u> | <u>336,012,963</u> | <u>366,672,936</u> |
| Cash surrender value of life insurance | <u>-</u> | <u>2,304,373</u> | <u>2,304,373</u> |
| Net assets, January 31, 2021 | 30,659,973 | 338,317,336 | 368,977,309 |
| Net investment return | 2,049,433 | 16,203,431 | 18,252,864 |
| New gifts | 740 | 5,941,569 | 5,942,309 |
| Net assets released from restriction | 4,127,884 | (4,127,884) | - |
| Other changes | | | |
| Endowment distribution of income | <u>(4,331,336)</u> | <u>(3,536,350)</u> | <u>(7,867,686)</u> |
| Total other changes | <u>(4,331,336)</u> | <u>(3,536,350)</u> | <u>(7,867,686)</u> |
| Net assets, January 31, 2022 | <u>32,506,694</u> | <u>352,798,102</u> | <u>385,304,796</u> |
| Cash surrender value of life insurance | <u>-</u> | <u>2,516,745</u> | <u>2,516,745</u> |
| Net assets, January 31, 2022 | <u>\$ 32,506,694</u> | <u>\$ 355,314,847</u> | <u>\$ 387,821,541</u> |

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 19 - CONTINGENCIES

The Church is a party to litigation in various matters arising in the ordinary course of operations. Typically, the Church's insurance carriers are defending these matters. Pending litigation will be vigorously defended and, in the opinion of management, is likely to be resolved without any material adverse effect upon the financial statements of the Church.

NOTE 20 - FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES BY NATURE

The statements of activities report certain categories of expenses attributable to the programs and supporting functions of the Church. The table below presents these functional expenses by their natural classification for the years ended January 31, 2022 and 2021.

| | 2022 | | | Total |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | Program Services | Management and General | Fundraising | |
| Financial support and grants | \$ 44,776,454 | \$ 76,710 | \$ - | \$ 44,853,164 |
| Compensation and benefits | 20,178,308 | 13,427,801 | 4,199,770 | 37,805,879 |
| Travel | 491,128 | 165,889 | 76,650 | 733,667 |
| Events and conferences | 852,686 | 275,347 | 8,427 | 1,136,460 |
| Office operations | 2,808,126 | 3,380,506 | 1,276,140 | 7,464,772 |
| Depreciation | 1,079,895 | 1,149,763 | 242,581 | 2,472,239 |
| Occupancy | 927,841 | 987,872 | 208,425 | 2,124,138 |
| Transfers to restricted and designated funds | 2,653,021 | 302,388 | (2,955,409) | - |
| Miscellaneous and expense recovery | 1,523,504 | 2,640,809 | 259,096 | 4,423,409 |
| | <u>\$ 75,290,963</u> | <u>\$ 22,407,085</u> | <u>\$ 3,315,680</u> | <u>\$ 101,013,728</u> |
| | 2021 | | | |
| | Program Services | Management and General | Fundraising | Total |
| Financial support and grants | \$ 42,460,521 | \$ 615,834 | \$ 2,210 | \$ 43,078,565 |
| Compensation and benefits | 25,643,909 | 11,747,866 | 2,784,218 | 40,175,993 |
| Travel | 647,368 | 39,477 | 37,331 | 724,176 |
| Events and conferences | 1,063,758 | 125,712 | 9,921 | 1,199,391 |
| Office operations | 5,023,343 | 3,037,121 | 73,558 | 8,134,022 |
| Depreciation | 1,054,416 | 1,162,832 | 232,179 | 2,449,427 |
| Occupancy | 964,216 | 1,063,358 | 220,540 | 2,248,114 |
| Transfers to restricted and designated funds | (129,561) | 46,105 | 83,456 | - |
| Miscellaneous and expense recovery | 3,207,289 | 1,307,719 | (328,370) | 4,186,638 |
| | <u>\$ 79,935,259</u> | <u>\$ 19,146,024</u> | <u>\$ 3,115,043</u> | <u>\$ 102,196,326</u> |

Certain categories of expenses are allocated to more than one program or supporting function. The allocation is based on estimated full-time equivalents or square footage, as applicable.

(Continued)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 21 - LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY

The Church's financial assets available within one year of the statement of financial position date for general expenditure are as follows:

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2021</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 66,552,968 | \$ 45,970,823 |
| Operating Investments | <u>54,282,206</u> | <u>52,932,772</u> |
| | <u>\$ 120,835,174</u> | <u>\$ 98,903,595</u> |

As part of the Church's liquidity management, the Church invests a portion of its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities, and other obligations come due. The Church had \$32,735,524 and \$30,659,973 in board designated endowments without donor restriction at January 31, 2022 and 2021. While the Church does not have any intention of liquidating the board designated endowments, and they are not currently available for general expenditure, these funds could be made available with Church Council approval.

NOTE 22 - PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM LOAN

As a result of the economic uncertainty stemming from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in April, 2020, the Church received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan in the principal amount of \$7,506,200 from the United States Small Business Administration (SBA).

The Church elected to account for its PPP loan in accordance with ASC 470 and ASC 405. Under ASC 470 and ASC 405, the PPP loan proceeds are initially recorded as a financial liability and subsequently recognized as revenue upon legal release from the liability should such release occur. At January 31, 2021, the Church had not repaid the loan balance and there had been no legal release and, therefore, the loan proceeds were recorded as a financial liability on the statement of financial position.

On July 27, 2021, the Church received notification that the United States Small Business Administration had reviewed the Church's application for forgiveness of the PPP loan and forgiven the loan and related accrued interest in full. The income from this loan forgiveness was recognized in the year ended January 31, 2022, as a gain on extinguishment of debt. The gain shown on the statements of activities is \$5,696,814 which reflects the forgiveness of debt in the amount of \$7,506,200 less expenses of \$1,809,386 for grants of the PPP shared with certain separately incorporated ministries of the Church.

NOTE 23 - SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Management has performed an analysis of the activities and transactions subsequent to January 31, 2022, to determine the need for any adjustments to and/or disclosures within the audited financial statements for the year ended January 31, 2022. Management has performed their analysis through July 29, 2022, the date the financial statements were available to be issued. Activities subsequent to this date have not been evaluated by management.

Report from the Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops (COB) met September 28-October 1, 2022, at Eaglewood Resort in Itasca, Ill. As always, our meeting was grounded in prayer and worship, including a celebration of Holy Communion with the ELCA Fund for Leaders scholars who were in attendance for the annual celebration of the Fund for Leaders. What follows is a brief overview of our meeting.

Our life together in the COB:

- ❖ We welcomed four new bishops: David Nagler, Pacifica Synod; Scott Johnson, Nebraska Synod; Stacie Fidler, Northern Illinois Synod; and Craig Miller, Upper Susquehanna Synod.
- ❖ Continuing our commitment to anti-racism and racial justice, Jennifer DeLeon, director for racial justice, led our first morning by reminding us of the work we are called to do, the resources available to us, and helping us understand our own place in that work.
- ❖ We adopted a new Bishops' Relational Agreement, which will be posted on the ELCA website.
- ❖ The Leadership Committee received feedback on a template for synods to use in putting together a document regarding synod bishop transitions; it is hoped this will be finalized at our spring 2023 meeting.
- ❖ The Congregational Vitality Committee led a generative discussion on best practices for accompanying congregations in various stages of vitality.

Leadership in the ELCA:

- ❖ We approved a change to the Rostered Minister Profile disclosure questions by adding a paragraph for those who have been accused of misconduct, even if found innocent, and striking "accused of" from the previous questions.
- ❖ We engaged in conversations with seminary leaders around questions of candidacy. This work relates to the Candidacy Leadership Working Group currently reviewing the entire process.
- ❖ We approved recommendations from the Roster Committee related to exceptions to policy for rostered ministers on leave from call and the congregational three-year rule, and we approved non-stipendiary calls and ministry in unusual circumstances. The issue of the three-year congregational rule for first call pastors remains a point of conversation for us.
- ❖ We voted to recommend to Church Council "striking the dagger" from the constitutional provision establishing a synod mutual ministry committee, thereby making it an optional provision.
- ❖ We spent time discussing the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church and submitted our feedback to the Office of the Secretary. It is fair to say there is great interest in seeing how this commission will go about its work, who will sit on it, and whether it can complete its work by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. There was considerable agreement that this work needs to be informed by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion audit called for at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and, therefore, should wait to begin substantive work until the audit has been completed.
- ❖ We heard from Pr. Roger Willer, director for theological ethics, the challenges related to completing the work called for at the CWA on revisiting and revising *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009). There was not a consensus in the COB on the best way for this work to move forward given the human capacity and funding realities of the churchwide organization.

- ❖ Recommendations related to the memorials on Specialized Ministry and On Leave from Call Status are being worked on by the Roster Committee as they also address issues related to the review of the retired roster as requested by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

Beyond the work described above, we come together as the COB to give and receive encouragement as we serve in our respective synods. We are at our best when we work collegially and celebrate all that God is doing through this church. I give thanks for my colleagues in the COB, on the churchwide staff, and on the Church Council as we seek to be the church Christ needs in this world.

Submitted by Bishop Tracie Bartholomew, chair, Conference of Bishops

**ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Staff Report, Office of the Presiding Bishop
March 1, 2021 – November 1, 2022**

Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Guest Program at CWA

We were honored to welcome almost twenty ecumenical and inter-religious guests to CWA. The plenary program is [online](#), starting at 2:36. Highlights included:

- Uplifting our newest full communion partnership, Churches Beyond Borders
- Celebrating 25 years of full communion through the Formula of Agreement
- Affirming our journey “on the way” through Lutheran-Catholic dialogue
- Encouraging cooperation to becoming anti-racist through the National Council of Churches
- Renewing work against anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim bigotry with the Union for Reform Judaism, the Islamic Society of North America, and together through the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign
- Uplifting our newest resources, “ELCA Guidelines for Ministry in a Multi-Religious World” and “Preaching and Teaching with Love and Respect for the Jewish People”



Inter-Religious Relations

Pastoral Guidelines

As part of the implementation of “[A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment](#),” adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 2019, an ad-hoc committee was appointed by the Presiding Bishop to develop pastoral “[ELCA Guidelines for Ministry in a Multi-Religious World](#),” which were published in July 2022.



The committee consisted of teaching theologians, bishops (Kreiss and Eaton), campus ministers, synod staff, pastors, deacons, chaplains, and lay people. Two noteworthy factors in the process were the input gleaned from a survey across the church that yielded the collective wisdom of more than 2,600 respondents, and the feedback our inter-religious partners provided on the penultimate draft. You can read highlights in this [blog post](#), which became the impetus for a [feature story](#) published by the Lutheran World Federation. The guidelines were lifted up by the

Presiding Bishop during the Churchwide Assembly and were shared in a [pastoral message](#) to the church at the end of September.

“Preaching and Teaching with Love and Respect for the Jewish People”

Building on “[A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community](#)” revised last year, the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations has developed a guide for “[Preaching and Teaching](#)

[with love and respect for the Jewish people.](#)” Reviewed and endorsed by the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Committee of the ELCA Conference of Bishops in spring 2022, the guide was published and distributed through various media this fall. During the Churchwide Assembly, the Presiding Bishop commended the guide for use by rostered ministers and it was highlighted in her pastoral message referenced above. You can learn more about this resource in Rev. Peter Pettit’s [introduction to the guide on the ELCA Perspectives blog](#). Rev. Pettit is part of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations and served as principal editor for the resource.

ELCA Declaration to the Muslim Community

In late March 2022, the ELCA Church Council adopted “[A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to the Muslim Community](#),” uplifting our commitment to friendship and solidarity with our Muslim neighbors. Prof. Mark Swanson, chair of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations wrote a [blog post](#) introducing the document and its intended purpose. In May 2022, on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr, Presiding Bishop Eaton wrote “[An Open Letter to the Muslim Community](#),” as a sign of our ongoing commitment to love our Muslim neighbors. This letter was shared by Muslim partners and organizations, including the Islamic Society of North America, Islamic Relief USA, the Islamic Circle of North America, and the Muslim World League, through their publications and social media channels.

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Relations

In late 2021, the ISNA appointed a new head of their Office for Interfaith Alliances, Community Alliances, and Government Relations, Imam Saffet Catovic. Kathryn Lohre and Imam Catovic have been meeting to build relations and to envision the next phase of partnership between the ELCA and ISNA. As one of the guest speakers at the Churchwide Assembly, Imam Catovic responded to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Muslim Community,” and affirmed our partnership to address issues of common concern such as Indigenous rights, racial injustice, climate justice, and hatred, xenophobia, and violence, including anti-Muslim bigotry. See [video](#) at 3:10:26. Over labor day weekend, Prof. Mark Swanson, chair of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations, attended the annual ISNA convention in Rosemont, Illinois on behalf of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to present the declaration.

Shoulder to Shoulder


Kathryn Lohre continues to serve as co-chair of the [Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign](#): Standing with American Muslims, Advancing American Ideals, of which the ELCA is a founding member. After two years of successfully pivoting its signature program online, the campaign is resuming in-person “[Faith Over Fear](#)” trainings. For the first time *Faith Over Fear* is now being offered as an online, self-guided training course. [Visit the Faith Over Fear page on ReligionAndPublicLife.org to learn more](#). In June 2022, Executive Director Nina Fernando, staff, and the Executive Committee engaged in a strategic planning retreat sponsored by the El-Hibri Foundation. This process initiated significant steps toward becoming a financially sustainable, stronger organization in the years to come. In May, Kathryn Lohre joined other Shoulder to Shoulder leaders at the first-ever inter-religious conference held in Saudi Arabia hosted and sponsored by the Muslim World League, which issued a “[Declaration of Common Human Values](#).”



Inter-Religious Dialogues

We participate in the National Council of Churches' national inter-religious dialogues with Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs. The Christian-Muslim dialogue met online in April to explore the convergence of holy days, with Kathryn Lohre presenting on the significance of Lent. In May, the Buddhist-Christian and Hindu-Christian dialogues met online. The Jewish-Christian dialogue resumed in-person in Washington DC to explore anti-Semitism and to visit the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. The Christian-Sikh dialogue met online in July to discuss forms of evangelism. The Buddhist-Christian dialogue and Hindu-Christian dialogue met in October at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in Los Angeles. The Buddhist-Christian dialogue included text study and a visit to the Japanese American National Museum to reflect upon the history of Japanese internment and the trauma and resilience of Japanese American Buddhist and Christian communities. The Hindu-Christian dialogue explored Diwali & All Saints Day and themes of friendship, understanding, dialogue, and cooperation.

Parliament of the World's Religions

 The centennial [Parliament](#) will return to its birthplace in Chicago, August 14-18, 2023. Presiding Bishop Eaton has been confirmed as a plenary speaker. We intend to organize a gathering of all Lutheran attendees – please consider attending this remarkable inter-religious conference and spread the word.

Ecumenical Relations

Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue

We are preparing to launch a new round of dialogue in December between the ELCA and the US Catholic church, as the report of the previous round on “Teaching Authority” is being finalized for publication by Fortress Press. The next round of the dialogue will be co-chaired by Bishop Patricia Lull and Bishop Denis Madden and staffed by the Rev. Dr. Carmelo Santos (ELCA) and the Rev. Dr. Walter Kedjierski (USCCB). Preparatory meetings have led to consensus on pursuing the topic of ministry with a general focus on the role of the bishops in our respective churches. The ELCA dialogue members are Rev. Dr. Katherine Shaner (Wake Forest University School of Divinity), Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder (Trinity Lutheran Seminary), Rev. Dr. Nelson Rivera (Moravian Theological Seminary), Rev. Dr. Justin Nickel (Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University), Rev. Dr. Derek Nelson (Wabash College), and Dr. Ian McFarland (Emory University's Candler School of Theology). The dialogue participants will be announced in a public press release, issued jointly with the USCCB as the new round is launched.

His Beatitude Theodoros II inaugural visit to United States

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria & All Africa, visited the United States for the first time in October. Ecumenical guests were invited to join in the Divine Liturgy and a luncheon at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Kathryn Lohre attended on behalf of the ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop. His Beatitude's time in the US also included a visit to the White House and to New York, where he received the 2022 Athenagoras Human Rights Award from the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarch in America. You can learn more about the full details of His Beatitude's visit at goarch.org.



Full Communion Updates

The [Memorandum of Mutual Recognition](#) among the ELCA, the ELCiC, The Episcopal Church (TEC), and



the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) came into full effect following the action of the General Convention of TEC in July 2022. In recent months, “Churches Beyond Borders” (CBB) efforts have focused on our common commitments to repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and confronting the legacies of slavery, including racism and white supremacy. A workshop was offered by the four churches during the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, with leadership from Vance Blackfox, director, ELCA Indigenous Ministries & Tribal Relations. Vance created a website of resources to deepen and extend this work at elca.org/rotdod

In June, ULS President Guy Erwin, who is a member of the **Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee (LMCC)**, attended the Moravian Church Southern Province Synod in Winston Salem on behalf of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. In his report, he shared about the ELCA’s work related to repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and invited the Moravians to join. In response, the Synod passed a proposal to initiate such work among themselves, with the Northern Province, and possibly together with the ELCA.

The **Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee (LECC)** continues to work through small leadership teams, as we live into the next phase of reception. The teams are *Shared Ministry Agreements and Governance*, *Judicatory Matters for Dioceses and Synods* (Kreiss), *Liturgical Considerations* (Strickland), *Orderly Exchange of Pastors/Priests Under CCM*, *Diaconate* (Gafkjen), and *Campus Ministry*.

Christian Churches Together in the USA



CCT gathered for its [Annual Forum](#) in Indianapolis in October 2022 under the theme, “Who Does Jesus Call our Christian Churches to be in a Polarized Society?” In the context of the “crossroads of American Christianity,” participants engaged in spiritual sharing, theological reflection, and experiential learning. This is the broadest ecumenical table in the US, including five church families: Evangelical/Pentecostal, Historic Black, Mainline Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic. A prayer conveying the wisdom, lamentation, and hopes raised at the Forum was adopted and will be shared through member churches. CCT also introduced three new charisms to guide their work: *Engaging in Loving Relationships*, *Learning Theologically*, and *Leading Actions*.

Dialogue with CCDOC

Our resumed bilateral dialogue with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) met in person for the first time in April 2022, following two online meetings in 2021. The agenda centered on exploring local case studies of common mission and ministry challenges and opportunities. The official documents of the dialogue are available [here](#). The dialogue met online in late October to explore the WCC ecumenical convergence text, “[The Church: Towards a Common Vision](#).”



National Council of Churches (NCC)

The 2022 Christian Unity Gathering (CUG) was held online October 9-11 under the theme, “The Challenge of Change: Serving a Never-Changing Christ in an Ever-Changing World.” The video segments will be posted online in January. Bishop Eaton is the Vice-Chair of the NCC Governing Board, serving

alongside Chair Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, and Interim General Secretary Bishop Vashti Mackenzie. The Updated Edition of the NRSV, or NRSVue, which is owned by the NCC, is now available for purchase in print and digital formats. You can find more information [here](#).

World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches 11th Assembly took place in Karlsruhe, Germany in early September on the theme, “Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity.” Representatives of the ELCA were among the more than 4,000 delegates, participants, observers, students, resource people, and ecumenical partners. The most significant and anticipated actions of the Assembly were the adoption of an ecumenical convergence text entitled “[Unity Statement](#),” and various resolutions such as “[The Living Planet](#),” “[Seeking Justice and Peace for All in the Middle East](#),” and “[War in Ukraine](#).” The Assembly adopted a message to the world, titled “[A Call to Act Together](#).” The ELCA’s delegation was led by Bishop



Eaton and included Vance Blackfox, Khadijah Islam (young adult), Carlos Peña, and Kathryn Lohre.



Service & Justice staff were present to lead workshops, serve in the networking spaces, and to engage in the work of specialized ministries. Bishop Eaton moderated the ecumenical conversation on “Minding the Gaps: A Gender Justice Approach to Reconciliation and Unity” and Kathryn Lohre served as rapporteur for the one on “Interreligious Solidarity.” These were two of twenty-three ecumenical conversations among delegates to inform the strategic direction and programmatic work of the Council in the 8-year period until the next Assembly. You can find information about the Assembly [here](#); the plenaries, Bible studies and business sessions can all be viewed on [YouTube](#). Kathryn Lohre wrote an [article](#) about the Assembly for [LivingLutheran.org](#)

National Workshop on Christian Unity 2022

The 2022 National Workshop on Christian Unity was held at Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove, California in May 2022. This is also the annual meeting of the Lutheran Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Representatives Network (LEIRN). Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in America was the [keynote](#) speaker. Next year’s NWCU will take place in Milwaukee May 8-12, 2023.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023

The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2023 is “Do good; seek justice” (Isaiah 1:17). The theme was chosen, and the materials prepared, by the Minnesota Council of Churches. Resources, including posters, bulletin covers, and daily Scripture and prayer guides can be ordered from [the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute](#). You can also access [a detailed resource to aid preparations](#) published jointly by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches.

Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Staff, Office of the Presiding Bishop

Kristen Opalinski, Manager, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations
Carmelo Santos, Director, Theological Diversity and Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations
Kathryn Lohre, Executive, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations & Theological Discernment

En Bloc Items

I. Budget and Finance Committee

A. Audit Committee Report

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the [report of the ELCA Audit Committee](#) describing its review of [the audited financial statements](#) for the churchwide organization's fiscal year ended January 31, 2022.

B. Mission Development Fund Policy

In 2006, the Church Council approved the establishment of a Mission Development Fund (MDF) as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer.

VOTED:

CC06.11.38

To approve the establishment of a new temporarily restricted fund, the Mission Development Fund, to reside in the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount, after covering any shortfall in other current income categories, in any fiscal year. Additional consideration will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies. The transfer of such income shall be authorized by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer. The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and the Foundation of the ELCA and in collaboration with the Cabinet of Executives. Expenditures from the Mission Development Fund in an amount greater than \$1 million shall require action by the Church Council.

Several revisions to the [MDF policy](#) were approved by the Budget and Finance Committee at its July 2022 meeting and forwarded to Church Council for action.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the revisions to the 2006 Church Council Action CC06.11.38 for the Mission Development Fund as presented in the "Mission Development Fund Policy."

C. Post-Retirement Medical Benefits

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To transfer the excess liability in the amount of \$622,977.90 which represents the excess accrual for Post-Retirement Medical Benefits to the Designated Fund for Budgeted Operations Support.

II. Executive Committee

A. Completion of COVID-19 Response Fund

At the April 2020 Church Council meeting, a special appeal in response to COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) was approved as a fundraising effort of this church. [CC20.04.09]

The fundraising effort successfully raised \$2,112,429 to support this church's congregations, synods, and other affiliate ministries that had been negatively impacted by the pandemic. No new

monies are coming in for the appeal and there are other urgent fundraising priorities, so the recommendation is to close the COVID-19 special appeal.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To approve the completion of the special appeal in response to COVID-19; and
To thank this church's members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and other institutions and agencies for their generous support.**

B. Revisions to the ELCA Governance Policy Manual

At the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, a bylaw was adopted that allowed the Church Council to designate categories for advisory members to have voice but not vote at Council meetings. This necessitates amendments to the ELCA Governance Policy Manual.

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

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

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

III. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee

A. Proposed Bylaw Amendments for Portico Benefit Services

The Church Council is responsible for approving Portico Benefit Services amendments that involve a significant change in policy or a significant change in cost or benefits and shall approve trust amendments initiated by Portico Benefit Services ["Portico"].

Pending Portico's Board of Trustees approval, the proposed changes are to be considered by the Church Council. The proposed amendments, including the rationale, can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA as listed in the "Portico Bylaws Changes Nov 2022" document.

B. Proposed Bylaw Amendment of Lenoir-Rhyne University

In August 2022, the Lenoir-Rhyne University Board of Directors approved a bylaw amendment that was fully supported by the chair of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) Advisory Council. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02. The proposed amendment replaces the university president with the vice president of mission, engagement, and innovation as the *ex-officio* voting member on the LTSS Advisory Council (p. 15). The proposed amendment can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University.

C. Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies

At its September meeting, the Executive Committee referred the Churchwide Assembly action concerning separation agreements to the Office of the Presiding Bishop [EC22.09.23b7]. The assembly action directed the Church Council to update the “Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies” to appropriately limit the use to non-disclosure agreements consistent with the memorials. [CA22.03.14]

The updated Personnel Policies reflecting that change can be found [here](#). Employees of the churchwide organization of the ELCA are expected to read, understand, and comply with the Personnel Policies of the Churchwide Organization, which are adopted by the Church Council in accordance with 14.21.06.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies; and

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

D. Synod Constitution Amendments

Provision 10.12 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: “Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification....”

The amendments to the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Constitution can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To ratify the amendments in the constitution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, with the exception of the following provisions:

- **S6.04.03.**
- **S9.05.**
- **S9.06.**
- **S9.07.**
- **S10.01.02.**
- **S10.01.03.**

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

E. Proposed Bylaw Amendment of United Lutheran Seminary

The United Lutheran Seminary Board of Trustees reviewed several bylaw amendments. Those amendments include removing gender-specific terms (pronouns), which lead in certain cases to rephrasing, adding clarifying language, further codifying Shared Governance, and removing language related to the Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation. In the case of the latter, the Governance, Infrastructure, and Policy Committee felt it appropriate to remove the entire second paragraph in Chapter 3 as unnecessarily specific. The proposed amendments can be found [here](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the amended bylaws of United Lutheran Seminary.

IV. Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee

A. Assessment and Feasibility of Social Message Processes

At this time, there are three pending requests for social messages, two of which come from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. It is the recommendation of the director for theological ethics to delay action on these requests until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting. A social message on climate care is in process, which fully occupies the churchwide organization staffing and churchwide capacity until brought to Church Council for consideration in Spring 2023. Further, it has not been possible to do the groundwork or assessment necessary to bring a clear recommendation regarding all the pending requests. Such assessment and recommendation are anticipated by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. national gun policy or on child abuse and protection and of considering the authorization of a revision of the “Message on Homelessness” (1990) until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting to allow for a careful and thorough assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances; and

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

V. Service and Justice Committee

A. Corporate Social Responsibility Documents

The Church Council is responsible for reviewing this church’s ongoing work in corporate social responsibility. The Service and Justice Committee reviewed [three issue papers and one new social criteria investment screen](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

- Sustainability Issue Paper
- Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper
- Genetics Issue Paper;

To approve the “Privatized Immigration Detention Social Criteria Investment Screen;” and
To request that the original issue papers be archived for historical and research purposes.

VI. Christian Community and Leadership Committee

A. Policies for Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities

In accordance with ELCA Constitution bylaw 10.01.04, “the synod—in keeping with criteria, policies, and procedures proposed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units, and approved by the Church Council—may acknowledge certain authorized worshiping communities such as developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission.”

The [2003 policy](#) is in conflict with current practice and later policy documents, so the recommendation is to repeal the policy and develop a new one.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To repeal the 2003 Policy on Criteria for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities; and
To direct the Christian Community and Leadership home area, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to consider a new policy to be reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and approved by the Church Council.**

VII. Other Items

A. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the Church Council meetings on [Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022](#), [June 27, 2022](#), and [Aug. 7, 2022](#) have been provided to council members electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on [Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022](#), [Apr. 26, 2022](#), [June 28, 2022](#), [Aug. 7, 2022](#), [Sept. 13, 2022](#), and [Oct. 13, 2022](#) have been provided electronically to members on Church Council Teams.

Please provide any notations or typographical errors in the distributed text of the minutes in writing to the executive for Office of the Secretary administration (Keith.Fry@elca.org). Proper corrections will be entered into the protocol copies of the minutes. Such corrections need not be raised in the plenary session in connection with the approval of the minutes.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To approve the minutes of the Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, June 27, 2022, and Aug. 7, 2022 meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, Apr. 26, 2022, June 28, 2022, Aug. 7, 2022, Sept. 13, 2022, and Oct. 13, 2022 meetings.

B. Issuance of Church Council Letters of Call

In 2008, the Church Council acted to grant the secretary of this church the authority to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for those calls listed in the *Tables of Sources of Calls* for which the Church Council is described as the calling body:

VOTED: EN BLOC
CC08.04.19

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, in accordance with the Sources of Calls tables in Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To note that this action supersedes Church Council action CC87.06.03; and

To request that the secretary annually report letters of call issued under this authorization.

In order to more closely parallel the process for issuance of letters of call by synod councils and congregations, and to ensure that authority for calls is more broadly shared by the Church Council, the secretary recommends that this responsibility be given to the Executive Committee. This action would rescind the earlier authority granted to the secretary.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for rostered ministers in accordance with the *Tables of Sources of Calls* in Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To note that this action supersedes Church Council action CC08.04.19.

C. Church Council Nominations and Elections

The Church Council has the responsibility for electing people to fill terms on boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries (SIM), social ministry organizations, and seminaries. Bylaws 8.21.03. and 8.21.04. outline basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Pursuant to 14.22. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Church Council is also to elect nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

Biographical information is provided in [Biographies](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to a term beginning Oct. 1, 2022, and expiring Sept. 30, 2024: Mr. DeWayne A. Cook.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To re-elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a term beginning Jan. 1, 2023, and expiring Dec. 31, 2028: Ms. Elizabeth L. Jones.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the advisory board¹ of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term beginning July 1, 2022, and expiring June 30, 2025: The Rev. Stephen D. Wachtman.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the Committee of Hearing Officers to a six-term beginning November 2022: Mr. Arundel T. Clarke.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the Mission Investment Fund Board of Trustees to a term expiring in August 2025: Mr. Randall S. Foster.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To elect to the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. for a renewable four-year term beginning in March 2023 and concluding March 2027: The Rev. Michael J. Vinson.

¹ editorial correction to identify the election to the advisory board, not a board of directors

Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions

A. Fortifying Urban Ministries

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.08]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Fortifying Ministries in Underserved Urban Areas” from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod;

To affirm the strategic direction of the ELCA Fund for Leaders ministry to enhance the capacity of people of color through its disbursement of scholarships to Theological Education for Emerging Ministries candidates;

To refer this memorial to the Congregational Vitality Training and Development Team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area to create a churchwide Urban Ministry group, in partnership with the appropriate leaders in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, to accompany ELCA synods in their urban strategies that lead to the enhancement of congregational vitality and ministry sustainability in the urban context. The group will 1) collaborate with other studies already underway, 2) resource synods by gathering best practices in urban ministry and emerging ideas in the care and creative use of church facilities, 3) identify supportive networks within this church and among ecumenical partners, and 4) encourage piloting innovative ways to address the realities and complexities of urban ministry, including enhancing urban internship opportunities. The group may consider additional topics as needed;

To request that the churchwide Urban Ministry group consult with and provide regular reports to the Church Council to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled; and

To provide a final report to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly on the results of its study, new urban initiatives, and ways for this church to fortify the witness and service among people and communities in underserved urban areas.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b3]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Fortifying Urban Ministries in Underserved Urban Areas” to the Christian Community and Leadership home area 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The responsibility for the implementation of this memorial has been assigned to the Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area. The Rev. Sandra Chrostowski, senior director, Congregational Vitality, and New Ministry Training and Development, and the Rev. Ruben Duran, senior advisor for New Ministry Development, have been appointed as conveners of a churchwide organization group to address this memorial on Urban Ministry, in partnership with leaders in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod who sent this memorial forward and who also passed a similar resolution on urban ministry for their synod.

Two initial action steps have been taken:

1. An initial consultation with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod staff has taken place. The synod has appointed the Rev. Regina Goodrich, pastor of Mediator Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, Penn. and dean of the synod’s Central Conference, and the Rev. Brian Penman, the synod’s director for evangelical mission, as *ad hoc* members of the Synod Task Force for Urban Ministry. They are identifying members for this task force and are planning to meet for the first time in early November.
2. Pastors Chrostowski and Duran have begun to develop criteria for the selection of participants for the churchwide group on Urban Ministry including representation from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod leadership. The intention is to have group membership finalized in December and to begin convening in early 2023.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

- To receive the response on “Fortifying Urban Ministries in the Underserved Urban Areas” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;**
- To request a progress report on the work by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and**
- To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

B. Mission Development Process

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.10]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Equity and Clarity in the Mission Development Process” from the Delaware-Maryland Synod;

To refer this memorial to the Congregational Vitality Training and Development team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area to establish a working group in partnership with the appropriate leaders in the Delaware-Maryland Synod to study and refine current ELCA guidelines and systems for appointments, calls, funds, and support mechanisms for mission developers and new ministries; and

To request that the working group consult with and provide regular reports to the Church Council beginning by Fall 2023 to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled.

Response from the Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The ELCA Christian Community and Leadership home area Congregational Vitality Training and Development Team leaders have contacted Delaware-Maryland Synod staff to create a working group in partnership with Delaware-Maryland Synod leaders who composed this memorial. The Rev. Sandra Chrostowski, senior director, Congregational Vitality, and New Ministry Training and Development, and the Rev. Ruben Duran, senior advisor for New Ministry Development, have been appointed as conveners of this working group which will identify partners across this church for consultation and collaboration with the goal of scheduling an online meeting during the first quarter of 2023.

This working group will study and refine current ELCA guidelines and systems in place for appointment, calls, funding, and support mechanisms for mission developers and new ministries. The working group will also provide regular reports, beginning at the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

- To receive the progress report on “Equity and Clarity in the Mission Development Process” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;**
- To request a progress report on the work by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; and**
- To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

C. Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.04.25]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Oregon Synod, Southwest California Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Minneapolis Area Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Southwestern Texas Synod, Northern Illinois Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Synod, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, New England Synod, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Central States Synod, and Delaware-Maryland Synod concerning greenhouse gas reduction;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to engage in creation care and advocacy based on the principles of sufficiency, sustainability, participation, and solidarity;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to advocacy and action in support of 50% reduction from 2005 levels in United States economy-wide net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050;

To direct the ELCA Churchwide organization to set the goal of reducing its net greenhouse gas pollution 50% by 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050;

To urge the churchwide organization to continue its network ministry through the Creation Care Network to inform and guide this church in its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

To encourage congregants, rostered ministers, and bishops to commit themselves to education about the urgency of the climate emergency, the global opportunities of a just transition and to lift up loving our neighbor in response to the climate emergency through their preaching;

To affirm the Mission Investments Fund's "Green Building" initiative and resources, and to encourage continued commitment to supporting ministries in caring for creation and addressing climate change;

To refer to the Service and Justice home area, Office of the Treasurer, Office of the Secretary, and Office of the Presiding Bishop, for implementation consistent with the memorials; and

To request the churchwide organization provide a report to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly assessing the progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions across all three expressions and sharing lessons learned to help meet reduction goals.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b2]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on "Greenhouse Gas Reduction" to the Service and Justice home area, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer, Office of the Secretary and Office of the Presiding Bishop, 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 synods of this action.

Response from the Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing all of God's creation. Leading scientists from around the world have confirmed that global average temperatures are growing warmer due to increasing levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases in the Earth's atmosphere. Human use of fossil fuels that release carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse" gases (GHGs) into the air is the main source of the increase in these gases. As levels of carbon dioxide and other GHGs increase, more and more of the sun's heat is trapped by the atmosphere and less escapes back into space. The increase in trapped heat changes the climate, causing altered weather patterns, including multi-year droughts, extreme storms, flooding, and rising sea levels.

The memorials direct the ELCA churchwide organization (CWO) to establish targets to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. This target is consistent with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2018 report that states that, in order to prevent the worst climate damages, global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) need to fall by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050. The ELCA has supported these targets in its advocacy and creation care education work.

Representatives of the Service and Justice home area, the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop met to discuss implementation of the memorial directive. This discussion noted that the CWO has already achieved reductions through reduced travel, more online collaboration, and hybrid work plans. The work to establish a 2005 baseline and to create emission and energy use reduction targets will require expertise beyond current churchwide staff capacity. Funding for a half-time position has been set aside in the Service and Justice home area, beginning in 2023. The CWO sees this initiative as a witness to ELCA commitments to care for creation, and an initiative that can model what synods and congregations can do. The CWO supports the reconstituting of the Creation Care Network that is currently underway.

A progress report will be made to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Greenhouse Gas Reduction” from the Service and Justice home area;

To urge the churchwide organization to continue its efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and commend it for its initiatives and commitments to creation care and environmental advocacy;

To request a progress report be provided by the Spring 2025 Church Council meeting with a report expected for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

D. Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.05c]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” from the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod;

To request that the presiding bishop communicate this church’s support for statehood for the District of Columbia to the United States Congress;

To direct the ELCA Witness in Society team in the Service and Justice home area to promote opportunities for education and advocacy regarding statehood for Washington, D.C.;

To direct the ELCA Witness in Society team to listen to and support calls for self-determination for American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other U.S. territories and to act on requests related to these matters from the Caribbean Synod and the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations; and

To encourage all ELCA synods, congregations, and members to inform and educate themselves about ELCA social teaching and witness in society on voting access and voting rights.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b1]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” to the Service and Justice home area 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 Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

As a church body, the ELCA uses its voice to address important policy issues that affect the well-being of people and communities, including promotion of civic engagement and the right to vote. The ELCA has consistently expressed its support for full representation of all people in political processes and decision making as a matter of fairness and civil rights. The ELCA social statement *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991) states, “Along with all citizens, Christians have the responsibility to defend human rights and to work for freedom, justice, peace, environmental well-being, and good order in public life. They are to recognize the vital role of law in protecting life and liberty and in upholding the common good. Christians need to be concerned for the methods and the content of public deliberation. They should be critical when groups of people are inadequately represented in political processes and decisions that affect their lives.” (p. 5) The ELCA social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (1993) states, “This church will support legislation, ordinances, and resolutions that guarantee to all persons equally: civil rights, including full protection of the law and redress under the law of discriminatory practices; and to all citizens, the right to vote.” (p. 7)

Through the Witness in Society team, the ELCA Service and Justice home area will respond to the memorial “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” with the following steps:

1. Fall 2022: Consult with the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod on the issue of statehood for the District of Columbia and collaborate with the synod on an action plan.
2. Fall 2022: Consult with the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations and with the Caribbean Synod regarding the resolve “to direct the ELCA Witness in Society team to listen to and support calls for self-determination for American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal

Nations, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other U.S. territories and to act on requests related to these matters from the Caribbean Synod and the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations.”

3. 2023: Determine opportunities for education and advocacy on voting rights, representation and statehood in the District of Columbia, including opportunities for timely communication from the Presiding Bishop to the United States Congress.
4. 2023: Continue to promote and encourage civic engagement in the ELCA, including through the ELCAvotes initiative.
5. Fall 2023: Report on memorial response to the ELCA Church Council.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” from the Service and Justice home area;

To affirm the timeline proposed and to anticipate a report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; and

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

E. Right to Boycott

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.05e]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and the New England Synod in relation to Palestinian human rights; and

To urge Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton and ELCA members to call on the president of the United States and the U.S. Congress to oppose legislation penalizing or criminalizing support for nonviolent boycotts, divestment, and/or sanctions on behalf of Palestinian human rights.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b5]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Right to Boycott” to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area 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 synods of this action.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

The Public Messages Working Group, an internal churchwide organization working group, reviewed the request for the presiding bishop and ELCA members to call on the U.S. President and Congress to oppose legislation penalizing or criminalizing support for nonviolent boycotts, divestment, and/or sanctions on behalf of Palestinian human rights.

Given the current election cycle, staff recommend the request be postponed until the new Congress is in session. The intention would be to link an ELCA letter with ecumenical efforts or with a calendar event like a United Nations day or discussion. In preparation, a template and initial draft will be undertaken so the letter may be quickly edited and released when the timing is appropriate. Church Council can expect a report on the outcomes by the April 2024 meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the timeline on “Right to Boycott” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area;

To request a report be provided by the April 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

F. Unaltered Augsburg Confession

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.02.09q]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from Allegheny and Southeastern synods concerning renewed awareness and use of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; and

To refer the proposed actions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media, Mission Advancement unit and other units, for additional analysis and planning in the churchwide organization for a report and possible recommendations to the Church Council.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a11]

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media and other appropriate churchwide organization units, provide a report or a timeline on when the Unaltered Augsburg Confession will receive further attention; and

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

Church Council action [CC19.11.47u]

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a report with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council’s Spring 2021 meeting; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

Over the past 18 months, the focus of the work of the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation has been the 2020 initiatives on Luther’s “The Freedom of a Christian.” 1517 Media generously made a .pdf of the treatise freely available to accompany a study guide and compendium of case studies developed and published at elca500.org. A number of public events drew upon these resources and themes. Consideration is currently being given to marking the 500th anniversary of the Diet of Worms this year.

Given these projects, an extension is requested for the work detailed in the November 2019 report. As this church journeys toward the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030, the Rev. Marcus Kunz (executive, discernment of contextual and theological issues) will serve as the facilitator for processes and consultations that will:

- clarify or define the purpose of any organized action by the churchwide organization in the years leading to the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession;
- assess what resources already are or will be available and what activities will likely be planned and undertaken by other organizations (for example, resources already available or planned by the ELCA publishing house; activities that may be undertaken by theological faculties and/or ecumenical groups, the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the 13th assembly in 2023);
- consider which, if any, of the actions requested in the memorials are appropriate for the churchwide organization to undertake itself or to coordinate with or among others, and considering what other actions related to the Augsburg Confession may be beneficial;
- give full attention to the letter and spirit of the ELCA’s representational principles in any and all related processes and consultations; and
- make a progress report with possible recommendations for next steps to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06u]

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a progress report with possible recommendations be provided to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2022)

Two synod memorials presented to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly proposed actions throughout the ELCA and its interdependent institutions as well as among its members that would:

- raise awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession more widely in the church;

- renew attention in seminary education; and
- develop resources for use in classrooms and congregations.

These actions would be encouraged and supported by the churchwide organization in anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030. The proposals specifically requested wider and easier availability of the English translations of both the German and Latin texts included in *The Book of Concord*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert. In follow-up conversation with the primary authors of the synod memorial from the Allegheny Synod, they said they understand this proposal to be comparable to Bishop Eaton's invitation to study the Small Catechism in 2016-2017 in connection with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Although the memorials were referred to the churchwide staff for additional study and possible recommendations, some actions have already been initiated with others. For a full account of the actions and consultations, please refer to the [Unaltered Augsburg Confession Report](#).

If the Church Council and/or Office of Presiding Bishop decide to proceed with the proposed actions of the memorial, some immediate next steps could include:

- a. Designating staff who will exercise responsibility for tasks and outcomes:
 - i. a point person and/or "realizer" who will have primary responsibility
 - ii. a working group of other staff with expertise, experience, and relationships needed for implementation
- b. Selecting an advisory group (beyond churchwide staff) to assist with assessment, networking, decision-making and planning
- c. Continuing consultations with individuals and at least 2-4 more small groups
- d. Making initial decisions regarding:
 - i. the purpose, goals, and scope of activities for this project
 - ii. the scope and posture of the churchwide staff's role (assuming that other groups and individuals will take their own initiatives), hopefully with attention to the insights expressed in this initial round of consultation (above)
- e. Clarifying what resources (budget, personnel, etc.) will be available for this project
- f. Taking inventory of existing material resources and making an initial assessment of their usability, accessibility, and limitations
- g. Taking inventory of individuals and groups in the ELCA, LWF and beyond who can collaborate productively. A networking session (workshop) at next summer's Rostered Ministers Gathering would be one opportunity.
- h. Beginning exploration and development of resources, including resource persons, other than traditional classroom-type materials and methods (assuming that the traditional materials and methods will also be available)

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on "Unaltered Augsburg Confession" from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To support the actions identified in the memorials to raise awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession more widely in the church, renew attention of the Augsburg Confession in seminary education, and develop resources for use in this church's congregations, synods, and institutions;

**To affirm the steps proposed by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to fulfill the actions; and
To request that the secretary inform the synods of this action.**

G. Salary Equity in the ELCA

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.11]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Salary Equity in the ELCA” from the Delaware-Maryland Synod;

To refer the memorial to the Church Council to consider commissioning a study of pay gaps for rostered ministers in the ELCA, particularly as they relate to women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQIA+ community, and to consider using such a study not only for the purposes described in this memorial but also for the study of inequitable compensation of clergy of color previously called for by the Church Council (CC19.06.23.), for the Quality of Call Initiative for Women in Ministry, for the study of educational debt, and for such other purposes as might serve the needs of this church;

To encourage Portico Benefit Services and the Churchwide organization to make appropriate changes to their bylaws and data privacy policies in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of compensation patterns for rostered ministers;

To replace the “Current gross compensation” question from the Rostered Minister Profile with “Minimum Compensation for Next Call;”

To amend the “Current Health Benefits” question to read “Needed Health Benefits;” and

To remove the “Current Retirement Contribution” question from the Rostered Minister Profile.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b4]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Salary Equity in the ELCA” to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Christian Community and Leadership home area, 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 Christian Community and Leadership and the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

As the memorial from the Delaware-Maryland Synod pointed out, there is evidence that across society and in churches there exist pay gaps that affect equity for women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who are marginalized or living in poverty, and the LGBTQIA+ community. One serious difficulty the ELCA faces in determining the extent to which inequity exists in compensation for rostered ministers, however, is that data on compensation has been extremely difficult to come by. The churchwide organization holds no data on compensation for rostered ministers. While Portico Benefit Services has salary and retirement contribution data for those rostered ministers who are sponsored in its plans, there are challenges that have hindered sharing of data, including the fact that Portico is bound by federal privacy laws as a fiduciary agent, as well as the reality that it has been bound by its own bylaws and policies that protect the privacy of plan participants. There is the additional complication that, while a large majority of rostered ministers are sponsored through Portico, it is likely that a number of those who serve smaller congregations or those with fewer financial resources are not sponsored, and thus would not be included in any information that Portico might be able to share. Furthermore, Portico does not maintain ethnicity data on its members, and the data in the churchwide database of rostered ministers is often incomplete concerning ethnicity. Neither Portico nor the churchwide organization maintain information on rostered ministers’ identification as LGBTQIA+, gender is recorded primarily on the binary with the possibility of a rostered minister to report gender only as “other,” and no information on disabilities is tracked by the churchwide organization for ministers on the active rosters.

Conversation has begun about the study called for by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and how the churchwide organization can most efficiently and effectively gather information that will serve the needs of the various studies already underway or about to get underway (as listed in the assembly’s action) that intersect with questions of compensation and equity. Adam DeHoek, ELCA congregation statistics analyst, will serve as a liaison to help ensure that there are efficiencies in data collection and reporting and that the various groups are sharing information across the studies. A timeline for the study will be reported at the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

Portico has asked for bylaw changes that the Church Council is being asked to approve at this meeting that would allow it to share compensation data for sponsored rostered ministers, which has been a challenge for

such research in the past. The churchwide organization is working on data sharing policy revisions, and, working with Information Technology (IT), is completing a new quarterly report that will give Portico more of the information they need and that will allow for data matching to enable the churchwide organization to pull useful conclusions from compensation data provided by Portico.

The various changes to the Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) compensation questions that the assembly called for have been addressed and are currently in production for release in the very near future.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the progress report on “Salary Equity in the ELCA” from the Office of the Secretary;

To request a report on the consideration of a study identified in the memorial by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting; and

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

H. Motion I: Nominations and Elections Process

Submitted by: The Rev. Kathy Gerking [Nebraska Synod, 4A]

RESOLVED, that the Church Council appoint a Task Force to explore and analyze nomination and election processes used by synods and the churchwide organization, including but not limited to the ecclesiastical ballot, in order to determine best practices and to make practical recommendations concerning options for the selection of all synod and churchwide officers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Task Force report to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council in sufficient time that potential governing document amendments and/or a report on best practices can be prepared in time for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Churchwide Assembly action [CA22.04.27]

To adopt Motion I as submitted.

Executive Committee action [EC22.09.23b11]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Motion I: Nominations and Elections Process” to the Office of the Secretary for a report or a timeline on when this will receive further attention.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

The Office of the Secretary plans to provide a report to the Church Council in November 2023, with a final report and recommendations to be brought to the Church Council at its November 2024 meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the timeline on “Motion I: Nominations and Elections Process” from the Office of the Secretary on when the resolution will receive further attention; and

To request a progress report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, with a final report and recommendations by the Fall 2024 Church Council meeting.

Responses to Previous Church Council Actions

A. Racial Justice Ombudsperson Position

Church Council action [CC22.06.20]

To receive the request to explore creation of the position of a Racial Justice Ombudsperson with a report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop delivered to the Church Council at its Fall 2022 meeting;

To acknowledge the previous action of the council to create “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” (CC22.04.04); and

To review the role and membership of the ELCA Response Team.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2022)

The Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color held its first Microsoft Teams meeting on Oct. 4, 2022. Judith Roberts, senior director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, facilitated the conversation with task force members. The agenda opened with a devotion, prayer, an introduction of task force members, and a review of the 2019 Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity recommendation for the creation of an ombudsperson position within the churchwide organization. The conversation was followed by examples of the impact for leaders of color and communities they served when disciplinary actions occur. The task force received a brief presentation on the current churchwide DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) portfolios, and where an ombudsperson position might be housed within the current organization. The meeting concluded with a conversation regarding expectations of work, timeline for completion, and engagement with additional churchwide staff. The task force is scheduled to meet again virtually on Dec. 1, 2022.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop concerning the exploration of a Racial Justice Ombudsperson position; and

To encourage the continued conversation within the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color.

B. 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 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.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Spring 2022)

The 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.

Church Council action [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.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (November 2022)

The Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area consulted with the Quality of Call Initiative, studying average worship attendance with leaders of color compared to their white companions in three synods. Unfortunately, with so few leaders of color, the data did not reveal useful information. The newly formed Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group is identifying barriers that people of color have experienced and will pilot solutions based on what is learned. That information will be reported to Church Council in a separate and ongoing report. In addition, the 2022 Churchwide Assembly adopted a memorial titled "Salary Equity in the ELCA" [CA22.02.11] that is addressing similar inequitable compensation issues.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the report from the Christian Community and Leadership home area regarding the research work related to discriminatory treatment within the call process and the inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color;

To acknowledge and commend the research work that is underway to address inequities in the call process and compensation patterns; and

To direct further reports on the related topics be provided to the Christian Community and Leadership Committee through the work occurring on the "Salary Equity in the ELCA" memorial and from the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.

Responses to Synod Actions

A. Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings

Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2021]

WHEREAS, anti-Semitic words, deeds, and attitudes do real harm to our Jewish neighbors; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has repudiated anti-Semitism and expressed its desire to live in “love and respect for the Jewish people” (“Declaration to the Jewish Community,” 1994); and

WHEREAS, passages of the New Testament which can be interpreted as anti-Jewish or supersessionist (i.e. supporting the idea that God has rejected the Jews) are included in our lectionary; and

WHEREAS, in the time in which the New Testament was written, the word Ἰουδαῖοι (ee-oo-DIE-oy), was used as a marker of geographic and ethnic identity (that is, it denoted people from Judaea as distinct from Galilee, Samaria, or other parts of the world) and “Israelite” was used to identify the people who worshiped the God of Israel wherever they lived, that is the people whom we today would identify as “Jewish;” and

WHEREAS, the word “Jews” in the New Testament is usually an inaccurate translation of the Greek Ἰουδαῖοι, and

WHEREAS, the preferred translation used by Augsburg Fortress is the NRSV, which uses the inaccurate and potentially harmful translation “Jews” in almost every instance; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the preachers and teachers of the Northern Illinois Synod be encouraged to address the issues of anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish theology (such as the teaching that the Jewish people are responsible for the death of Jesus and/or the idea that God has rejected the Jews); and, be it further

RESOLVED, that preachers, teachers, and lectors of the Northern Illinois Synod be encouraged, when reading in public, to substitute a more appropriate translation of Ἰουδαῖοι where the English translation uses the word “Jews.” Examples include “Judaeans,” “Religious Leaders,” and “locals;” and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church in order to address the issues of anti-Jewish language in this church’s lectionary and teaching materials.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.06.19c5]

To refer the “Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings” resolution from the Northern Illinois Synod to the Worship Team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The concern about Anti-Jewish interpretations of biblical texts is not new and remains an important challenge for this church to address. Two issues are often at play. One is interpretation of translations of biblical texts (as this resolution identifies) and the other is how the readings are grouped together for public worship, for example in the Revised Common Lectionary.

Several resources are already available to help guide worship planners and preachers in navigating these important concerns. [Preaching and Teaching “With Love and Respect for the Jewish People”](#) is recently available from the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations. This resource explores challenging topics, lectionary selections, and Bible passages to inform Christian preaching and teaching so that they respect the integrity of the Jewish tradition and avoid anti-Jewish interpretations of New Testament texts. Another key resource developed by the panel is “Talking Points: Topics in Christian-Jewish Relations,” especially [#5 on “Difficult Texts.”](#)

An essay titled, [“The Jews” in John’s Passion](#), was published in the 2020 edition of the Sundays and Seasons worship planning resource from Augsburg Fortress. This essay includes an emended translation of the passion according to John for use on Good Friday. This essay and emended text are now available both on [SundaysAndSeasons.com](#) and on [ELCA.org](#).

Similar emendation principles were used in *Readings for the Assembly*, a three-year lectionary resource published in 1995–1997. An emended edition of [Readings for the Assembly](#) is being made available on [SundaysAndSeasons.com](#) for provisional use beginning this Advent. The [Principles for](#)

[Emendation](#) note alignment with guidance on “Language and the Christian Assembly” in the 2002 ELCA document [Principles for Worship](#), the updated edition of the NRSV ([NRSVue](#)) published in 2021, and follow the encouragement of [Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action](#) (2019).

Ecumenical and full communion partners are having similar conversations regarding anti-Jewish interpretations of biblical readings. The Episcopal Church, at its general convention in July 2022, [adopted a resolution](#) that calls for a task force “to address both the anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish or supercessionist impact of lectionary readings, especially for Holy Week, and to develop proposals to mitigate that impact.” The ELCA is a member of the [Consultation on Common Texts \(CCT\)](#), which is an ecumenical consultation of liturgical scholars and denominational representatives from the United States and Canada. The CCT was instrumental in the development of the [Revised Common Lectionary](#). Ongoing conversation with these groups, and others, will be important as the ELCA considers future recommendations. The ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations is prepared to support ELCA Worship team’s participation in these efforts.

The ELCA Worship team will continue conversation with key stakeholders, such as the Worship Resource Development Working Group (the combined worship teams of the churchwide organization and 1517 Media/Augsburg Fortress), the Consultation on Common Texts; ecumenical partners such as The Episcopal Church, the Conference of Bishops; and, in consultation with the executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment and the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations. In addition, the ELCA Worship team and the Worship Development staff at 1517 Media/Augsburg Fortress will ensure these topics are addressed when considering future resources such as preaching helps and worship formation.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the progress report on “Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request an update be provided by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

B. LGBTQ+ Programming for Events

Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2022]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted the social statement *Human Sexuality: A Gift and Trust* in 2009, providing guidance on how to live with our LGBTQ+ neighbors; and,

WHEREAS, the ELCA adopted in 1995 a social policy resolution that “gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations” of the ELCA; and,

WHEREAS, the gatherings of the church (including, but not limited to, the National Youth Gathering) often include pre-gathering events or in-gathering sessions focused on specific communities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly direct the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Council to request the ELCA Church Council direct the appropriate churchwide offices develop LGBTQ-focused and LGBTQ-specific programming for use as pre-gathering events and in-gathering sessions whenever the gatherings of the church include such sessions for other communities.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.06.19c6]

To refer the “LGBTQ+ Programming for Events” resolution from the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in the Christian Community and Leadership home area 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

Tammy Jones-West, interim program director for the ELCA Youth Gathering, has been apprised of this request for a pre-gathering of LGBTQIA2S youth. A response can be expected in first quarter 2023 for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the timeline on “LGBTQ+ Programming for Events” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request a response by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting on LGBTQ-specific programming for pre-gathering events and in-gathering sessions for other communities; and

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

C. ELCA Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act

Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2022]

The Office of the Secretary reclassified this memorial as a resolution.

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth and everything therein and proclaimed it good (Gen 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Gen 2:15); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has adopted social statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999) that call for economic and environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and for economic justice, to consider how people’s actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with the *Caring for Creation* social statement, ELCA Lutherans realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children. Time is very short;” and

WHEREAS, carbon pricing is one policy tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion, which complements other tools like regulations on polluting industries and tax incentives encouraging investment in energy efficiency and renewable forms of energy production; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, over 3,500 of the United States’ leading economists across the political spectrum, including 28 Nobel Laureates and 4 former chairs of the Federal Reserve, issued a joint “Economists’ Statement on Carbon Dividends” that argued “A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary,” but also recommended “the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates,” and concluded “The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in ‘carbon dividends’ than they pay in increased energy prices;” and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Churchwide Assembly received with gratitude a memorial from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin regarding a Carbon Fee and Dividend, and the Church Council directed the Domestic Mission unit to develop “a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy;” and

WHEREAS, in October 2019 ELCA Advocacy published a primer on “Carbon Pricing Basics” that provides an overview to the topic and identifies several principles rooted in ELCA social statements that “can move us toward the pressing goal of reduced GHG emissions and just application of that [carbon] pricing or policy;” and

WHEREAS, bipartisan members of congress conceived the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act which has been successfully introduced in the last three sessions of Congress and which is broadly consistent with the following principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy’s “Carbon Pricing Basics” primer:

- Any carbon tax must be structured to respect the jeopardy of vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Any carbon pricing mechanism must not be fiscally regressive but rather must respect vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Emissions targets should be consistent with credible science and with the IPCC special report’s directive that global warming be kept at 1.5 degrees Celsius or less.
- An adjustment mechanism should be included in case the emissions targets are not being met.
- Federal agencies should not be prohibited from proposing new regulations on GHGs if such regulations are needed.
- An effective carbon tax must be applied to as many sectors as possible. Because of the global nature of the problem, border issues and trade policies must also be considered in designing the tax, so that problems aren’t remedied through workarounds.

- The process for identifying problems and implementing solutions in a carbon tax should be participatory and transparent for all stakeholders.
- The pricing mechanism itself should be transparent and accountable to government authority to ensure that goals are being met.
- Transparency and accountability should be built into the pricing mechanism.
- The mechanism for awarding rebates to individuals/households should reach the most vulnerable, regardless of income or citizenship.
- Existing environmental and climate change protections should not be rolled back. and,

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently noted in its sixth assessment report that: carbon taxes are the most powerful and efficient [mitigation strategy], because they allow firms and households to find the lowest-cost ways of reducing energy use and shifting toward cleaner alternatives . and

WHEREAS, the IPCC also emphasizes that “any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all. ” and: “risks from mitigation costs could also be severe if no progressive redistribution from carbon pricing is applied...using tax revenues to issue payments back to taxpayers that are disproportionately impacted or to redistribute capital among regions may be one of the most important features of carbon tax policies.” Combined, these ideas advocate for a carbon tax with revenue distribution to citizens in legislation such as the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividends Act. and,

WHEREAS, as Christians it is our responsibility to speak for future generations and to advocate for climate justice, and

WHEREAS, ELCA Advocacy does advocate for particular pieces of legislation after careful review and moral grounding in the ELCA’s social statements; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorializes the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividends Act or similar legislation and direct its lobbying personnel to advocate for such legislation.

Executive Committee action (EC22.06.19c4a)

To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Southeastern Iowa Synod to the ELCA Witness in Society Team in the Service and Justice home area for further response related to endorsement of the legislation; and

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

Response from the Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

The urgent task of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches, which include carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards or GHG mitigation technologies. Carbon pricing is generally believed by economists as being the best tool for having the greatest impact in the near-term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, with the most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax.

The Witness in Society Team has developed a primer for ELCA members entitled “Carbon Pricing 101” with principles that provide a basis for ELCA evaluation of related legislation. The team has included carbon pricing as a topic in webinars, blog posts, and in creation of educational resources.

The resolution requests ELCA endorsement of a bill. Congressional offices may invite organizational endorsement of a bill to demonstrate support from civil society, with endorsers often listed at the introduction or during promotion of a bill. The ELCA rarely endorses legislation due to the probability that the provisions of a bill may change significantly over time and that there may be multiple bills on the same concern at once. Rather than committing to a specific bill, the ELCA frames advocacy priorities by the principles or provisions that it seeks in legislation. When the ELCA does promote a bill, it prioritizes bills with bipartisan sponsorship. When the ELCA does support a specific bill, an action alert may be sent to invite the ELCA’s advocacy network to contact Congress when a concerted push could help move a bill out of committee or to a vote.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act was introduced in the House of Representatives on April 1, 2021. It has 95 Democratic cosponsors and no Republican cosponsors. The bill has been referred to committee but has not received a hearing, indicating a lack of Congressional will to move the legislation forward. The ELCA’s climate advocacy has focused instead on other climate-related legislation with greater promise to move forward. These efforts included the successful passage of the Infrastructure Act and the [Inflation Reduction Act](#). These landmark pieces of legislation will have a

transformational impact on U.S. carbon emissions and the effort to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. ELCA Witness in Society will continue to monitor legislative opportunities on carbon pricing in the next Congress.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

To affirm the Witness in Society Team's decision to not endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation;

To direct the Witness in Society Team to continue its climate advocacy efforts on legislative opportunities that will have a transformational impact on U.S. carbon emissions and achieve net zero emissions by 2050; and

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

D. ELCA Name Change

Southwest California Synod (2B) [2022]

The Southwest California Synod Assembly ran out of time to act on the “ELCA Name Change” as a memorial. Therefore, the Southwest California Synod Council has forwarded it to the Church Council for its action.

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” appears in the name of our denomination (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: ELCA) and our primary worship book (Evangelical Lutheran Worship: ELW); and

WHEREAS, the constituting members of the ELCA and the Commission for a New Lutheran Church which led into the ELCA’s formation held to the historic view and value of the word “evangelical” as meaning “pertaining to the Gospel;” and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” was hoped to be maintained in its historic usage and sense at the time of the ELCA’s formation; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” has become culturally synonymous in the U.S. with a religious expression and belief that is not compatible with the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” in the U.S. now culturally refers to fundamentalist Christianity including many forms of exclusion which we find to be contrary to the “evangel” (gospel) including the ordination of women and LGBTQ persons; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” is now representative of a narrow swath of conservative Christian denominations and sects rather than a broad notion of being Gospel-centric and inclusive of all persons; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the word “evangelical” be discontinued in use and stricken from the name of our denomination and future books of worship; and be it further

RESOLVED that ELCA Church Council determine the nature of the transition in the use of the word “evangelical” in our denominational title leading up to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Southwest California memorialize the ELCA 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to discontinue the use the use of the word “evangelical” in our denomination name and to adopt a new name for the denomination which more faithfully reflects its identity in the U.S.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c8]

To refer the “ELCA Name Change” resolution from the Southwest California Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of certain memorials that are coming before the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

On April 6, 2018, *Living Lutheran* published an [article](#) written by the Rev. Robert C. Blezard titled, “The ‘e’ word: Why does the ELCA have the word “evangelical” in its name?” where he addressed the historical significance of using the word “evangelical” in this church’s denominational name and the challenges of using a word where society and culture has shifted the word’s original meaning.

In light of the pending work to be accomplished with the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary recommends the reconsideration of a denominational name change be given to the commission.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “ELCA Name Change” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary;

To request the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church consider the question of whether the denomination name, “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” should be changed;

To anticipate a recommendation when the commission presents its findings for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

E. Adoption of Gender Inclusive Language

Southwest California Synod (2B) [2022]

The Southwest California Synod Assembly ran out of time to act on the “Adoption of Gender Inclusive Language” as a memorial. Therefore, the Southwest California Synod Council has forwarded it to the Church Council for its action.

WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly voted to accept the response to memorials about Gender Identity (Churchwide 2019 Assembly Action CA19.02.09 per Category 4: Gender Identity); and

WHEREAS, that we thank the Churchwide Assembly for accepting the Memorial from the Sierra Pacific Synod in 2019 and requesting “that the Church Council consider authorizing development of a social message on gender identity and gender expression” (pg. 48); and

WHEREAS, the Memorials and Resolutions Report of 2019 (adopted above) requested “the Office of the Presiding Bishop provide materials to facilitate education among ELCA members so as to build awareness of the broad varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation among God's people, as well as to provide pastoral care insights regarding concerns and issues of the transgender experience and gender nonconformity;” and

WHEREAS, in the ELCA Social Statement “Faith, Sexism, and Justice” (adopted in 2019) the ELCA commits to use inclusive language (all genders) for humankind and inclusive and expansive language (other than human) for God. (pg 8, paragraph 27); and

WHEREAS, some demographic requirements and data collection remains rooted in binary gender norms; and

WHEREAS, nonbinary and gender expansive lay leaders of our church deserve the use of inclusive language to determine where they are eligible to serve in synod roles; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to adopt gender-inclusive language across all governance documents, forms and reports by the end of 2022; specifically including options for “gender nonbinary” and “other” for all demographic data gathering regarding gender; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod in Assembly memorialize The ELCA Church Council to adopt a social message on gender identity and gender expression to be applied throughout ELCA official forms, documents, and resources by 2025.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c9]

To refer the “Adoption of Gender Inclusive Language” resolution from the Southwest California Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of related actions already taken; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

Many of the amendments to the governing documents that were adopted by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly eliminated gendered references to people and provided for use of more inclusive language. The

amendments were based on an extensive review of the constitutions of this church by Office of the Secretary staff.

At its Spring 2022 meeting, the Church Council directed “the churchwide organization to adhere to the “ELCA Style Guide” to ensure the appropriate usage of gender inclusive language in ELCA communications and documents.” [CC22.04.17p] In addition, the churchwide organization is updating its forms and reports to provide options for “gender nonbinary” and “other” in demographic data gathering regarding gender. The churchwide organization staff hopes to complete another review of its forms and reports by the end of 2023.

In November 2021, the Church Council considered a social message on gender identity and acted “to release the request to develop a social message on gender identity and gender expression in light of the various actions already underway to address the topic, with the understanding that the ELCA will continue its ongoing efforts to address the concerns expressed in the “Gender Identity” memorial [CA19.02.09].” [CC21.11.25m4]

Some of those efforts underway include educational resources developed through the Gender Justice and Women’s Empowerment ministry, including a study guide session that explores *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action’s* rejection of harmful sex and gender stereotypes and the statement’s affirmation that all persons are equal members of the body of Christ. There is also education on two-spirit through the ELCA’s ethnic-specific ministries and the launch of “[The Naming Project](#)” where one of the directors is a deacon in the ELCA. The program helps to “meet the needs of youth who are dealing with coming out, sexuality, gender identity, and faith.” Educational resources continue to be lifted up through <https://www.elca.org/lgbtqia>.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Adoption of Gender Inclusive Language” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary;

To support the previous actions by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council related to gender inclusive language as outlined in the response;

To commend the ongoing efforts in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to develop educational resources that build awareness of the broad varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation;

To urge the churchwide organization to conduct another review and update of its forms and reports for gender-inclusive language by the end of 2023; and

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

F. 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 the whole church. *Church Council action [CC21.04.06s]*

To receive the request from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council requesting guidance regarding the review of retired ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To refer the matter to the Office of the Secretary for further research and to request that a response be provided at the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and

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

Response from Office of the Secretary (November 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 Bishop 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.

Church Council action [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.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

Following the last report from the Office of the Secretary in April 2022, a working group was convened to draft revised text outlining a process for the synods’ review of retired and retiring rostered ministers. The draft was presented to the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops at the committee’s September 2022 meeting and was subsequently described to the Conference of Bishops in a plenary session of the Fall 2022 Conference of Bishops meeting. After discussion, because the process being proposed overlaps with similar questions concerning granting and review of On Leave from Call (OLFC) for rostered ministers, the Roster Committee recommended that this proposed revision be postponed until after other decisions are made.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

**To support the recommendation of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops to postpone the revision until other related decisions are made; and
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

G. Concurrent Calling of Pastors by More than One Congregation

Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2022]

WHEREAS, ELCA Constitution 7.44A19 “Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament” b. “Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament” 1.2 reads:

| Setting | Calling Body |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1.2 Multiple-congregation parish | Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal |
| 1.21 Pastor | One of the participating congregations |
| 1.22 Other pastoral arrangements | One of the participating congregations |

WHEREAS, pastors more and more are being asked to serve more than one congregation; and

WHEREAS, each congregation, as a place where the Promises of Jesus are proclaimed to gathered people, has the authority to call a person to be their proclaimer of those promises of Jesus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the ELCA Church Council work up a resolution to be presented at the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly that allows more than one congregation concurrently to call the same person as pastor, and to make all necessary changes to its constitution.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c3]

To refer the “Concurrent Calling of Pastors by More than One Congregation” resolution from the Upstate New York Synod to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide organization office or home area, 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 Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

This question will need to be discerned with the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with the Leadership Committee and the Roster Committee of that body. Any change would require amendments to the governing documents and revision of the roster manual.

After discussion with the Christian Community and Leadership home area, the Office of the Secretary plans to bring a report and proposed timeline to the Church Council at its November 2023 meeting, with a final report and recommendations to be brought to the Church Council at its November 2024 meeting.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the timeline on “Concurrent Calling of Pastors by More than One Congregation” from the Office of the Secretary on when the resolution will receive further attention;

To request a progress report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, with a final report and recommendations by the Fall 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

H. Extending Pastoral Counseling through Private Practice

Northwest Intermountain Synod (1D) [2021]

WHEREAS, “Pastoral counseling, rooted in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the church, is an intrinsic part of the health and healing ministry of the church, seeking to foster spiritual wholeness and mental health as a style of ministry integrated into the total mission of the church,” as stated in the ELCA Ministries in Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education, (MPCPCE) Endorsement Standards and Procedures, Call Criteria, Program Guidelines, Revised and Adopted, Congregational & Synodical Mission, May 2012, hereafter referenced as “MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual,” (p.15); and

WHEREAS, Jesus himself encourages care of the stranger saying, “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing,” Matthew 25:35–36; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing anxiety, grief, and mental health needs worldwide, increasing opportunity for pastoral counseling ministry extending care from our church in the world; and

WHEREAS, pastoral counseling in the ELCA is part of specialized ministries which are, “missional by nature and are a part of the church’s outreach ministry to the ill, the imprisoned, the elderly, the troubled, the conflicted, and the afflicted,” (MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual, Introduction, B. Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education, B.1. Rooted in the Gospel, p.3); and

WHEREAS, pastoral counseling in private practice rather than an agency setting is not explicitly prohibited or acknowledged in the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual and has historically been extended as a valid ELCA ministry; and

WHEREAS, geographic locations may not have any Lutheran affiliated or recognized social ministry counseling organizations, but state licensure may support private practice opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual defines expectations of pastoral counselors to include active membership in an ELCA congregation, and, “They are also responsible for making themselves and their expertise available to synods, congregations, and rostered workers in the church. Such availability may include regular participating in meetings and committees of rostered leaders, being available as speakers and consultants, and being active interpreters of specialized pastoral care as an extended ministry of the church in the world,” (ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual, p.18–19); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended to include a second bullet following under p.18, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, A. Criteria, 6. Criteria F. Ministry Accountability, a. Institutional/Agency Accountability, saying:

Pastoral counselors working in a private practice setting will create an Advisory Board to meet at least annually to provide oversight, performance review, and acknowledgement of continued maintenance of ELCA requirements for rostered ministers in public ministry. Private practice pastoral counselors are required to hold general liability business insurance in addition to professional liability insurance. They must include a statement in informed consent documentation for clients seeking pastoral counseling removing liability for the ELCA or local ELCA congregations. Private practice pastoral counselors must clearly identify themselves as “Christian” therapists in public advertising and marketing. And be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA legal counsel provide the liability statement to be included in private practice counselor’s informed consent documents and clarify any other needed actions to support private practice pastoral counselors of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.20, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, B. Procedures, 2. For Employment, paragraph 2, final sentence after “employing organization” add, “or private practice counseling opportunity.”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.20, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, B. Procedures, 2. For Employment, paragraph 4, first sentence after the words “employing organization” add, “or the private practice pastoral counseling business has been created in accordance with state and federal laws and requirements.”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MCPCCCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.24, IV. Program Guidelines for Church Related Organizations, D. Quality Assurance, below the existing text add, “5. For Private Practice Pastoral Counselors, a volunteer Advisory Board must be formed to provide an annual review and ongoing accountability to Ordination and Ecclesiastical Endorsement Standards as well as state licensure laws and professional requirements. See suggested guidelines for the Advisory Board below:” then insert the following “Advisory Board Agreement” attached to this Resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Conference of Bishops be invited to hold continuity in annually renewing synod calls to specialized ministers despite geographic location or historic practice that might differ from annual review and renewal; and be it further

RESOLVED, that private practice pastoral counseling be fully acknowledged and supported as a valid extension of rostered ministry in the ELCA for our world.

Executive Committee action [EC21.06.13b]

To refer the “Extending Pastoral Counseling through Private Practice” resolution from the Northwest Intermountain Synod Council to the Office of the Secretary and the Christian Community and Leadership unit for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention;

To ask the Conference of Bishops to consider annually renewing synod calls to specialized ministers despite geographic location and historic practice that might differ from annual review and renewal; and

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

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

This question will need to be discerned with the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with the Leadership Committee and the Roster Committee of that body, as well as with the Christian Community and Leadership home area. Any change would require amendments to the governing documents and revision of the roster manual. Furthermore, this question would seem to fall under the review of Specialized Ministry called for by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and would most appropriately be part of the recommendations to be made as a result of that review.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Extending Pastoral Counseling through Private Practice” from the Office of the Secretary;

To direct the review team that will be initiating a review process of the roster manual and the constitutional provisions and policies and procedures as it relates to Specialized Ministry to incorporate this matter into its review; and

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

I. Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2022]

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council modifies the language of the resolution on Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers as follows: “It is recommended that congregations develop a program for parental leave which includes childbearing and childcare leave. The program should include both the birth and adoption of children and cover full salary, housing, and benefits with the understanding that the individual would return to work for a minimum of six months after taking the leave. It is recommended that any time a child is added to a household of a pastor [deacon], congregations provide at least 12 paid weeks of child-bearing leave for the birthing caregiver and at least 8 paid weeks of childcare leave for the non-birthing caregiver. This allows time to recover from the physical demands of childbirth, as well as for parents to spend time bonding with the child. A minimum of 6 weeks leave with full compensation is strongly encouraged. Congregations are also encouraged to consider the provisions of the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which allow for up to 12 weeks leave (which can be a combination of paid and unpaid leave). FMLA leave can be used for personal or family member care situations;” and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in Assembly direct the Synod Council to petition the ELCA Church Council to request that Portico explore providing child-bearing leave and childcare leave coverage for congregations in which a child is added to the rostered minister’s household.

Executive Committee action (EC22.06.19c7)

To refer the “Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers” resolution from Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to Portico Benefit Services 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 Portico Benefit Services (November 2022)

Portico Benefit Services (“Portico”) has reviewed the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod resolution related to parental and medical leave. Portico is in agreement and supportive of the value of children, the importance of their care and early nurture, and the need for parents/caregivers to be given the time to provide the early care/nurture.

Portico recommends that synods evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating Parental and Medical Leave policies for their synod.

ELCA benefits provided by Portico (and all church plans) are regulated at the national level, providing economies of scale for the ELCA. In response to this resolution, Portico has evaluated the feasibility of providing a national parental and medical leave benefit offering for congregations. The evaluation found that:

- A parental and medical leave benefit is challenging for Portico to administer; Portico lacks first-hand information so it is not aware of the member's work schedule to know when an absence begins and its associated compensation stops, limiting the ability to continue compensation seamlessly. Continuing compensation locally is far more likely to avoid compensation interruption than transferring compensation continuation to another entity and then back again after the leave ends.
- The FMLA's timely notification of leave requirement and collection of necessary documentation is often an iterative process. This process presents challenges for accurate and effective administration by Portico.
- Many states have laws that provide benefits beyond the FMLA, creating a patchwork of compliance and costs by state that prevent this church from offering and administering a single plan on a nationwide basis.
- If a new benefit were to be set up for the whole church, an initial assessment would likely be required to fund the start-up trust and retain competent expertise to administer the benefit. This will result in a program that may be more expensive to congregations than the cost of continuing payroll during a leave from the congregation's general assets. As good stewards of benefit resources, a benefit that is more costly provided across the whole church is in conflict with the expectations this church gains economies of scale by coming together to source and provide benefits.
- These many administrative challenges and expenses may result in delay, frustration, and dissatisfaction with this benefit.

Given that this potential benefit is not likely to result in a satisfying benefit offering, Portico recommends that synods evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating parental and medical leave policies and resources where appropriate for their synod.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To receive the response on “Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers” from Portico Benefit Services;
To encourage synods to evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating parental and medical leave policies and resources where appropriate for their synod; and
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

J. Justice for the Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2022]

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod commends the ELCA presiding bishop on her establishment of a Listening Panel in Sierra Pacific Synod. Based on the outcome of the listening panel, this synod requests that appropriate actions be recommended and implemented to ensure a just resolution, and we pray for a healthy and just resolution for all; and, be it further,

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod recommends that the ELCA presiding bishop and the Church Council reform the process used when a rostered minister is under investigation so that it allows the rostered minister opportunity for response, investigation, transparency, and appeal.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c2]

To refer the “Justice for the Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez” resolution from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of related memorials that are coming before the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

The Sierra Pacific Synod, led by interim Bishop Claire Burkat, is investigating the circumstances surrounding the removal of Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez from the roster, with a view towards achieving a healthy and just resolution, as called for in the first resolve. The churchwide organization, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary, is supporting this investigation.

Similarly, while each synod has its own process for investigating rostered ministers, the churchwide organization is addressing the second resolve in a number of ways. In Spring 2022, the Church Council authorized the creation of the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color, which is “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.” [CC22.04.04] In addition, the 2022 Churchwide Assembly tasked the churchwide organization with reviewing the “Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” and the constitutional provisions and policies and procedures as they relate to interim, transition, bridge, specialized, non-parish-based, and innovative calls, as well as on-leave from call status, protocols for removal from the rosters, and communication protocols. [CA22.04.24] The expectation is that the groups working on these issues will address the concerns in this resolution, and this resolution will be forwarded to these groups.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Justice for the Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary;

To request the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color and the review team for the roster manual to address the concerns identified in this resolution as they complete their work; and

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

K. Preferred Vendors and Privacy

Alaska Synod (1A) [2022]

WHEREAS, recently a third party ‘preferred’ financial vendor to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shared Alaska congregational financial and benevolence records to promote their new products; and

WHEREAS, each congregation is considered its own legal entity responsible for their financial records, keeping those records up to date, secure, and private in all regards to their member’s giving patterns and amounts; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Lutheran congregations’ control and share who receives their financial records upon request, and if they wish to share their records such as, congregations sharing that information with the Alaska Synod and their own financial institutions. Even then individual congregational members names and the amount of their benevolence is not shared; and

WHEREAS, it is wrong and unethical, that the financial culture of the United States at this time is that corporations buy and sell names, financial records, and the spending habits gleaned from multiple electronic sources. In short, it is an invasion of an American individual’s privacy for corporations to exchange and deal in financial records for profit. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America should not sanction this abuse of privacy; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that outside ELCA church third party vendors are not allowed to exchange any financial information with individuals, other business, ELCA synod offices or other congregations and that if an ELCA “preferred vendor” does exchange benevolence and financial information without prior written permission, they automatically lose their ‘preferred vendor’ status; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod Assembly direct the Alaska Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c1]

To refer the “Preferred Vendors and Privacy” resolution from the Alaska Synod to the Office of the Treasurer,

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in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary, 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 Office of the Treasurer (November 2022)

The ELCA churchwide organization has been in conversation with its preferred vendors and confirmed that no individual personally identifiable information (PII) was shared from the vendors to other organizations or individuals.

Each congregation signs an individual contract with a preferred vendor. As part of the contract, the congregation acknowledges the privacy policy of the vendor. In relation to this resolution, churchwide organization staff have confirmed that each of the vendors follows its privacy policy and has not shared information with synods or the churchwide organization that is in violation of its privacy policy.

Information that may be shared within the terms of the privacy policy between the vendors and synods or the churchwide organization is not for the purpose of marketing or sales of new products, but for the purpose of improving the value that its products have for the church.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response on “Preferred Vendors and Privacy” from the Office of the Treasurer;

To affirm that outside ELCA “preferred vendors” are not allowed to exchange any financial information with individuals, other businesses, synods, or other congregations that would be in violation of the vendor’s privacy policy and that if an ELCA “preferred vendor” does exchange individual personally identifiable information without prior written permission, the vendor would lose its “preferred vendor” status; and

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

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Mission Development Fund Policy

Origin of the Mission Development Fund

~~From November 2006 Budget and Finance Committee:~~

The Mission Development Fund (MDF) was established as a temporary restricted fund in November 2006. Being the unrestricted bequests and trusts income received more than the budgeted amount the primary source of funding.

Purpose of the Mission Development Fund

The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and in collaboration with the Administrative Team.

Source of Funding

Mission Development Fund

~~The recommended action calls for the establishment of a new temporarily restricted fund to reside in the ELCA Foundation. The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount. In the event the total current (unrestricted operating fund) is in deficit position at the end of the year the Budget and Finance Committee should review and make a recommendation to the Church Council as to whether the excess bequest and trust should remain in current fund to reduce the deficit or transferred to the Mission Development Fund. ; after covering any shortfall in other current income categories, in any fiscal year. -Additional consideration will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies.~~

The Mission Development Fund may also be funded by donor gifts, subject to the understanding that this fund will continue to operate as a Church Council designated fund functioning as an endowment.

Transfer of Funds to the ELCA Foundation

~~The transfer of the funds from the ELCA Churchwide Organization to the Mission Development Fund managed by the ELCA Foundation should be initiated by the Office of the Treasurer. such income shall be authorized by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer. The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and the ELCA Foundation.~~

BF ACTION

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

Spending of the Fund

~~From Spring 2007 Budget and Finance Committee~~

~~From ELCA Foundation Funds~~

~~1) —~~

~~Mission Development Fund~~

~~a.) —~~

~~The Church Council approved the establishment of the Mission Development Fund at its November 2006 meeting. The final amended action read:~~

~~*To approve the establishment of a new temporarily restricted fund, the Mission Development Fund, to reside in the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount, after covering any shortfall in other current income categories, in any fiscal year. Additional considerations will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies. The transfer of such income shall be authorized by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer. The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and the Foundation of the ELCA and in collaboration with the Cabinet of Executives. Expenditures from the Mission Development Fund in an amount greater than \$1 million in total for any fiscal year shall require action by the Church Council through the Budget and Finance Committee. Requests for withdrawal from the Mission Development Fund will not be permitted if the MDF endowment fund balance is less than \$3 million.*~~

Reporting of Activity of the Fund

~~Activity in this fund will be shared with the Budget and Finance Committee annually as Church Council designated funds functioning as endowment.~~

~~This fund will be included in the annual report provided from the ELCA Foundation for Church Council designated funds functioning as endowment. If a request for use exceeding \$1 million would arise in any fiscal year, a separate action will be brought to the Church Council through the Budget and Finance Committee.~~

~~An amount of \$750,000 was transferred to this new fund in fiscal 2006. This was a significant portion of the \$791,142 of unrestricted bequests and trusts received in excess of the budgeted amount of \$1.1 million. An additional \$1.4 million was budgeted for temporarily restricted bequests and trusts and \$1.6 million received. The total income received showed a favorable variance of \$2.0 million. Our cash position was deemed satisfactory, so all conditions were met to allow for this transfer.~~

~~At the March 2007 Conference of Bishops meeting, a check in the amount of \$280,000 from the Pacifica Synod as a distribution of the proceeds from the sale of a congregation was presented to Presiding Bishop Hanson for credit to this fund. The addition of this gift brings the current fund balance available to \$1,030,000.~~

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Mission Development Fund Policy

Origin of the Mission Development Fund

The Mission Development Fund (MDF) was established as a temporary restricted fund in November 2006. It would be managed by the ELCA Foundation.

Purpose of the Mission Development Fund

The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and in collaboration with the Administrative Team.

Source of Funding

The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount. In the event the total current (unrestricted operating fund) is in a deficit position at the end of the year the Budget and Finance Committee should review and make a recommendation to the Church Council as to whether the excess bequest and trust should remain in current fund to reduce the deficit or transferred to the Mission Development Fund. Additional considerations will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies.

The Mission Development Fund may also be funded by donor gifts, subject to the understanding that this fund will continue to operate as a Church Council designated fund functioning as an endowment. It may also be funded by other Church Council actions.

Transfer of Funds to the ELCA Foundation

The transfer of funds from the ELCA Churchwide Organization to the Mission Development Fund managed by the ELCA Foundation should be initiated by the Office of the Treasurer.

Spending of the Fund

Expenditures from the Mission Development Fund in an amount greater than \$1 million in total for any fiscal year shall require action by the Church Council through the Budget and Finance Committee. Requests for withdrawal from the Mission Development Fund will not be permitted if the MDF endowment fund balance is less than \$3 million.

Reporting of Activity of the Fund

Activity in this fund will be shared with the Budget and Finance Committee annually as Church Council designated funds functioning as endowment.

REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

At the July 12, 2022, Audit Committee meeting, the external auditors, Crowe LLP presented a preliminary draft of the financial statements of the ELCA for the year ended January 31, 2022. They included an “unmodified” opinion that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the ELCA as of January 31, 2022, and the changes in its net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. The opinion also contains an Emphasis of Matter paragraph stating that this is an audit of the Churchwide Organization of the ELCA and not a reflection of the entire ELCA. At this meeting the Audit Committee voted to approve the auditors’ report on the financial statements for the year ended 1/31/21.

The committee performed all other duties and responsibilities in compliance with its Charter and Checklist. No exceptions were noted.

At the November 9, 2022 Audit Committee meeting, Management reviewed the interim financial results through September 30, 2022.

Crowe LLP, the external audit firm, presented the Audit Service Plan and fees for the year ended January 31, 2023. Crowe noted a 7% increase in fees for this year. The committee approved the audit service plan and fees and recommends the Budget and Finance Committee approve the engagement of Crowe LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organizations’ year ending January 31, 2023.

Forvis LLP, the internal audit firm, presented the internal audit report for the period ended September 30, 2022. Forvis also presented the internal audit plan for the year ending January 31, 2024. The audit committee approved the plan and internal audit report.

The committee received and approved Forvis internal audit plan for 2023. The proposed fees for the engagement were \$94,000, although their hours were reduced from 600 to 470 in order to stay in line with their original proposed fees for 2022 – 2024 of \$94,000 per year for Churchwide Administrative Offices.

The committee received a report from Jon Beyer, Executive for Information Technology, updating the committee on the ELCA information security program.

The committee met in separate executive sessions with Crowe LLP, Forvis LLP and the Treasurer.

Update on Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group

At the March 2022 meeting, the working group shared its purpose, vision, and values. The group also offered identified projects. Here are updates on those projects:

1. A **public website** is active: <https://www.elca.org/formation>. An introductory communication was sent to all rostered ministers and candidates for rostered ministry.
2. **Coaching** is being explored. There is one candidate paired with a coach and the group is determining the best way to manage coaching as a tool. Currently, the plan is to experiment with and without coaches to gain insight whether coaching is best suited for discernment or formation.
3. **Unified Application:** it was quickly determined this is not feasible as each institution's application feeds into a database. However, by asking the question, seminaries freely shared best practices and issues of timing were raised.
4. **Examining Ecumenical Partners:** this work has been completed with five main areas lifted up for further exploration or application.
5. **Barriers for underrepresented populations:** a survey was created and is being socialized to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color) rostered ministers and candidates for rostered ministry. The survey is also being socialized organically through ethnic associations and through Reconciling Works. It will be open until November 15.
6. **What do rostered leaders need to do, know, and be?** This is by far the largest project underway. A series of listening questions have been socialized and operationalized and thus far nearly 750 responses have been received. Some groups have been targeted, namely bishops, directors for evangelical mission, and soon synod vice presidents. The hope is to push further into non-rostered members of the ELCA.
7. **Next Meeting:** will be held on Nov. 9-10, 2022.

POLICY ON CRITERIA FOR SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

*Adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
April 6, 2003*

1. BASIS

The possibility of synodically authorized worshiping communities being acknowledged by synods exists on the basis of churchwide bylaws and an optional provision in the Constitution for Synods.

Churchwide bylaw 10.02.03. says: “Within the territory of each geographic synod, the synod, in keeping with criteria and procedures proposed by the Division for Outreach and approved by the Church Council, may acknowledge certain authorized worshiping communities—such as developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels—as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission. Such authorized worshiping communities of the synod shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.”

Further, churchwide bylaw 10.41.04. indicates: “Synods may establish processes that permit representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, under bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01.”

In the Constitution for Synods, S7.26., if adopted by the synod, provides: “This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21. Such authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria and procedures of the ELCA Division for Outreach and the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be

served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.”

2. CRITERIA

- a. The primary criteria for acknowledgment of such synodically authorized worshiping communities, under the governing documents of this church, include agreement to:
 - (1) Accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of this church (Chapter 2 of the churchwide constitution);
 - (2) Accept and adhere to the Statement of Purpose of this church (Chapter 4 of the churchwide constitution);
 - (3) Be served by leadership appointed or called on an annual basis by the synod under the criteria of this church;
 - (4) Be subject to the discipline [pattern of order] of this church;
 - (5) Be evaluated annually by the synod to determine next year’s status; and
 - (6) Function under the corporation established through the guidance of the synod.
- b. Other criteria for such synodically authorized worshiping communities (hereafter known as “chapels,” unless otherwise designated) include:
 - (1) Participatory worship for the chapel, consistent with Lutheran expectations, provided under the leadership of a pastor of this church or a licensed lay person;
 - (2) Ability to be a financially self-supporting ministry, unless other arrangements are made in accord with the Division for Outreach policies on developing ministries;
 - (3) Participation in benevolent (“mission support”) giving to the synod and churchwide organization, with the expectation that 15 percent of the offerings

of such chapels will be provided to the respective synod as a sign of commitment to the overall ministry of this church;

- (4) Commitment to evangelical outreach to unchurched persons within the area of the chapel;
- (5) Authorization by the synod for a specified duration, generally for one year, subject to possible renewal following evaluation jointly by the synod and the Division for Outreach;
- (6) Maintenance by the leadership appointed or called to serve the chapel of a listing of regular participants to be filed annually with the synod¹;
- (7) Proper recording of such pastoral acts as baptism (see item 4.b.1.); and
- (8) If an authorized worship community is discontinuing, refer remaining participants to a regularly recognized congregation of this church for possible membership.

3. EXAMPLES OF CHAPELS AND OTHER AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES

Generic designation—*Chapels*: Such gatherings of small groups sometimes are known as preaching points and places where the population base is insufficient to establish or maintain a congregation, as defined in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (9.11., 9.21., 9.23., 9.25., and 9.31.).

- a. *Former congregation*: A small group that has dissolved as a congregation and who can no longer call a pastor, but who may continue worshiping as a chapel.
 - (1) An authorized worshiping community may be a way in which the synod may continue to serve a group of people in an area where a congregation has dissolved or where several congregations have dissolved.
 - (2) Before being identified as an authorized

worshiping community, an existing congregation that may no longer be viable would have to complete the necessary steps for dissolution as a congregation.

- (3) Subsequent to the dissolution, a new corporation would be established with the synod as the corporate member for the purposes of the chapel.
 - b. *Small groups*: A small group of Lutherans may request Lutheran worship in an area where the potential for growth is limited and could not be expected to achieve a self-reliant congregation nor to call a full-time pastor. This group, however, could generate enough income to pay for worship costs and the service of a part-time pastor or other synodically authorized leader.
 - c. *Test a Field*: An opportunity may be sought to test the potential of a new development prior to the commitment of churchwide resources for development of a congregation. This may be a vehicle for experimentation to reach a specialized community of people whose population base is not sufficient to guarantee viable development of a congregation.
 - d. *Seasonal and Recreational Ministries*: In situations where recreational and vacation communities exist, seasonal worship needs might be met, even though a year-round worship schedule would not be possible.
 - e. *A Former Ministry Development*: A former ministry under development may not have developed sufficiently for formal organization as a recognized congregation. Yet a long-term commitment was found within a group of loyal “members.” They may be organized into a chapel as participants in such an authorized worshiping community.
- ### 4. LISTING OF CHAPELS AND OTHER AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES
- a. Upon acknowledgment by the Synod Council in the synod to which the chapel is related, the synod shall report such acknowledgment to the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for recording on

¹ A temporary roster of participants is to be filed annually with the synod. The synod will use this listing in determining status as to voting rights at the Synod Assembly. Records are also to be maintained of any official pastoral acts [see item 4.b.(1) below].

the list of acknowledged chapels and other authorized worshiping communities.

- (1) A number will be assigned to the authorized worshiping community by the Office of the Secretary.
- (2) Upon filing of the required authorization, the community will be listed in the ELCA churchwide organization's next annual report to the Internal Revenue Service, to be covered by the ELCA Group Exemption Number for nonprofit status.
- (3) Each synodically authorized worshiping community is to obtain an Employer Identification Number to be used for payment of the salary and benefits of the pastor or other leader serving the authorized worshiping community.
- (4) A corporation is to be established for each worshiping community by the synod designating such a ministry, under the laws of a state selected by the Office of the Secretary and using standard corporate governing documents developed by the Office of the Secretary.
- (5) This corporation is to be qualified, if necessary, as a foreign corporation in the state in which the chapel or other authorized worshiping community will be functioning.

b. Records shall be maintained on an annual basis of the regular participants of each acknowledged chapel and of all pastoral acts conducted within each chapel, the latter retained on a permanent basis.

- (1) For retention on a permanent basis, the synod shall designate an existing congregation as a congregation of record for the recording of all pastoral acts conducted within a synod's authorized worshiping communities.
- (2) Those participants in an authorized worshiping community who are received by affirmation of faith or adult baptism shall be recorded as members in the congregation of record (cited immediately above) for the duration of participation in the authorized worshiping community.
- (3) Those participants in an authorized worshiping community who already are members of an existing congregation shall

continue to be listed as members of such an existing congregation during the period of their participation in the authorized worshiping community.

5. PROVISIONS FOR PROPERTY, FINANCES, AND INSURANCE

- a. Care must be taken to assure appropriate maintenance, insurance, management, liability protection, exemption from state and local taxes, and other matters.
- b. If title to any real property is held in the name of the synod, but leased to the community, arrangements may be developed through the Division for Outreach to provide insurance coverage.
- c. Each authorized worshiping community is to make provision for bond coverage for the handling of finances in the authorized worshiping community.

6. PROCEDURES

The authorized worshiping community:

- a. May select a steering committee from the list of participants to work with the synodically designated leader.
- b. Should develop and approve an annual spending plan, including the commitment to 15 percent of all offerings to benevolence ("mission support").
- c. Should function under a governing document that includes: fully and without alteration or amendment the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; a statement of the community's relationship to the synod; agreement to be served by leadership appointed or called by the synod; agreement to be subject to the discipline of this church; agreement to be reviewed by the synod and the Division for Outreach annually to determine the next year's status; and any definition of internal organization and decision-making.

- d. May elect representation to the Synod Assembly, if such a provision is made in the synod's constitution.

7. CHANGING STATUS

Status may be shifted from a synodically authorized worshiping community to a congregation under development or a recognized congregation:

- a. When the population of the community has sufficient potential to warrant full-time mission development, this ministry may be declared a congregation under development by the synod and the Division for Outreach.
- b. When the participants of this ministry are of a sufficient number and leadership ability and when they have fulfilled the organizing steps leading to recognition and reception as a congregation, then the synod and the Division for Outreach may complete the process for the recognition and reception of a congregation of this church, in accord with the churchwide constitutional provision 9.25.

8. IN EVENT OF DISCONTINUANCE OF AUTHORIZATION

- a. A plan, effective upon discontinuance of authorization, should be established for the transfer of any remaining participants to regular membership in congregations of this church.
- b. Arrangements, in consultation with the synod, should be made for the orderly disposition of any interests in real estate, other than capital items, supplies and other material, and the payment of all debts.
- c. Arrangements and historical materials of the chapel should be gathered and transferred to the synod for archival filing.
- d. The corporation of the formerly authorized community must be legally dissolved.

*Revised policy adopted by the Church Council
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
April 6, 2003*

ELCA AUTHORIZATION FORM

*[To establish Exemption from Federal Income Tax
under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code]*

The annual filing for our exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will be made by ELCA for its **Congregations Under Development and its Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities.**

A **Congregation Under Development (CUD)** and a **Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community/Chapel (SAWC)** is eligible for inclusion in the group exemption status provided it has: (1) authorized ELCA to include it; and (2) provided the necessary federal employer identification number (EIN).

The EIN is the nine-digit number assigned to you by the IRS. It usually consists of two digits followed by a dash and seven more digits, e.g., 41-1234567. This number is used for payment of the salary and benefits of the pastor serving the congregation under development.

While a congregation under development can have exempt status from federal income tax without being included under the ELCA Group Exemption Determination, the ELCA would not be able to provide them with the necessary certification letter unless the congregation under development has provided its authorization and has been included in one of ELCA's filings. Accordingly, if you wish to be included under ELCA's group exemption determination, please complete the form below, and return the original by mail immediately upon receiving your EIN# from IRS to the following address. You may also fax a copy but we will eventually need the original.

ELCA / CSM
Attn: New Evangelizing Congregations
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago IL 60631
(773)380-2632 (Fax)

Please check one of the following: CUD SAWC SYNOD

Development Name _____

Location Street Address _____ City _____ State ___ Zip _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____

_____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Federal Employer Identification Number: ____ -- ____ -- ____ -- ____ --

Person Completing Form: **(Please Print)**

_____ Position _____

The congregation under development identified above is affiliated with and, for IRS purposes, subject to the general supervision or control of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and authorizes the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to request that the organization be included in the Internal Revenue Service group exemption status whereby the organization will be determined to be exempt from federal income taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

CURRENT VERSION March 3, 2018

**MODEL CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
FOR
SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING
COMMUNITIES
OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Constitution and Bylaws of Name of SAWC

DATE: November 28, 2022

**CONSTITUTION
AND BYLAWS
for
Name of SAWC
of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA**

PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

SAWC1.01. The name of this Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) or Chapel is **Name of SAWC**.

SAWC1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the SAWC of **Name of SAWC** is hereinafter designated as "SAWC."

SAWC1.11. This SAWC shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois and the initial incorporators and initial directors shall be named by the **Name of Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There shall be two classes of members, the **Name of Synod** in which this SAWC is located and the individual voting members of the SAWC as set forth below. For purposes of this document, **Name of Synod** shall be referred to herein as "Synod."

SAWC1.12. The Synod will have the sole rights of voting and ratification on matters relating to the amendment of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, dissolution, merger or other changes in corporate structure, and purchase, acquisition, transfer, lease, mortgage, encumbrance, disposition, and sale of real property. In the absence of express notice of the designation of some other person by the Synod, the Synod may vote or execute consents or ratifications by its or by any officer or proxy appointed by its bishop. The individual voting members shall have the right to elect the directors, (other than the initial directors) which is also referred to as "Steering committee," and elect or appoint committee members and adopt continuing resolutions not inconsistent with this Constitution and bylaws.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

SAWC2.01. This SAWC confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

SAWC2.02. This SAWC confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

- b. The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God’s Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God’s revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God’s Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

- SAWC2.03.** This SAWC accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- SAWC2.04.** This SAWC accepts the Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this SAWC.
- SAWC2.05.** This SAWC accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- SAWC2.06.** This SAWC accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord; namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- SAWC2.07.** This SAWC confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- SAWC3.01.** All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this SAWC are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- SAWC3.02.** This SAWC confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- SAWC3.05.** The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA, “the church” or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- SAWC4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- SAWC4.02.** To participate in God’s mission, this SAWC shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation

among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.

- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

SAWC4.04. This SAWC shall develop an organizational structure to be described herein. The SAWC Steering Committee shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the SAWC Steering Committee.

SAWC4.05. This SAWC may, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

SAWC4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between this Church and the SAWC is not meant to imply or describe the creation of a partnership, co-venture, agency, or other legal relationship recognized in civil law.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE SAWC

SAWC5.01. The powers of this SAWC are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

SAWC 5.02 The powers of this SAWC are distributed, as provided in this constitution and bylaws, among the Synod, the SAWC Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws, and the SAWC Steering Committee.

SAWC5.03 The SAWC Meeting is authorized to:

- a. approve the annual budget;
- b. elect the officers of the SAWC and the members of the SAWC Steering Committee other than the SAWC leader and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

SAWC6.01. This SAWC shall be a corporation and an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the **Name of Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

SAWC6.02. This SAWC accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

SAWC6.03. This SAWC acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This SAWC agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This SAWC agrees to file this constitution and bylaws and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the Synod and the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and, when appropriate, with the constitution of the synod. The SAWC understands that it is subject to an annual review by the Synod and the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.
- c. This SAWC agrees to be subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- SAWC6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This SAWC ceases to exist.
 - b. This SAWC is dissolved or removed from membership by the Synod.

- SAWC6.06.** If this SAWC considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod shall be received in writing before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- SAWC7.01.** If this SAWC ceases to exist, title to undisposed real or personal property or any bequests or gifts shall pass to the **Name of Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- SAWC7.02.** If this SAWC is dissolved or removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property, real and personal, shall pass to the **Name of Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or as the Synod directs.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- SAWC8.01.** Members of this SAWC shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this SAWC at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintained their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- SAWC8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in the name of the Triune God.
 - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
 - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this SAWC and shall have made a contribution of record to this SAWC. Members of the SAWC who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the SAWC as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and bylaws.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in a Lutheran church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this SAWC, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this SAWC while being members of other churches. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the SAWC Steering Committee of this SAWC.
 - e. The SAWC will provide records of the above information to the synod designated congregation of record.
- SAWC8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the SAWC Steering Committee.
- SAWC8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this SAWC to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and

- c. support the work of this SAWC, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

SAWC8.05. Membership in this SAWC shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the SAWC Steering Committee; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9.

THE SAWC LEADER

SAWC9.01. Authority to call or appoint a leader for the SAWC shall be vested in the Synod, in consultation with the Christian Community and Leadership Home Area in the Churchwide Organization. The authority to alter, change, or terminate the relationship with a Mission Developer also rests with the Synod after consultation with the Churchwide Organization, including a Ministry Review, which shall be coordinated by the Director for Evangelical Mission.

SAWC9.02. The specific duties of the SAWC called leader, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the SAWC leader shall be included in a letter of call or letter of appointment, which shall be issued by the Synod Council and attested by the bishop of the Synod.

In the case of Mission Developers, the duties and responsibilities will be consistent with the Expectations for Mission Developers and the Operational Guidelines for Mission Developers from ELCA Christian Community and Leadership.

SAWC9.11. The SAWC leader:

- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the SAWC;
- b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
- c. shall become a member of this SAWC upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call.

SAWC9.12. The SAWC leader(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

SAWC9.13. The parochial records of the SAWC shall be maintained by the SAWC leader and shall remain the property of the SAWC.

Chapter 10.

SAWC MEETING

SAWC10.01. The annual meeting of this SAWC shall be held in April of each year, or at a different time specified in a bylaw or continuing resolution.

SAWC10.02. A special SAWC meeting may be called by the Synod, SAWC leader, the SAWC Steering Committee, or the president of this SAWC, and shall be called by the president of the SAWC upon the written request of 25 percent of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted. An organizing meeting may be called by the Synod or the SAWC leader to take all steps necessary related to the formation of the corporation.

- SAWC10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this SAWC shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- SAWC10.04.** Ten percent (10%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- SAWC10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- SAWC10.06.** All actions approved by the SAWC shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- SAWC10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this SAWC, unless otherwise agreed.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- SAWC11.01.** The officers of this SAWC shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws or continuing resolutions.
 - The officers shall be voting members of the SAWC.
 - Officers of this SAWC shall serve similar offices of the SAWC Steering Committee and shall be voting members of the SAWC Steering Committee.
- SAWC11.02.** The SAWC leader shall be *ex officio* president of the SAWC and the SAWC Steering Committee. The SAWC, at the organizational or annual meeting, shall elect by written ballot the other officers of the SAWC who shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- SAWC11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12.

SAWC STEERING COMMITTEE

- SAWC12.01.** The initial incorporators shall name the initial directors who adopt this Constitution and Bylaws. The initial director shall be the **Name of Synod**. In cooperation with the SAWC leader, the Synod shall call a first organizational meeting of the SAWC, at which the SAWC Steering Committee voting members shall be elected. Upon the election of the SAWC Steering Committee voting members at the first organizational meeting, the initial directors' position in office shall end. The voting membership of the SAWC Steering Committee shall consist of the SAWC leader(s), the officers of the SAWC, and not more than 9 nor fewer than 3 additional members elected by the SAWC Meeting. Any voting member of the SAWC may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the SAWC Steering Committee shall be declared vacant if the member: a) ceases to be a voting member of this SAWC or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the SAWC Steering Committee without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state of Illinois, the SAWC or the SAWC Steering Committee may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the SAWC Steering Committee in other circumstances.
- SAWC12.02.** The members of the SAWC Steering Committee except the SAWC leader(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. It is suggested that whenever possible terms be staggered.
- SAWC12.03.** Should a member's place on the SAWC Steering Committee be declared vacant, the SAWC Steering Committee shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. For purposes of SAWC 12.02, the completion of an unexpired term of one year or less shall not count as a full term, while the completion of an unexpired term of greater than one year shall count as a full term.

- SAWC12.04.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this SAWC, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the SAWC Steering Committee shall include the following:
- a. To lead this SAWC in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this SAWC in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this SAWC to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the SAWC leader(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for leadership and service during the sickness or absence of the SAWC leader.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other churches and SAWCs, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- SAWC12.05.** Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the SAWC Steering Committee shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this SAWC.
- a. The SAWC Steering Committee shall be the board of directors of this SAWC, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Illinois except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The SAWC Steering Committee shall not have the authority to acquire, buy, sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, encumber, or otherwise dispose of real property unless specifically authorized to do so by the Synod.
 - c. The SAWC Steering Committee may enter into contracts of up to \$1,000.00 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The SAWC Steering Committee shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this SAWC, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$1,000.00 or 2%, whichever is greater, in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a SAWC Meeting. The budget shall include this SAWC's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The SAWC Steering Committee shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this SAWC are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The SAWC Steering Committee shall be responsible, in consultation with the Synod, for compensation of staff.
- SAWC12.06.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- SAWC12.07.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

- SAWC12.08.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this SAWC.
- SAWC12.09.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall submit a comprehensive report to this SAWC at the annual meeting.
- SAWC12.11.** The SAWC Steering Committee shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the SAWC leader or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- SAWC12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the SAWC Steering Committee, including the SAWC leader except when the SAWC leader requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting.
- SAWC12.13.** The SAWC Steering Committee and its sub-committees may hold meetings by remote Communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

SAWC COMMITTEES

- SAWC13.01.** The officers of this SAWC and the SAWC leader shall constitute the ***Executive Committee***.
- SAWC13.02.** A ***Nominating Committee*** of four voting members of this SAWC, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the SAWC Steering Committee, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- SAWC13.03.** An ***Audit Committee*** of three voting members shall be elected by the SAWC Steering Committee. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the SAWC Steering Committee. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.
- SAWC13.04.** A ***Mutual Ministry Committee*** (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) should be appointed jointly by the vice president and the SAWC leader. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- SAWC13.06.** Other committees of this SAWC may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the SAWC Steering Committee.
- SAWC13.07.** Duties of committees of this SAWC may be specified in the action of the Steering committee or in the continuing resolutions.
- SAWC13.08.** The SAWC leader shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the SAWC.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE SAWC

- SAWC14.01.** All organizations within this SAWC shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this SAWC and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this SAWC's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This SAWC at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- SAWC14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the SAWC Steering Committee.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- SAWC15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the SAWC, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the SAWC is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the SAWC leader, b) censure and admonition by the SAWC leader in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the SAWC Steering Committee to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the SAWC leader is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another SAWC leader chosen by the Executive Committee of the SAWC Steering Committee.
- SAWC15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the SAWC shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to SAWC15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the SAWC Steering Committee, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament or SAWC leaders). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- SAWC15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the SAWC Steering Committee, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The SAWC Steering Committee and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- SAWC15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of SAWC members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*
- SAWC15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- a. suspension from the privileges of SAWC membership for a designated period of time;
 - b. suspension from the privileges of SAWC membership until the SAWC leader and SAWC Steering Committee receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in the SAWC; or
 - d. termination of membership in the SAWC and exclusion from the SAWC's property (if allowed under applicable law) and from all SAWC activities.

SAWC15.06. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the SAWC Steering Committee as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the SAWC Steering Committee and recorded in the minutes of the next steering committee meeting.

SAWC15.07. No member of the SAWC shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.

SAWC15.10. Adjudication

SAWC15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this SAWC on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this SAWC shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the SAWC Steering Committee of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

AMENDMENTS

SAWC16.01. The Synod shall have the sole right to vote to approve amendments to this constitution and bylaws. However, the SAWC may propose and request modifications. Proposals must be filed in writing with the SAWC Steering Committee 60 days before formal consideration by this SAWC at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The SAWC Steering committee shall notify the members of the proposal with the Steering Committee's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

SAWC16.02. A request to the Synod for proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- Be approved at a legally called SAWC meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting;
- Have the proposed effective date included in the resolution^a (but not prior to the date of approval by the Synod Council) and noted in the constitution; and
- Be presented to the Synod for approval. The result of such Synod vote shall be sent to the SAWC.

SAWC16.03. Any amendments approved to this constitution, approved as set forth above, shall be sent by the synod to the SAWC.

Chapter 17.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

SAWC17.01. The SAWC Steering Committee or the SAWC Meeting may enact continuing resolutions in a legally called meeting. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this SAWC.

SAWC17.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Steering Committee or a majority vote of a meeting of the SAWC.

Chapter 18.

INDEMNIFICATION

SAWC18.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this SAWC is incorporated, this SAWC may adopt provisions providing indemnification and may purchase insurance coverage for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a SAWC Steering Committee member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this SAWC, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened,

pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

EXPLANATION

The *Constitution for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities or Chapels* is adapted from the *Model Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Congregations*. For future reference, Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities may be abbreviated as SAWC. The preface to many sections is “WC” which stands for Worshiping Community.

- **Codification explanation:** A numerical codification indicates (a) general subject, (b) constitutional provisions, (c) bylaws, and (d) continuing resolutions.
 - a. Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus, provisions in “Chapter 8. Membership” are preceded by “8.”
 - b. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to “Membership” is codified SAWC 8.02.
 - c. Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus, one bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified SAWC8.02.01. Because continuing resolutions normally are so specifically related to details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, no set of continuing resolutions is provided for.
 - d. The SAWC Steering Committee may adopt “continuing resolutions,” which may provide descriptions of operational patterns or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. Within the governing documents of a SAWC, continuing resolutions are the provisions most easily amended. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws, continuing resolutions may be updated regularly by the SAWC Steering Committee without the necessity of calling a regular or special Meeting and submission to the Synod. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered C13, to designate the chapter; C13.07, to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A01. in the codification C13.07.A04. to indicate by the “A” that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and to indicate by the “04” that it was adopted in 2004.

- e. When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they normally are lettered “a,” “b,” “c,” etc. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence. If the related provisions cannot be judged clearly to be separable or inseparable, preference will be given to a number sequence.

- **Ease of use:** The provisions of your SAWC’s constitution, the bylaws, and the continuing resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity and ease in use.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitutional numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus, SAWC5.01. will precede SAWC5.03.10.

- **Missing numbers:** As you work with the *Constitution for SAWCs*, you may notice that certain numbers seem to be missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. That is intentional. In the style followed here, the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions.

- **References to church:** In the governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter is used in references to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words “church” and “this church” in lower case letters are employed, although, for clarity in this constitution, the full name or “ELCA” normally is used.

The specific SAWC may be identified, as provided in SAWC1.02., as “this SAWC.”

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PREFACE

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

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

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

- a. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
- b. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

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- Serve in response to God's love for human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs.
- d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

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

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

In order to understand the application of governance principles to the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council, it is important to begin with a common understanding of an underlying philosophy of governance. In fulfilling its dual constitutional roles, the Church Council exercises fiduciary, strategic, and generative

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

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

The following goals were identified and approved for this church:

- **Goal 1:** A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people.
- **Goal 2:** A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church.
- **Goal 3:** An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings.
- **Goal 4:** A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace, and reconciliation in communities around the world.
- **Goal 5:** A well-governed, connected, and sustainable church.

In 2017, the churchwide organization began reassessment of its structure. After multiple consultations and additional strategic planning work with leaders throughout this church, the presiding bishop appointed a Future Church design team in April 2020

whose work resulted in a proposed new organizational design. The design team provided opportunities for churchwide staff to share their thoughts and ideas.

The Church Council affirmed the new design in November 2020 and the following purpose statement:

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

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

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

These goals inform and frame the fiduciary, strategic, and generative responsibilities of the Church Council. They reflect a thoughtful integration of the missional imperatives contained in the governing documents of congregations and synods as well as the churchwide organization. Striving for the collective implementation of these goals would reflect interdependence and strengthen all the ministry partners of this church. ELCA members, congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization must work together to share a powerful witness of the gospel in the world, inviting more new, young, and diverse people to experience God's grace in action.

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

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PART 1

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Church Council

1. Introduction

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

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

2.1. Overarching responsibilities

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

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

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

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

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

3. Specific responsibilities of the Church Council

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

A. Oversight and coordination

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

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

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

B. Policy development and approval

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

C. Relationships

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

D. Governance

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

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

4. Responsibilities of individual Church Council members

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

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

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

A. Preparation

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

B. Participation and decision-making

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

C. Collegiality and relationships

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

D. Commitment to the ELCA

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

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Church Council Governance Policy Manual

PART 2

1. Organization and structures of the Church Council

In accordance with provisions in Chapter 14 of the CBCR, the voting members of the Church Council are the four officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops and 32–45 individuals elected by the Churchwide Assembly. There also are nine liaison synod bishops, one from each region, who serve as advisory liaison members with voice but not vote (14.32.01.) and advisory members to the Church Council with voice but not vote (14.33.A22). In addition, representatives of ecumenical partners, ethnic ministries, separately incorporated ministries, and others attend Church Council meetings as guests.

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

A. Standing committees

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

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

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

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

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

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

D. Evaluation of organization and structures

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

2. Meetings of the Church Council

A. Types of meetings, scheduling and attendance

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

In accordance with this church's Open Meetings policy and because the Church

Council is an elected decision-making body, its business shall be conducted in open session, except when executive sessions or closed sessions are authorized by the policy. Thus, meetings are public sessions and open to advisory members, guests, and visitors, unless otherwise indicated in the meeting agenda or unless the Church Council votes to enter executive or closed session.

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

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

Voting members, liaison bishops, and advisory members are expected to attend Church Council meetings; they should not miss more than one full day of a meeting or two consecutive meetings. If a member needs to be excused, electronic notification should be sent to the secretary. Within the guidelines and policies of the ELCA, all travel, room costs, and most meals are paid for by the ELCA for Church Council members and liaison bishops to attend Church Council meetings. For advisory members attending Church Council meetings, the sending organization pays for the travel expenses and the ELCA pays the room costs and most meals.

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

B. Calendars

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

Committee will regularly review and update the triennial calendar.

C. Agendas and meeting materials

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

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

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

Agendas also must include focus on the spiritual aspects of servant leadership. Worship and prayer also must be incorporated into the fabric of Church Council

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

meetings, as well as in committee meetings and in all activities that take place during the times that a Church Council meeting is scheduled. Balancing these multiple imperatives is challenging but must be accomplished in a proactive manner.

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

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

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

D. Meeting process

Pursuant to bylaw 14.12.02, “[T]he Church Council shall use parliamentary procedure in accordance with *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the council.” Bylaw 14.12.03 also prohibits proxy and absentee voting. The Church Council may adopt standing rules or rules of organization and procedure to provide additional procedural rules or processes to facilitate its work. Notwithstanding

⁵ “*En bloc*” agendas are analogous to “consent calendars” or “consent agendas.” See *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), 41:32.

⁶ A “special order” is a matter scheduled for a particular time that takes precedence over what is being addressed when the time occurs. See *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), 41:53–54. In addition, agendas may contain estimates of discussion time for planning purposes, but they are not binding unless they are special orders.

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

These rules are very important for the Church Council to set aside meeting time for generative discussions, prayer and reflection, and other nonlegislative purposes.

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

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

E. Meeting evaluations

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

In addition to substantive evaluations, a process observation team may be identified for each meeting of the Church Council by the Board Development Committee. The process observation team will monitor the conduct of business and the manner of discussion and debate and report during the meetings on issues such as whether agenda matters have been fully addressed, whether multiple viewpoints and voices have been heard, whether discussion has been respectful, and whether there has been clarity in

decision-making and delineation of follow-up, if any. The process observation team is authorized to make suggestions to the vice president, the Board Development Committee, and/or the Executive Committee to improve the work of the Church Council.

F. Minutes

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

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

G. Updates and training between meetings

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

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

4. Relationships and communications

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

The starting point in analyzing interrelationships is Chapter 8 of the CBCR. It both addresses the polity of the ELCA and defines the interrelationships among the expressions of this church, as well as with agencies and institutions. With respect to congregations and synods, the churchwide organization shares a relationship of interdependence: “Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole

Chapter 8 continues by describing relationships and defining responsibilities of this church with respect to institutions and agencies, other Lutheran organizations, interchurch agencies, institutions and councils, church-to-church relationships and others. Within the polity of the ELCA, it is the churchwide organization that “shall implement the extended mission of the Church, developing churchwide policies in consultation with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions and/or in response to specific agreed-upon areas of responsibility” (8.14.). In the exercise of its fiduciary responsibilities, the Church Council must endeavor to nurture and strengthen these relationships, but the Church Council must remember that its role is governance and not management.

A. Church Council relationships with churchwide organization and staff

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

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

- As a general proposition, communications between a Church Council member and churchwide officers and staff should be channeled through the Office of the Secretary,⁸ except as otherwise authorized by the CBCR, by approved policies, or with the permission of the presiding bishop. When in doubt, a Church Council member should advise the Office of the Secretary through the appropriate executive that communication is taking place with a

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

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

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

B. Relationships and communications with the Conference of Bishops

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

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

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

If the Conference of Bishops is required to review an existing or proposed policy that the Church Council must approve in accordance with the CBCR, the Church Council shall refer the policy to the Conference of Bishops for review. The referral shall describe

the scope of the requested review, as well as sufficient background to provide a roadmap of the issues to address and a timetable for reporting to the Church Council.

C. Relationships and communications with synods and congregations

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

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

5. Related policies

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

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

6. Review and amendment

At least triennially, provisions of this Church Council Governance Policy Manual shall be reviewed and amended, as necessary. Proposed amendments shall be reviewed

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

APPENDIX

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

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

- Establish fiscal policies and authorize expenditures of the churchwide organization, within limits established by the Churchwide Assembly and the CBCR (11.40. and following bylaws).
- Approve a policy for the development of social statements and review and recommend for approval by the Churchwide Assembly social statements prepared in accordance with the policy (12.12.01.).
- Establish the time and place of meetings of the Churchwide Assembly, appoint and allocate to synods up to 10 additional voting members, designate other persons as advisory members, and appoint committees in accordance with CBCR Chapter 12.
- Serve as *ex officio* voting members of the Churchwide Assembly (12.41.16).
- Elect the treasurer (14.14.).
- Exercise discretion, as necessary, to remove a voting member of the Church Council for cause (14.15.).
- Act on policies proposed by churchwide units, subject to review by the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.01.).
- Review procedures and programs of churchwide units to assure that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled; approve policies of churchwide units (14.21.02.).
- Review all recommendations from the churchwide organization for consideration at the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.03.).
- Report to the Churchwide Assembly (14.21.07.).
- Adopt policies for the churchwide organization in accordance with the CBCR (14.21.04.). In addition to fiscal policies (11.41.), these include personnel policies (15.12.C20., 15.21.01., 16.12.D20.), salary structure for the staff and ranges for salaries of the officers (14.21.06., 14.21.13.).
- Consult with and refer matters to the Conference of Bishops and receive reports from it (14.21.11.).
- Act on resolutions from synod councils (14.21.11.).
- Provide for the installation of churchwide officers (14.21.12.).
- Consider issues of corporate social responsibility and, as appropriate, direct the churchwide organization to file shareholder resolutions, cast proxy ballots, and take other actions (14.21.14.).
- Establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between the churchwide organization and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations, and determine which unit of the churchwide organization shall relate to each (14.21.15.).
- Arrange processes for all elections specified in the CBCR (14.21.22.).
- Fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the CBCR, including electing individuals to serve the balance of unexpired terms when a vacancy has been declared by the secretary (14.22.).

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

Assessing the Need for and Feasibility of Initiating Social Message Processes

“[Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns](#)” (2018) states, “The Church Council shall ask the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to review all [social message] requests and bring a proposal on how to address the social questions entailed in these requests. This review shall consider financial implications and alternative means for addressing the social topic, such as development of a study resource, yearlong ELCA-wide emphasis, or others.” (p. 21)

At this time, there are three pending requests for social messages, two of which come from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. (*See chart below) It is the recommendation of the Director for Theological Ethics to delay action on these requests until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting. A social message on climate care is in process, which fully occupies the time of churchwide organization staff and churchwide capacity until it’s brought to Church Council for consideration in Spring 2023. Further, it has not been possible to do the groundwork or assessment necessary to bring a clear recommendation regarding all the pending requests. Such assessment and recommendation are anticipated by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

*Chart of Pending Social Message Requests

| Topic | Type of Request | Source | Notes |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Child Abuse and Protection | Request for new message | 2022 Churchwide Assembly | CA22.01.05r |
| Homelessness | Request for substantive reconsideration | 2022 Churchwide Assembly | CA22.01.05s |
| U.S. National Gun Policy | Request for new message | 2019 Churchwide Assembly [CA19.02.06m] | Was reviewed, but held for future action [CC21.11.25m5] |

PS ACTION

Recommended: *To recommend that the Church Council approve the following en bloc action*

To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. national gun policy or on child abuse and protection and of considering the authorization of a revision of the "Message on Homelessness" (1990) until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting to allow for a careful and thorough assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances; and

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

Response to Reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009)

To recommend that the Church Council approve the following action:

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to manage the initiation of work on the reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009), per authorization of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, by delaying task force initiation to 2024 due to timing, budgetary, and leadership capacity demands.

Rationale in brief

This proposed action follows the recommendation of the director for theological ethics who conducted several consultations, e.g., Conference of Bishops, and assessed realistically matters of timing, budget, staffing levels, and leadership capacity. This proposed action follows the protocol established in “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018, P&P).

In 2023, the social statement process on civic life and faith and other work underway in Theological Ethics exhausts current staffing and leadership availability, e.g., the task force enters the drafting phase. Further, in order to initiate a concurrent social statement process to reconsider aspects of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) an associate director for theological ethics and additional administrative staff will need to be hired and other choices made regarding budget.

The year delay allows time for necessary groundwork to be laid for the sake of quality and integrity in the upcoming process. The recommended action also factors in the assembly action's authorization to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Church Council to approve the parameters and expense budget of this process and identify the revenue source(s) to provide for this editorial revision to be considered as early as the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

The task force is charged with two tasks by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, and these will need to be approached in sequential phases with a proposed editorial reconsideration (CA22.01.07) at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly and the proposed reconsideration of bound conscience (CA22.03.23) at the 2028 Churchwide Assembly. (See below for further explanation.)

An FAQ of explanation

1) What was authorized by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly?

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly took two separate actions (CA22.01.07 and CA22.03.23) regarding *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009). The first action, CA22.01.07, was a memorial that authorized reconsideration by edit of the statement's wording regarding relationships of same-gender and gender non-conforming couples. The second assembly action, CA22.03.23, was a floor motion that authorized reconsideration of the concept of bound conscience and the four sets of convictions described therein. Both actions authorize reconsiderations, but do not determine the protocol parameters or the outcomes. The protocol is governed by P&P. The outcomes of any cycle of this church's deliberative work is a Recommend Proposed Revision brought to a churchwide assembly for action. The deliberation will take place within the main lines of the existing statement and other ELCA teaching.

2) Who makes decisions about the management of the process?

As indicated within P&P, the timing of the project is managed by the Church Council in its responsibility for oversight of churchwide organization finances and church capacity. The director for theological ethics makes a recommendation to Church Council and directs the process.

3) What are the staffing factors?

It has been the case for nearly a decade that developing one statement and one social message at a time is the maximum capacity for this church. This results from reduced budget levels and staffing of the

Theological Ethics “desk” (Currently there is one director and ½ program assistant FTE). Any substantive reconsideration, such as that authorized by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, requires new staffing unless that work is delayed until the 2025-2028 cycle. (Existing Theological Ethics’ projects include a social statement on civic life and faith (expected by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly), a social message on climate care, publication of *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, holding the Lutheran Ethicists’ Gathering, and several study projects.)

4) What are the budget implications?

There are two budget implications. The first is the increased staff (see item 3). The estimate for staffing increase is approximately \$200,000 each year of a 3-year cycle, a total of \$600,000. The second budgetary increase is related to the program costs. The program costs include such expenses as honorariums, publication costs, and occasionally in-person task force meetings. The estimate is approximately an additional \$40,000 each year, a total of \$120,000. (These figures have been checked with the Treasurer of the ELCA and account for inflation.)

5) What does “leadership capacity” entail?

Because our church develops its teaching as a community of moral deliberation, any development of social teaching must account for “leadership capacity”, i.e., time and energy required of ELCA leadership (Conference of Bishops, Church Council, Churchwide Assembly) in conducting their designated roles of input and review. The Reconsideration cycle includes the possibility of extensive involvement across the church and requires a public comment period approximately 15 months before an assembly action. In addition, review is required at designated points by both the Conference of Bishops and Church Council as well as adequate time at a churchwide assembly. The year’s delay to 2024 means that congregational members’ participation and leadership reviews will be staggered rather than concurrent with existing work, such as the social statement on civic life and faith. The delay also should help stagger this effort in relation to review and consideration of proposals from the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church.

Unaltered Augsburg Confession Report

Two synod memorials presented to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly proposed actions throughout the ELCA and its interdependent institutions as well as among its members that would:

- raise awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession more widely in the church;
- renew attention in seminary education; and
- develop resources for use in classrooms and congregations.

These actions would be encouraged and supported by the churchwide organization in anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030. The proposals specifically requested wider and easier availability of the English translations of both the German and Latin texts included in *The Book of Concord* edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert. In follow-up conversation with the primary authors of the synod memorial from the Allegheny Synod, they said they understand this proposal to be comparable to Bishop Eaton's invitation to study the Small Catechism in 2016-2017 in connection with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

A first step

Although the memorials were referred to the churchwide staff for additional study and possible recommendations, some actions have already been initiated. Martin Seltz reports that Timothy Wengert and Robert Kolb both have agreed to work on assembling an annotated edition of the English translation of the German version published in the Kolb/Wengert edition of the Book of Concord. The initial plan is that this edition will be published in both print and eBook formats and will include the English translation, along with a new introduction and some additional updated content (comparable in content and scope to the 2015 edition of *Martin Luther's 95 Theses*; <https://www.fortresspress.com/store/product/9781451482799/>). Seltz anticipates they could complete their work by the end of 2023 with publication by Fortress Press in 2024 or 2025.

Consultations

Another first step in the last year has been a series of consultations with present and former churchwide staff and with others beyond that circle (see Appendix). The consultations touched on a range of issues to consider when deciding whether and how to implement the proposed actions (or similar activities).

1. For some the value of the proposed actions is immediately self-evident, because the Augsburg Confession holds a singular place among Lutheran Christians globally as its defining witness of the Gospel and its common resource for faithful Christian witness and proclamation, for unity and collaboration with those who share its witness, and for ecumenical and inter-religious conversations. Others, while acknowledging the singular place of the Augsburg Confession, emphasized the importance of bringing its witness into wider and deeper conversation with other voices, both confessional and cultural, including especially the current cultural discourses in the United States and globally.

Others, while still affirming the Augsburg Confession's witness as an asset, stated the importance of reconsidering its limitations and liabilities, with particular attention to its relevance to modern questions and the legacies of its anathemas. Two examples: One consultant who identifies as someone who is "committed to Lutheran doctrine making sense in everyday life" asked, "How does this proposal promote the Gospel? What is liberating and serves the Gospel in lifting up the Augsburg Confession?" Another: "The Augsburg Confession unleashed a recognition of individuality that now needs to be revisited, especially the relationship between rights and responsibility. In the context of current political and economic turmoil, the message 'you're freed' has led to misunderstandings about the self and its relationships to God and others."

However, despite questions or concerns, consultants (including participants in one congregation's Sunday morning adult forum) unanimously affirmed the Augsburg Confession's witness of the Gospel, and eagerly

advocated for that witness to continue in the life and ministry of the whole community of faith (not simply the ELCA or Lutherans globally).

2. Several consultants raised a question about the Augsburg Confession’s voice—for whom and to whom it speaks. Some raised the questions in historical and confessional terms. When it was first presented at Augsburg was it a “Lutheran” confession (that is, the confession of a party that called itself “evangelical”), a “Catholic” confession (since they claimed to be faithfully catholic in this confession), or “ecumenical”? Moreover, whatever its voice was then, how does it speak today and into the future?

Others, explicitly or implicitly, raised questions about social and political standing and relationships. In comparison to when nobility were addressing an emperor (and academic theologians of one party addressing theologians of another), how can the Augsburg Confession’s witness be faithfully and evangelically spoken and heard in relationships among ordinary people today—Lutherans with other Christians and with people of other convictions?

3. Others addressed an issue related to the Augsburg Confession’s voice and the opportunities in renewed attention to it from another perspective: its function with the Lutheran community broadly and the ELCA specifically to clarify or define “Lutheran” *identity*. Several expressed hope for the kind of study and discussion that would elevate the Augsburg Confession’s theological witness for defining Lutheran identity most consistently in those contexts where ethnic and cultural markers have too often been determinative in distorting and exclusionary ways.

At the same time, others expressed caution and suggested that the legitimate hope for clarity might be framed and addressed in other terms. For example, one bishop ardently expressed the hope that the Augsburg Confession would not be “weaponized” in any activities or resources, especially against members or groups who are already more vulnerable or who historically have been marginalized or excluded from the life and work of the faith community. Moreover, a former executive has repeatedly suggested that an investigation of the Lutheran community’s *vocation* would be a more helpful way to frame questions of clarity.

4. Although only some made explicit reference to the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, many spoke in ways that assumed the Augsburg Confession’s unity of theological witness with those other writings. Occasionally they suggested activities or initiatives that would include those other writings, especially the Large and Small Catechisms. (The 500th anniversary of Luther’s two catechisms will come in 2029, and 2030 will also mark the 450th anniversary of the Book of Concord.)

In addition, those who were consulted also addressed a range of matters related to engaging partners, making decisions, and developing resources.

5. Several emphasized both the obligation and the opportunity in engaging partners—within the ELCA, as one Lutheran church body in a global community of Lutherans, and ecumenically, especially with those faith communities that have either joined in the Augsburg Confession or have been addressed by it.
 - a. Engagement with the global community of Lutherans need not be limited to the organizational activities and structures of the LWF, but could extend directly to the member churches themselves and their teaching practices and experiences. Opportunities include engagement with Lutherans who are not affiliated with the LWF, especially in some local contexts.
 - b. Ecumenical engagement can include both continuing national and global dialogues and exploring new local partners in mutual learning and discourse.
 - c. Engaging the ELCA publishing house and seminaries is explicitly assumed by the proposed memorials. Other ELCA partners outside the churchwide office could include multiple networks for

theological discourse (the ELCA Theological Roundtable was mentioned) and learning (for example, Select Learning, part of the Lay School for Ministry Network, or the ELCA Youth Ministry Network).

6. An important consideration will be the role or responsibility that the churchwide office staff takes for these proposed actions in relation to these varied partners. Many emphasized a collaborative posture—more initiator, convener and catalyst than sole owner (neither feasible nor even possible), director or administrator. This collaborative posture will also benefit from a measure of humility that some do not find common among Americans. One executive gently but pointedly noted that other Lutheran churches in the global community and immigrant Lutheran communities in the US often have deeper understandings and stronger commitment to the Augsburg Confession and the Lutheran confessional writings than do ELCA members, including pastors and teachers. “Do not assume that the ELCA knows best.”
7. Similarly, the Augsburg Confession does not belong solely to white American men of European descent who have too often monopolized interpretation and teaching. Many emphasized the importance of engaging a diversity of voices, life experience, and perspective, both individuals and groups, when making decisions, planning, and implementing the proposed actions. Several noted the importance of doing so respectfully—caringly, but not condescendingly—with sensitivity to long histories and deep legacies of marginalizing, dismissive, and too often abusive habits and practices in church life. Continued disciplined attention to the ELCA’s representational principles will be salutary. Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, while agreeing to collaborate on a new edition of the Augsburg Confession, encouraged engagement with a younger and more diverse group of scholars in developing additional study and discussion resources.
8. Others also strongly encouraged deliberate attention to diverse kinds of resources for diverse audiences. Book-length commentaries and booklet study guides about the Augsburg Confession are familiar resources. Older standard interpretations, more recent studies, and future publications will all be valuable. At the same time, for many growth in faith happens in ways other than traditional reading material and classroom models for learning. Moreover, many now engage newer media and the types of learning that incorporate those media into a growing spectrum of new opportunities for discourse.

For example, some recommendations from three bishops.

- a. One recommended the development of an online digital library with a variety of print resources (essays, study guides, sermons, devotions, planning and leader guides, as well as new print resources like blogs and online discussion boards), and also video and audio resources (podcasts, etc.).
 - b. In their confirmation instruction many ELCA members have experienced traditional classroom models for learning that emphasized cognition (“head” learning) and, to a lesser extent, behavior (“hands”). Other ELCA members, however, have come from traditions and communities (Pentecostal, for example) that emphasize experiences of emotional engagement (“heart”) in faith formation. Opportunities for engaging in learning and discussion that draw on these other experiences in faith formation hold the promise of reaching a broader range of audiences and deepening the engagement for all audiences.
 - c. Another remembered an older tradition of presenting a play or pageant that dramatically re-enacted the events leading to the presentation of the Augsburg Confession on June 25, 1530. (If I remember correctly that bishop followed up by sending a copy of a script, and I think I saw such a performance at St. Luke’s on Belmont in Chicago in 2015 or so.) Although the scripts themselves are likely dated, the model is suggestive for innovative experiential learning.
9. Similarly, one executive noted that the primary means of communication in some ELCA faith communities is word-of-mouth. Invitations, resources and requests for participation that are extended through *written*

communication, whether on paper or electronically, often have very limited reach in these communities. Although this observation was made about communities of recent immigrants to the United States, it also accurately describes the more than a century-old two-point parish in rural Minnesota where I now worship and others where I have served. Attention to the realities of oral culture suggests the development of resource *persons* and *experiences* (not merely printed resource materials).

Possible next steps

If the Church Council and/or Office of Presiding Bishop decide to proceed with the proposed actions of the memorial, some immediate next steps could include:

- a. Designating staff who will exercise responsibility for tasks and outcomes:
 - i. a point person and/or “realizer” who will have primary responsibility
 - ii. a working group of other staff with expertise, experience and relationships needed for implementation
- b. Selecting an advisory group (beyond churchwide staff) to assist with assessment, networking, decision-making and planning
- c. Continuing consultations with individuals and at least 2-4 more small groups
- d. Making initial decisions regarding:
 - i. the purpose, goals and scope of activities for this project
 - ii. the scope and posture of the churchwide staff’s role (assuming that other groups and individuals will take their own initiatives) ... hopefully with attention to the insights expressed in this initial round of consultation (above)
- e. Clarifying what resources (budget, personnel, etc.) will be available for this project
- f. Taking inventory of existing material resources and making an initial assessment of their usability, accessibility, and limitations
- g. Taking inventory of individuals and groups in the ELCA, LWF and beyond who can collaborate productively. A networking session (workshop) at next summer’s Rostered Ministers Gathering would be one opportunity.
- h. Beginning exploration and development of resources, including resource persons, other than traditional classroom-type materials and methods (assuming that the traditional materials and methods will also be available)

Marcus Kunz
Executive, Discernment of Contextual and Theological Issues
Office of the Presiding Bishop

APPENDIX

Individuals consulted

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anthony Bateza | St. Olaf College professor |
| Joseph Bocko | ELCA churchwide staff |
| Pat Taylor Ellison | Church Innovations executive (retired) |
| Guy Erwin | United Lutheran Seminary president |
| David Folkerts | ELCA pastor (retired) |
| Becky Horn | ELCA pastor |
| Robert Kolb | Concordia Historical Institute, Concordia Seminary professor (retired) |
| Dirk Lange | Lutheran World Federation staff |
| Martin Lohrmann | Wartburg Theological Seminary professor |
| Patricia Lull | St. Paul Area Synod bishop |
| Rafael Malpica | ELCA churchwide staff |
| Leila Ortiz | Metropolitan DC Synod bishop |
| Moses Penumaka | Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary professor |
| Denise Rector | Trinity Lutheran Seminary professor |
| Matthew Riegel | West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod bishop |
| William Russell | Lutheran World Federation staff |
| Carmelo Santos | ELCA churchwide staff |
| Paula Schmitt | Allegheny Synod bishop |
| Scott Schul | ELCA pastor |
| Martin Seltz | Augsburg Fortress Publishers president |
| Robin Steinke | Luther Seminary president |
| Kirsi Stjerna | Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary professor |
| Jonathan Strandjord | ELCA churchwide staff (retired) |
| Mary Streufert | ELCA churchwide staff |
| Paul Tomkiel | ELCA pastor |
| Timothy Wengert | United Lutheran Seminary professor (retired) |

Group conversations

Adult forum participants (approx. 15) Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Broomfield, Colorado

LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

Board of Trustees



Charter and Bylaws

Fall 2022

Charter and Bylaws

Lenoir-Rhyne University

Charter

Situated at Hickory, Catawba County, North Carolina

As revised by the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne College on March 27, 2020; approved by the Synod Council of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in April 2020; and certified by the State of North Carolina Department of The Secretary of State on April 14, 2020.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That W.P. Cline, J.C. Moretz, R.L. Fritz, S.E. Killian, J.S. Propst, P.C. Setzer, McCoy Moretz and B.A. Whitener of Hickory, N.C.; J.C. Hall, Lenoir, N.C.; J.M. Rhodes, Rhodhiss, N.C.; J.B. Stirewalt, New Market, Va.; W.J. Boger, Mt. Holly, N.C.; R.E. Cline, Henry, N.C.; Lee Hoover, Lincolnton, N.C.; G.W. Rabb and C.E. Smyre, Newton, N.C.; John M. Arndt, Claremont, N.C.; J.F. Deal, Concord, N.C.; J.S. Lipe, Landis, N.C.; and J.H.C. Huitt, Catawba, N.C.; and their successors in office, be and they hereby are created a corporation under the name of “Lenoir-Rhyne University.”

Section 2. That the purpose for which this corporation is formed is the promotion of religion, morality and learning through the establishment, maintenance and operation of an institution of higher education.

Section 3. In order to properly prosecute said purpose, this corporation shall have the following powers and authority:

- a.** To confer such degrees and other marks of literary distinction as are usually conferred by colleges and universities;
- b.** To elect a President of said university, other officers, and such professors as they deem proper, and to remove them for sufficient cause;
- c.** To possess all the powers authorized and allowed to non-profit corporations under Chapter 55A of the General Statutes of North Carolina.

Section 4. This corporation shall have no capital stock. It is organized and is to be operated exclusively for the educational purposes heretofore set forth. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private shareholder, or individual, and no part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein

contained, the said corporation shall have no power to receive or hold property of any kind for any purpose other than religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes, all for the public welfare.

Section 5. The Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University, and/or said corporation, shall be the successors of and shall succeed to any and all rights, powers, privileges, advantages, title and property heretofore conferred upon, or which may hereafter be acquired by the Board of Trustees for Educational Institutions of the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, the Board of Trustees of Lenoir College and/or Lenoir College; the Board of Trustees of Daniel Rhyne College and/or Daniel Rhyne College; the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne College and/or Lenoir-Rhyne College; the Board of Trustees of the North Carolina College and/or the North Carolina College; the Board of Trustees of Mount Amoena Seminary and/or Mount Amoena Seminary: Provided, that nothing contained herein shall alter, change or modify any existing contract, or contracts, agreement or agreements heretofore made by Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Section 6. This corporation shall have no members. It shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The members of the Board of Trustees shall be recommended to the Synod Council of the NC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) for ratification. Any vacancies on the Board of Trustees shall be ratified by the Synod Council of the NC Synod of the ELCA upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees, election being for the unexpired term. – The number of members of the Board of Trustees, their terms of office, and the method of their recommendation shall be provided for in the bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Section 7. The Board of Trustees shall meet annually in the City of Hickory, N.C., and may meet at such other times and places as may be deemed expedient for the good of the University. The Board of Trustees shall elect the officers and shall elect the members of the committees specified in the bylaws.

Section 8. The power to make bylaws shall be vested in the members of the Board of Trustees. Bylaws may be enacted, amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members of the Board of Trustees present: Provided, all members of the Board of Trustees have been notified in writing of the proposed changes at least thirty days prior to the meeting. Bylaws may be suspended by an affirmative vote of at least four-fifths (4/5) of the members of the Board of Trustees.

Section 9. In the event that this corporation ceases to exist or in the event that it ceases to operate in accordance with the purposes for which it is created, then all of the assets and property of said corporation shall be vested in the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 10. This Charter may be amended only by a vote of the majority of the members of the Board of Trustees of said corporation: Provided that such amendment shall not become effective until it has been approved by the Synod Council of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 11. To the fullest extent permitted under Chapter 55A of the General Statutes of North Carolina as it exists or may hereafter be amended, no person who is serving or who has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the corporation shall be personally liable for monetary damages for breach of any duty as a trustee. No amendment or repeal of this Section, nor adoption of any other amendment to this Charter inconsistent with this Section, shall eliminate or reduce the protection granted herein with respect to any matter that occurred prior to such amendment, repeal, or adoption.

Lenoir-Rhyne University Bylaws

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, August 26, 2022

Article I Authority

Pursuant to authority granted in the Charter of Lenoir-Rhyne University, Section 9, the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University adopts the following Bylaws for the government of itself and the University.

Article II Purpose

Section 1. In pursuit of the development of the whole person, Lenoir-Rhyne University seeks to liberate mind and spirit, clarify personal faith, foster physical wholeness, build a sense of community, and promote responsible leadership for service in the world.

As an institution of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the University holds the conviction that wholeness of personality, true vocation, and the most useful service to God and the world are best discerned from the perspective of Christian faith.

As a community of learning, the University provides programs of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing study committed to the liberal arts and sciences as a foundation for a wide variety of careers and as guidance for a meaningful life.

Section 2. There shall be such colleges and divisions of instruction as are consistent with the purpose of the institution and approved by the Board of Trustees. Among these is a seminary of the ELCA known as Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS).

Section 3. These Bylaws shall not preclude compliance with compatible standards and requirements of the accrediting agencies having jurisdiction for such standards.

Article III Seal

Section 1. The official seal of the University shall be:



Section 2. The official seal of the University shall be the official seal of the Corporation.

Section 3. The official seal of the University shall be affixed to all degrees and certificates which shall also bear the signatures of the President of the University, the Secretary of the Faculty Assembly, the Chairperson of the Board, and the Secretary of the Board.

Article IV Board of Trustees

Section 1. Functions

- a. Lenoir-Rhyne University is a corporation of the State of North Carolina and the Board of Trustees is its governing body. In the Board resides the ultimate authority to make decisions affecting the University as a whole or any of its parts. The Board's decisions are normally policy-related rather than administrative.
- b. The Board is responsible for the immediate and long-range welfare of the institution including, but not limited to, providing for its financial needs, its academic program and standards, and faculty and student status and governance. It encourages reasonable student and faculty voice in matters affecting their welfare and is the final arbiter of internal disputes involving the administration, the faculty and the students.
- c. The Board serves as the intermediary between society and the University and between the Church and the University, interpreting its mission, advocating support of its welfare, protecting the administration as much as possible from undue pressure from political, religious and other sources, and acting as an agent of constructive change.

Section 2. Powers

- a. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to manage the property and business of the Corporation, referred to in these Bylaws as Lenoir-Rhyne University or the "University," and to carry out any other functions which are granted or permitted by the State of North Carolina under the provisions of Chapter 55A of the North Carolina Non-profit Corporation Act and the Charter of Lenoir-Rhyne University or by these Bylaws, except insofar as such powers may be limited by law.
- b. These powers shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - (1) Elect or remove the Officers of the Board and the President and other administrative officers of the University in accordance with these Bylaws; however, the power to appoint or remove administrative officers,

but not Officers of the Board, should normally, in the discretion of the Board, be delegated to the President of the University;

(2) Confer degrees upon such persons as have satisfactorily completed the requirements for the degree upon recommendation of the President and the Faculty Assembly and confer honorary degrees and awards upon the recommendations of the Committee on Honors and Awards;

(3) Establish and review the educational programs of the University;

(4) Establish annually the budget of the University which shall be submitted to it upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Investment;

(5) Authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings;

(6) Authorize the sale and purchase of land, buildings or major equipment for the use of the University;

(7) Institute and promote major fund-raising efforts of the University;

(8) Authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the University;

(9) Authorize Officers or agents of the University to accept gifts for the University;

(10) Authorize the incurring of debts by the University and securing thereof by mortgage and pledge of real and personal property, tangible and intangible.

Article V

Membership of Board of Trustees

Section 1. The Board of Trustees consists of the persons ratified by the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in this article.

Section 2. Elections

- a. The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of at least 24 members elected to three-year rotating terms, plus the President of the University, the Chair of the Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, and the Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- b. The Board of Trustees shall submit for Synod ratification each year a list of names of all nominees for membership, a list which is sufficient to maintain the minimum size of the Board. At least four members of the full board will be rostered clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each of whom has served in the North Carolina Synod in the past or present or who is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne University or the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall be members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) or members of denominations recognized as full communion partners of the ELCA.
- c. Any vacancy on the Board of Trustees shall be ratified by the Synod Council of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, election being for the unexpired term.

Section 3. Each Trustee is eligible to serve for a total of three consecutive terms, if so selected by the above processes. A person who has completed three consecutive terms as a Trustee may be elected again after that person has been off the Board for at least one year.

Section 4. The terms of the Trustees begin June 1 or as soon as the Synod Council meets to ratify the new members.

Section 5. A member of the Board of Trustees may be removed from the Board before the end of the member's term only for cause, including failure to meet the requirements of election, failure to fulfill the duties of the appointment, and/or behavior that brings discredit to the university. A proposal to remove a member shall be brought to the Executive Committee which, if a majority of the Committee finds cause, shall bring the matter to the full Board for a vote at its next meeting. A majority vote of the Board shall be necessary to remove a member.

Article VI

Officers of the Board and Administrative Officers of the University

Section 1. Officers of the Board

- a. The Officers of the Board are the Officers of the Corporation. They shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Nominations Committee submits the candidates for officers for election by the Board of Trustees.
- b. The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for a term of three years. Election shall be by ballot if more than one nominee for the office. Election shall be held at the last regular meeting of the Board before the end of the fiscal year.
- c. All other officers shall be elected annually for terms of one year. Election shall be by ballot if there is more than one nominee for the office and shall be held at the last regular meeting in the fiscal year of the Board, except that interim vacancies may be filled by the Executive Committee.
- d. The Officers of the Board shall function as the legal representatives of the Board and the University.

Section 2. Administrative Officers of the University

- a. The administrative officers of the University shall be the President, the Provost of the University, the Vice President for Business and Finance and Treasurer, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Vice President for Mission, Engagement and Innovation, the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Vice President for Athletics.
Upon the recommendation of the President, and upon the approval of the Board, the role of Treasurer of the University may be designated to another position than the Vice President for Business and Finance. Duties and responsibilities of the position as set forth in these Bylaws shall remain unchanged and as stated, whether there be two positions or a combination.
- b. The President of the University shall be elected by the Board of Trustees from the active membership of the ELCA on nomination of a special committee appointed by the Chair. The initial term of office shall be six years subject to renewal for succeeding terms none of which shall exceed six years.

- c. At the inauguration, the President of the University shall make the following declaration: "I do solemnly promise that I will endeavor to elevate the Christian character and academic quality of this institution, and at all times to be faithful to the fundamental principles of the Lutheran church as taught in its Confessions."
- d. The performance of the President shall be evaluated under the direction of the Chair of the Board and the Executive Committee on an annual basis. Additional evaluations of the President's performance may be conducted at other times upon the request of either the Board of Trustees or the President.
- e. In the absence of specific instructions from the President or the Board to the contrary, the Provost shall be regarded as the University's chief administrator when the President is not available to exercise the usual responsibilities. Should the President be incapacitated by illness or otherwise rendered incapable of exercising the administrative role, the Provost shall immediately contact the Chair of the Board and assume necessary presidential prerogatives until the Chair or Executive Committee of the Board authorizes some other arrangement.
- f. All other administrative officers and regular teaching faculty of the University shall be appointed by the President for such terms as it may determine.
- g. The duties of the several administrative officers shall be those assigned by these Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, and by the President of the University. These duties shall be described in the Faculty Handbook and other appropriate documents. The President shall have full authority in unusual circumstances to amend or change any assignment of duty when the President considers such a change to be in the best interest of the University. Any such change shall be reported by the President promptly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- h. The Faculty Handbook is a compilation of official policy for administrators and members of the faculty. Should there appear to be a conflict between materials in the Handbook and the Bylaws of the University or resolutions of the Board of Trustees, the Bylaws and Board resolutions shall take precedence. Responsibilities of the faculty and administrative officers shall be set forth in the Faculty Handbook which shall also include official actions of the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees which have continuing significance.
- i. The administrative officers shall be under the supervision of the President.

Article VII

Powers and Duties of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Chair of the Board is the Chair of the Corporation. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, shall have a right to vote on all questions, shall appoint to all committees the members whose elections are not otherwise provided for, and shall have such other powers and duties as the Board from time to time may prescribe. The Chair shall be a member and chair of the Executive Committee, a member of the Committee on Finance and Investment, a member of the Subcommittee on Investments, and a member of the Committee on Promotion and Development; and the Chair shall be ex officio member of all the other committees of the Board with voice but without power to vote. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the office of the Chair.

Article VIII

Powers and Duties of the President of the University

Section 1. The President of the University is a member of the Board of Trustees. The President is the chief executive officer of the University and the official adviser to and agent of the Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee. The President shall, as educational and administrative head of the University, exercise a general superintendence over all the affairs of the institution, and bring such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed to meet its policy-making responsibilities. The President shall have the power on behalf of the Board to perform acts to make effective the actions of the Board or its Executive Committee. The President shall be the primary medium of communication between the Board and the Administration, the Board and the Faculty, and the Board and the Students. The President shall be a member of the Executive Committee, of the Committee on Finance and Investment, of the Subcommittee on Investments, of the Committee on Honors and Awards and shall be ex officio member of all other committees of the Board with voice but without power to vote.

Section 2. Should any administrative officer (other than the President) or member of the faculty be incapacitated or otherwise prevented from fulfilling official responsibilities, the President is authorized to arrange for the temporary filling of the position, provided the President shall report such interim appointments to the Board or its Executive Committee.

Section 3. The academic deans of the colleges and other academic leadership positions shall be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the President and appropriate constituencies.

Article IX

Powers and Duties of the Secretary

Section 1. The Secretary of the Board is the Secretary of the Corporation. The Secretary shall give proper notice of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall keep or cause to be kept an accurate record of all meetings of the Board, including in such minutes all reports of committees, treasurer's reports, audit reports and all other official communications. The Secretary shall furnish each member of the Board with a copy of all Board minutes. The Secretary shall be a member and the secretary of the Executive Committee. Any of the duties or powers of the Secretary may be performed by an Assistant Secretary who shall be responsible to and report to the Secretary.

Section 2. The Secretary shall attest to and affix the University seal to such documents as required in the business of the University, including but not limited to deeds, bonds, mortgages, agreements, contracts, diplomas, evidences of the award of degrees, transcripts, abstracts of resolutions, certificates, minutes and bylaws issued pursuant to the authority of the University.

Section 3. The Secretary and all Standing Committees shall keep minutes of all meetings and such minutes shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board and permanently filed and archived, either on campus, in the case of paper records, or in accordance with the University's information technology policies, in the case of electronic records.

Article X

Powers and Duties of the Treasurers

Section 1. The Treasurer of the Board shall be the custodian of all trust and endowment funds of the University and of the Board; however, the Board, upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Investment, may contract for the custody and investment of such funds, as are designated by contract, by a duly chartered bank or trust company or an investment management organization licensed and authorized by law to carry on such business. The Treasurer of the Board shall be bonded. The Treasurer of the Board shall be responsible for an

accurate record of all endowment or trust funds in his/her custody or control. The Treasurer of the Board shall be a member of the Executive Committee, the Committee on Finance and Investment and of the Subcommittee on Investments.

Section 2. The Treasurer of the University shall be the custodian of the current funds, the building funds, and all other funds not in the custody of the Treasurer of the Board. The Treasurer of the University shall be bonded. The Treasurer of the University shall keep or cause to be kept full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements and obey all lawful orders of the Trustees, the President of the University, the Committee on Finance and Investment, and the Committee on Audit respecting funds, property, and accounts of the University. The Treasurer of the University shall be responsible for the preparation of any corporate financial reports as may be required by departments of government, including but not limited to the State of North Carolina. The Treasurer of the University shall, in the name of the University, give receipts for monies or property as shall be required, deposit funds in accordance with resolution and direction of the Committee on Finance and Investment or the Board of Trustees, and safeguard the money of the University. The Treasurer of the University shall not pay out any money unless by order of the Board of Trustees or under such regulations or with such approval as the Committee on Finance and Investment may prescribe. The Treasurer of the University shall cooperate with any independent Certified Public Accountant retained by the Board of Trustees for the purpose of conducting audits of the accounts of the University.

Section 3. All Treasurers shall make a full report on all securities, funds, and properties in their custody or control at each annual meeting of the Board and at such other times as required by the Board.

Article XI Meetings

Section 1. Three regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held annually in the City of Hickory, North Carolina, or at such other place deemed expedient for the good of the University. At least one meeting each academic year will be held in Hickory, NC. The time and place of these meetings shall be decided by the Board and written notice shall be given each trustee at least two weeks in advance of each regular meeting.

Section 2. The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees during the fall semester (November/December) shall be the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Board, and shall be called by the Chair upon written request of at least seven members of the Board. A written notice shall be given each trustee at least five calendar days in advance of a special meeting and only the matters included in this notice shall be considered at the meeting.

Section 4. The Board may permit any or all Trustees to participate in a regular or special meeting by, or conduct the meeting through the use of, any means of communication by which all Trustees participating may simultaneously hear and be heard by each other during the meeting. A Trustee participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

Section 5. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Trustees or by any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if the action is taken by all members of the Board or committee, as the case may be. Such action shall be evidenced by one or more written consents setting forth the action so taken and signed by all members of the Board or of a committee, as the case may be, and filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board or the Committee. Any such written consent may be signed electronically and may be transmitted by facsimile, electronic mail or other method.

Section 6. Meetings of the Board of Trustees, except for executive sessions, may be attended by the Chair of the Faculty Assembly, the President of the Student Government Association, the President of the Alumni Association, the Chair of the Board of Visitors, the President of the Bears Club Council, and the Chair of the Business Council. Their attendance shall be with voice but without vote. They shall report regularly to their respective organizations on actions taken at the Board of Trustees meetings.

Section 7. Any employee of the University shall attend a meeting of the Board when requested by the President or the Chair of the Board.

Section 8. A majority of the Trustees shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the act of a majority of the Trustees present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Board shall be the act of the Board of Trustees, except as may be provided by statute or by the articles of incorporation, or by these Bylaws.

Article XII Rules of Order and Order of Business

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, as modified by these Bylaws, shall be observed in conducting the business of the Board and the Corporation. In all matters of parliamentary procedure not covered by these Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

Section 2. The Board may adopt a stated Order of Business to be used at all its regular meetings.

Section 3. Should an Order of Business be adopted under Section 2 of this article, said Order of Business shall be subject to change by a majority of the Trustees at any meeting at which there is a quorum.

Article XIII Committees

Section 1. The Chair of the Board shall annually recommend to the Board the Trustee members and chairs of all committees except the Executive Committee; the Board shall elect the members of the committees specified in the bylaws. The Chair will also present to the Board for the purpose of election the names of individuals proposed for the Advisory Council of LTSS.

Section 2. The terms of all committees except the Executive Committee shall be one year.

Section 3. Executive Committee

- a.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the following members of the Board of Trustees: the Chair, who shall be Chair of the Committee; the Vice Chair; the Secretary, who shall be the Secretary of the Committee; the Assistant Secretary; the Treasurer of the Board; the President; and three other members, elected by the Board for terms of three years, so that one term expires each year. Should an elective member of the Committee be chosen as an officer of the Board, another shall be elected to fill out the unexpired term on the Executive Committee.
- b.** The Executive Committee shall act for and on behalf of the Board in the interim between meetings and shall have the authority and responsibility authorized by the laws of North Carolina for the Executive Committee of a corporation. It shall execute the orders of the Board and perform all matters referred to it and have charge of the welfare of the University. It shall keep formal minutes of all meetings. The Secretary shall furnish all

members of the Board with a copy of all its minutes and file a copy in the permanent minute record of the Board. At each and every regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, the proceedings and actions taken by the Executive Committee since the last meeting of the Board shall be reported to the Board.

Section 4. Committee on Finance and Investment

- a. The Committee on Finance and Investment shall consist of the Chair of the Board, the Treasurer of the Board, the President of the University, two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, and four to six trustees. The Chair of the Board shall appoint the Chair of the Committee.
- b. The Committee on Finance and Investment shall have supervision of budget preparation and the investments of the Board and of the University. It shall formulate rules and regulations for the approval of the Board to guide the Treasurer and the Subcommittee on Investments in the management of the investments of the Board and the University. The Committee shall keep formal records of all its meetings and file a copy with the Secretary of the Board.
- c. The Committee on Finance & Investment shall select one or more investment managers to manage the University's endowment. The Committee shall review the performance of managers at least annually and make changes in managers as the Committee deems necessary.
- d. In order to exercise closer supervision of its areas of responsibilities, the Committee on Finance and Investment may appoint subcommittees on investment and budget. Chairs of subcommittees shall be Trustees. A Subcommittee on Investments shall include the Chair of the Committee on Finance and Investment, the Treasurer of the Board, and the President of the University.
- e. A Subcommittee on Investments shall have authority and power to buy, sell and exchange investments and to approve or disapprove investments or sales of investments in hands of managing agents, within the types and limits of investments approved by the Board. All actions of the Subcommittee shall have the affirmative vote of at least four of its members. Action of the Subcommittee shall be final but shall be reported to the Board through the Committee on Finance and Investment, giving a detailed list of all purchases or sales of investments.
- f. A Subcommittee on Budget shall study the program of the University, the sources of revenue, and, in cooperation with the President of the University, present through the Committee on Finance and Investment an annual current operating budget to the Board for approval. All items necessary for the efficient operation of the University shall be included in the budget. This Subcommittee shall review annually the requirements of the University for debt service and the adequacy of the provisions to meet such requirements, and shall report through the Committee on Finance and Investment to the Board any recommendations for adjustments.

Section 5. Audit Committee

- a. The Audit Committee shall be composed of seven trustees. The Chair of the Audit Committee shall be the Chair of the Committee on Finance and Investment or another appropriate Board member as identified by the Chair of the Board. Two additional trustees serving on the Committee on Finance and Investment will be appointed and four trustees not serving on the Committee on Finance and Investment will be appointed.
- b. The purpose of the Audit Committee is to assist the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities for the financial and tax reporting process, the system of internal control, the audit process, and the University's process for monitoring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- c. The Audit Committee is empowered to recommend nomination of external auditors for appointment by the

Board of Trustees; oversee and evaluate the work of any public accounting firm employed by the University, as well as pre-approve of all audit and non-audit services and proposed fee arrangements; seek any information it requires from employees, all of whom are directed to cooperate with the committee's requests, or external parties; conduct or authorize investigations into any matters within its scope of responsibility; retain independent counsel, accountants, or others to advise the Committee or assist in the conduct of any investigation.

- d. The Committee will meet at least three times a year, with authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require. All committee members are expected to make a diligent effort to attend each meeting. The committee will invite members of management, auditors, or others to attend meetings and provide pertinent information, as necessary. It will hold private meetings with auditors (see below) and executive sessions as needed.
- e. Staff support to the Audit Committee will be provided by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Controller of the University.

Section 6. Committee on Promotion and Development

- a. The Committee on Promotion and Development shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, four members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors in consultation with the Chair of the Committee on Promotion and Development, the Chair of the Business Council Board of Directors, and at least eight trustees including the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- b. The Committee, in consultation with the President, shall formulate and adopt policies and review operations which have to do with the general development and expansion of the University, long-range planning and public relations, and cultivating prospective givers and benefactors of the University. The Committee may create subcommittees relating to its area of responsibility. The Committee shall provide liaison between the Board of Trustees and the Board of Visitors.

Section 7. Committee on Instruction and Student Life

- a. The Committee on Instruction and Student Life shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, two students appointed by the President of the Student Government Association, two members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors, and at least seven Trustees.
- b. The Committee on Instruction and Student Life shall confer at least annually with the Administration concerning matters dealing with the instructional staff, curriculum, admissions, and other items pertaining to the educational function of the University. The Committee shall confer at least annually with the Administration concerning matters related to the intercollegiate program. The Committee shall also have supervision of the physical, social, and spiritual welfare of the student body. Disciplinary matters which are referred to the Board shall be submitted to this Committee for investigation and report. The Committee shall conduct special studies in these areas as need arises and report to the Board with recommendations.
- c. The Committee is also responsible for keeping the Board informed concerning the quality of the faculty, the educational program, the library, and other learning resources and facilities. Changes resulting in the addition or elimination of a major, department, or school of instruction shall be reported by it to the Board for action.

- f. The Committee may, at the discretion of the Chair of the Board, be divided into subcommittees with appointed chairs. The subcommittees may make reports and recommendations back to the Committee on Instruction and Student Life for its consideration and action.

Section 8. Committee on Buildings and Grounds

- a. The Committee on Buildings and Grounds shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, two members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors, and at least five trustees.
- b. The Committee shall exercise general supervision over the care and control of all buildings, the grounds and equipment of the University. It shall make periodic inspections of all buildings, grounds, and equipment and report to the Board the condition thereof together with recommendations for improvements thereto.
- c. The Committee, in consultation with the Chair of the Board, the President of the University, and the Vice President for Administration and Finance shall see that all buildings, equipment and hazards are adequately covered by insurance.
- d. The Committee, in consultation with the Administration and the Chair of the Board, shall investigate and determine the need for new buildings, facilities, and equipment, and the need for renovation and modernization of all buildings for other uses, and report to the Board. Its recommendation of capital budgets relating to buildings and grounds shall be forwarded to the Committee on Finance and Investment.
- e. Upon authorization of a new or renovated building, facility, or equipment, this Committee may:
 - (1) Act as Agent of the Board in the preliminary preparation of plans and specifications and submit same to the Board along with estimated costs;
 - (2) Proceed, upon approval of the preliminary plans by the Board, to have final plans and specifications prepared and arrange for same to be submitted to qualified contractors for bids;
 - (3) Receive all such bids, review same and make recommendations to the Board on the award of the contracts. All building contracts shall be awarded by the Board;
 - (4) Serve, upon the award of a contract, as the representative of the Board with authority to decide all matters and see that construction is in conformity with the plans and specifications. Final payment on any contract shall not be made except upon the approval of this Committee.

Section 9. Committee on Nominations

- a. The Committee on Nominations shall be composed of four trustees.
- b. The Committee on Nominations shall submit a list of nominees for all positions within the Board to be filled by Board election. The Committee shall also submit nominees for Board membership to be proposed to the Synod. Such nominations shall be given to all members of the Board in advance of the meeting when practical.

Section 10. Committee on Honors and Awards

- a. The Committee on Honors and Awards shall be composed of three members of the Board of Trustees (including the Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), three faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, and the President of the University.

- b. Honorary degrees, Trustee Awards and other awards may be conferred upon such persons as shall be nominated by a majority vote of the Committee on Honors and Awards, and approved by the affirmative vote, by ballot, of three-fourths of the members of the Board of Trustees present at a regular meeting of the Board.

Section 11. Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS).

The Advisory Council of LTSS shall be an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees with guidelines and operating procedures approved by the Board of Trustees. The function of the LTSS Advisory Council will be to provide advice and guidance to the Board regarding the operations of the seminary, as well as to serve as a liaison between Lenoir-Rhyne and the church. The members of the Advisory Council will be elected by the Board of Trustees. The membership of the Advisory Council shall meet the following requirements:

- a. At least one-fifth will be nominated by the Church Council of the ELCA upon consultation with the Advisory Council in coordination with the Board of Trustees.
- b. The **Vice President of Mission, Engagement, and Innovation** ~~President~~ of Lenoir-Rhyne and the Rector and Dean of LTSS shall be ex officio members of the Advisory Council with full voting privileges.
- c. Two members will be nominated by the Bishops from the primary supporting Synods of Region 9 from among their number. The primary supporting Synods include Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Southeastern and Florida-Bahamas.
- d. The President of the University, after consulting with the LTSS Advisory Council, shall submit one member of the Advisory Council as the proposed Chair to the ELCA Church Council for official nomination, with subsequent election by the university's Board of Trustees.
- e. Additional members will be nominated by the Advisory Council in coordination with the Board of Trustees and in consultation with the primary supporting Synods of Region 9 to represent these Synods.

Section 12. Special committees appointed by the Chair shall serve for terms designated in the appointment.

Section 13. Where the interests of the University might be better served, non-Board members may be appointed to committees or subcommittees of the Board at the discretion of the Chair of the Board, provided that a majority of the committee or subcommittee shall be Board members, one of whom shall serve as Chair. The Executive Committee and any other committee of the Board of Trustees exercising Board-delegated authority shall be comprised exclusively of members of the Board of Trustees.

Section 14. The minutes of each committee meeting (with the exception of the minutes of the Executive Committee and the Committee on Honors and Awards which require confidentiality) shall be sent to all trustees. Minutes shall always be distributed prior to the next meeting of the Board.

**Article XIV
Conflicts of Interest**

All Trustees shall comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy of the University. All Trustees shall disclose to the Board, consistent with the Conflict of Interest Policy, any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practicable time and at a minimum, at least once per calendar year. No Trustee shall vote on any matter, under consideration at a Board or committee meeting, in which such Trustee has a conflict of interest. The minutes of that meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made and that the Trustee having a conflict of interest abstained from voting. Any Trustee who is

uncertain whether he/she has a conflict of interest in any matter may request the Board to determine whether a conflict of interest exists, and the Board shall resolve the question by a majority vote.

Article XV Faculty

Section 1. The duties of the Faculty shall be those prescribed in these Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, notices of appointment, the Faculty Handbook, and the Faculty Constitution, to the extent Faculty Constitution does not conflict with the Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, notices of appointment or the Faculty Handbook.

Section 2. The Faculty shall be under the supervision of the President, or the President's designee.

Section 3. The Board of Trustees recognizes the Faculty Assembly as the official representative body of the instructional staff of the University. To the extent its provisions do not conflict with these Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, the Faculty Handbook or other directives approved by the Board or its designees, the Faculty Constitution shall govern the Faculty Assembly. The Board must approve changes to the Faculty Handbook and the Faculty Constitution.

Section 4. The Faculty Assembly shall consist of the President of the University, the Provost and such other persons as shall be named in the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly.

Section 5. The Faculty Assembly shall develop, implement, coordinate, and evaluate the educational programs of the institution according to the provisions of these Bylaws and the regulations of the Board of Trustees.

Section 6. The University recognizes academic freedom as a right and responsibility of its faculty. No restrictions are imposed upon responsible investigation and discussion in the pursuit of truth in and outside of the classroom. The University encourages freedom and dedication in the search for truth.

Section 7. The Board awards tenure to professors, associate professors, and assistant professors on the basis of Board-approved guidelines published in the Faculty Handbook. The Board may terminate faculty appointments on the basis of Board-approved guidelines in the same document.

Section 8. Members of the Faculty Assembly shall adhere to the pension and retirement plans as provided by the University.

Section 9. No member of the faculty shall be dismissed from the faculty without written notice by registered mail, return receipt requested. Such notice shall, in the case of the tenured faculty members, set forth the reason or reasons for the dismissal. All such notices shall notify the recipient of his/her right to a hearing by the Faculty Hearing Committee, as described in the Faculty Handbook, thence to a hearing by the Trustees' Committee on Instruction and Student Life, and finally a hearing before a Board of Review if so requested. A Faculty member wishing to request a hearing before a board of review regarding a negative decision on tenure must file a written appeal to the Chair of the Committee on Instruction & Student Life within thirty (30) days of notification of the negative decision.

Section 10. Board of Review

The Board of Review shall consist of three members of the Board of Trustees, elected by its Executive Committee, and two members (with voting privileges) of the Faculty Assembly elected by its Executive Committee. The five members of the Board of Review thus elected shall select by majority vote a presiding officer from among the

Trustee representatives. The Board of Review shall work with the University attorney on all processes of the review. No member of the Board of Review shall be (1) a principal involved in the dispute, (2) a member of the Board of Trustees' Committee on Instruction and Student Life, or (3) a member of the Faculty Assembly's Development and Status Committee. Any faculty member or administrative officer who is a principal or witness in the dispute must be present and offer testimony at the hearing(s) if so requested by the Board of Review. The five elected members of the Board of Review shall make every effort to be objective and review only facts of the case.

- a. At the hearing the parties to the dispute shall have the right to be present and to be heard, to be represented by counsel, at their expense, and to produce through witnesses any competent testimony or documentary evidence relevant to the issue of whether grounds for dismissal exist.
- b. The presiding officer shall have the right to vote and rule on the admissibility of evidence in communication with the University's attorney following the Rules of Evidence prevailing in the State of North Carolina.
- c. A copy of the transcript of the hearing shall be furnished to the respective parties.
- d. The Board of Review may defer its decisions on the merits of the dismissal, but shall notify in writing the dismissed faculty member and the Administration of its decision and the reasons therefore.

Article XVI Students

Section 1. The Board of Trustees, by approving the Constitution of the Student Government Association, recognizes it as the official representative body of students of the University.

Section 2. This Institution shall be open to all students who meet the entrance requirements. They shall submit to the regulations of the Institution, the Faculty Assembly, and the Board.

Article XVII Discipline

The constitutions of the Faculty Assembly and the Student Government Association shall provide the normal channels for the disciplining of the faculty members and students, respectively. Nevertheless, the Board retains the power to remove or depose any individual as the welfare of the Institution may demand. Should the Board contemplate such action, the defendant shall have the right to be heard in his/her own behalf. The responsibility for discipline cases may be delegated by the Board to one of its standing committees. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present shall be necessary to convict in a case of discipline.

Article XVIII Property

Section 1. The Corporation shall have power to take, hold, use, improve, lease, buy or sell, and mortgage real and personal property without limitation in value or quantity, within the State of North Carolina or elsewhere, and shall enjoy all the rights and powers authorized and allowed to non-profit corporations under the laws of the State of North Carolina, as may be necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Corporation.

Section 2. The funds of the Board and the University shall be accounted for by those procedures and methods used by accounting agencies and promulgated by the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Section 3. A trust fund in any of these groupings shall be held for the purpose specified in the trust instrument, subject to the laws of North Carolina and the regulations of the Board.

Section 4. The Board shall exercise supervision over the investment of all trust and endowment funds and shall have control of all other funds of the University. No investment of any fund shall be made until after the type of investment has been approved by the Board.

Section 5. The Board shall designate approved types of investments and the percentage of each type permitted for the guidance of the Treasurer, the Committee on Finance and Investment, and the bank or trust company that may have custody of funds of the University. This designation shall be reviewed annually by the Board.

Section 6. Securities held by a managing agent may be purchased, sold, transferred or exchanged by the said bank or trust company within the limits set forth in the contract between the University and the managing agent; provided, all such purchases, sales or exchanges shall be within percentage and type of investments approved by the Board.

Section 7. Endowment or Trust Funds

- a. Endowment or trust funds shall not be expended or hypothecated for current expenses or for any purposes other than those of the endowment or the trust.
- b. Capital gains (appreciation in value) may be considered income to the extent of the spending rule, provided the investment producing the capital gains shall have been actually sold prior to the transfer of such gains to the income account. No anticipated capital gains shall be considered income.

Section 8. No trust or endowment funds shall be loaned to anyone officially connected with the University or to a member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 9. All securities not in the custody of a bank or trust company shall be kept in a safety deposit vault approved by the Board.

Section 10. Securities owned by the University, the certificates for which are in the safety deposit vault of the University, shall be removed from the safety deposit vault only upon the joint signatures of two of the following: Chair of the Board, Treasurer of the Board, President of the University, and Treasurer of the University. When securities are withdrawn or deposited, all of these four officials who are not present shall immediately receive a written notice of such withdrawal or deposit signed by the officers who were present.

Section 11. All depositories shall be designated annually by the Board.

Section 12. All custodians of properties, trust funds, endowment funds, or current funds shall be bonded in a stock surety company admitted to do business in North Carolina, provided, however, that the Board may waive this requirement for surety bond when a duly chartered bank or trust company is contractual custodian of such funds. The premiums on said bonds shall be paid by the University.

Section 13. All funds of the Board and the University shall be audited at least annually by a Certified Public Accountant appointed by the Board. Such audits shall include an actual check of all securities in all trust, endowment, and other funds in custody of the Board or its managing agent.

Section 14. The physical properties of the University shall be in the custody of the President and the Vice President for Administration and Finance who shall be responsible for their proper care and maintenance. Major additions to existing buildings, or major structural alterations thereto, shall be made only upon the approval of the Board and when adequate funds are available for that purpose.

Article XIX Indemnification

Each Trustee and each Officer of the University shall be indemnified by it against all expenses actually and necessarily incurred by such Trustee or Officer in connection with the defense of any action, suit, or proceeding to which the Trustee or Officer has been made a party by reason of being or having been such Trustee or Officer except in relation to matters as to which such Trustee or Officer shall be adjudicated in such action, suit, or proceeding to be liable for gross negligence or willful misconduct in the performance of duty.

Article XX Discrimination Prohibited

Section 1. In administering its affairs, the University shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or gender.

Section 2. Employment will not be denied to administrators or faculty solely on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or gender. The primary test of employment shall be professional competence and support of the purpose and goals of the University. Before acceptance of employment, each person shall acknowledge full understanding and acceptance of the obligations engendered by the relationship of the University to the Lutheran confessional traditions of Christianity, and agree that neither his/her religious integrity and academic prerogatives nor the integrity of the University in this Church relationship and Christian commitment will be compromised by his/her employment.

Article XXI Amendment and Review of Bylaws

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided that written notice of the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been given to all the Trustees at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date the vote is taken. Any amendment which affects the authority or integrity of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall not become effective until the amendment has been approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 2. At least once every two years the Executive Committee shall review these Bylaws and suggest any necessary or desirable changes to the Board of Trustees.

Governance, Infrastructure, and Policy Committee

Proposed amendments to the bylaws of United Lutheran Seminary

May 10, 2022

Rationale for amendments

Several considerations lead to the recommendations for amendment to the bylaws. Generally stated, they include

- Removing gender-specific terms (pronouns), which leads in certain cases to rephrasing
- Adding clarifying language
- Further codifying Shared Governance
- Removing language related to SRHPF

In the case of the latter, the committee felt it appropriate to remove the entire second paragraph in Chapter 3 as unnecessarily specific.

BYLAWS of UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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Chapter 1 - Name, Seal, and Location

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

Chapter 2 - Confessional Basis

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

Chapter 3 - Purpose

- 3.01. Purpose: The purpose of this Seminary is and shall be to educate and train faithful, capable and creative persons for public leadership in Christ's Church to enable the Church to fulfill its mission, including preparing persons for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, Word and Service and other forms of ministry in the ELCA and other Christian traditions. Our mission includes educating and training individuals to exercise leadership in the Church and world, offering lifelong learning opportunities, and equipping the whole people of God to live their faith in their various and many Christian callings in the world.

Chapter 4 - The Board of Trustees

- 4.01. Composition; Election; Terms: The Board of Trustees, shall consist of not fewer than fourteen (14) and not more than twenty-five (25) natural persons. At least one-fifth (20%) of the Trustees shall be nominated, in consultation with the Seminary, by the appropriate unit of the Churchwide Organization of the ELCA, and shall be elected by the Church Council of the ELCA. Two (2) Trustees shall be elected by the synodical bishops of Regions 7 and 8 from among their own number. The remainder of the Trustees shall be

elected by the Synod Councils of synods comprising Regions 7 and 8 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in consultation with the Seminary. Distribution of Trustees among the synods shall be determined from time to time by the Board in consultation with the Synod Bishops. The President of the Seminary will serve with the Board as an ex officio non-voting participant.

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

The Board of Trustees shall establish such other rules and procedures as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Bylaw (4.01) and any rules or guidelines established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Except for the President, no Trustee will receive remuneration beyond reasonable reimbursement for costs incidental to attendance at meetings or approved events as determined by policy adopted by the Board.

4.02. Powers: The business and affairs of the Seminary shall be managed under the direction of the Board. The powers of the Seminary shall be exercised by, or under the authority of, the Board except as otherwise provided by statute, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws. Without limiting the foregoing, the Board shall provide for the governance of the Seminary in the following ways:

- a. By electing, and evaluating the performance of, the President and, if necessary, removing the President from office in accordance with procedures adopted by the Board.
- b. By appointing, upon recommendation of the President and the appropriate Standing Committee, persons to the Faculty, approving educational programs and major curricular modifications, ensuring that the academic standards of the Seminary and the continuing accreditation by the appropriate accrediting agencies are maintained, and seeking to provide and protect an atmosphere of free academic inquiry.
- c. By granting to qualified students, upon recommendation of the Faculty, such degrees, certificates, honors, and awards as shall be authorized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- d. By taking responsibility for the Seminary's financial welfare through providing for the acquisition and expenditure of necessary capital and operating funds, supervising the Seminary's investments and financial affairs, approving the annual appointment of an auditor and receiving the audit report, exercising oversight of the Seminary's physical assets, and representing the needs of the Seminary to the supporting synods.
- e. By approving general policies essential to the Seminary's operation – including approval of the Faculty and Trustee Handbooks, review of Student and Employee

Handbooks, and approval of such Policies and Procedures as are deemed by the Board to be necessary and appropriate.

4.03. Meetings:

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

The fall semester meeting shall be the annual meeting, and all officers, except the President, shall at that time be elected for a term of two years.

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

4.04. Vacancies; Resignations; Removals:

- a. Vacancies. The entity which elected a Trustee who resigns, dies or is removed shall fill the vacant position for the remainder of the term as expeditiously as possible. Such service in an unexpired term will not be counted as a full term for the purpose of the three-term limit.
- b. Removal. Any Trustee may be removed from office for cause at any meeting of the Board by a majority vote of Trustees then in office. Additionally, any Trustee may

be removed from office by the group appointing or electing the Trustee to office, with or without assigning any cause. If a Trustee is removed, the resulting vacancy shall be filled by the entity which elected the person who was removed.

- c. Resignation. Any Trustee may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Secretary and Chairperson of the Seminary. The resignation shall be effective upon receipt or at such subsequent time as may be specified in the notice of resignation.

Chapter 5 – Officers

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

- 5.06. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible to the President and the Board for all monies, securities, deeds, and mortgages which are assets of the Seminary and which are to be maintained as such, either in perpetuity or for a period extending beyond the normal fiscal year of the Seminary. The Treasurer shall order the deposits and investments of the Seminary. The Treasurer shall make a report on the condition of the assets of the Seminary at each regular meeting of the Board. An annual report shall be properly audited. Securities in the Treasurer's possession shall be examined in such manner as the Board or the Executive Committee may from time to time require. The Treasurer shall give security for the faithful performance of duties as the Board may determine.

Chapter 6 – Committees

- 6.01. Executive Committee: There shall be an Executive Committee which shall consist of the officers together with the chairpersons of all Standing Committees, plus one of the Trustee Bishops (who shall be designated by the committee responsible for governance to serve on the Executive Committee for such term as the committee shall determine). An officer who is not a Trustee shall have voice but no vote at Executive Committee meetings. Subject to the limitations of section 6.06 hereof, the Executive Committee shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Board between meetings of the Board, except that the Committee shall not have the power to revoke or rescind any prior action of the Board. The Executive Committee shall meet whenever necessary to carry on effectively its responsibilities. The Executive Committee may receive reports at its meetings from other Committees and may act upon any recommendations of such Committees. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings shall be distributed to Trustees. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to review by the Board.
- 6.02. Standing Committees: The Board shall establish committees as deemed necessary to fulfill its responsibilities. Such committees shall be listed with their duties in in the Trustees Handbook. Standing committees will have responsibility for academic affairs, financial, governance, and student affairs.
- 6.03. Ex Officio Members: The Board Chairperson and President shall be ex officio members of all Committees of the Board.
- 6.04. Membership: Each Committee of the Board, other than the Executive Committee, shall consist of at least three Trustees appointed by the chairperson of the Board in consultation with the President. Normally, Committees of the Board will include advisory members (e.g., Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, etc.) as deemed necessary to accomplish the charges of the committee. Advisory members shall be appointed by the Board chairperson or, in the case of Faculty, by a process specified in the Faculty Handbook, in consultation with the President and the chairperson of the committee. Such advisory members will have voice only.
- 6.05. Terms of service: Committee appointments shall be announced to the Board of Trustees for its review and comment. The term of each committee member shall commence immediately upon appointment and will be co-terminus with their term as Trustee.

- 6.05. Quorum: A quorum for each Committee shall be a majority of its members, exclusive of the Board Chairperson and the President.
- 6.06. Limitation on Committees: No committee, including the Executive Committee, shall have any power or authority as to the following:
- a. The filling of vacancies on the Board;
 - b. The adoption, amendment or repeal of the Bylaws;
 - c. The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board; or
 - d. Action on matters committed by the Bylaws or by resolution of the Board to another committee of the Board.

Chapter 7 - The President

- 7.01. Election: The Board, after consultation with the Faculty, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, and the appropriate unit of the Churchwide Organization of the ELCA, shall elect a President.
- 7.02. Duties: In addition to the duties noted below and in Section 5 with respect to the office of the President as the chief executive officer of the Seminary, the President shall be Chairperson of the Faculty.
- It shall be the duty of the President to administer the policies established by the Board, to exercise general supervision over the academic, fiscal, and other affairs of the Seminary, to preside at all meetings of the Faculty, to secure the enforcement of such rules as the Board or the Faculty may adopt for the governance of the Seminary, to have general oversight of the internal management of the institution, and to represent the Seminary in its relations with the institutions of learning and with other interests beneficial to the life and growth of the Seminary. As the President determines is appropriate, a portion of these duties may be delegated by the President to appropriate academic or administrative officers. The President shall not be required to teach but may do so when in the judgment of the Faculty and the President it is in the best interest of the Seminary so to do.
- 7.03. Committees: The President shall be an ex officio member (with voice and vote) of each committee of the Faculty except when the President shall designate an appropriate academic or administrative officer in his or her place. Such designee shall have voice without vote.
- 7.04. Other Staff: The President may from time to time appoint such other staff as deemed necessary for the administration of the Seminary, and shall fix their duties.
- 7.05. Evaluation: The performance of the President shall be evaluated on an ongoing and regular basis..

Chapter 8 - The Faculty

- 8.01. Composition: The Faculty of the Seminary shall consist of the President, the Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, and Instructors. The Faculty shall also include such other persons as the Board may determine. Duties and privileges of the Faculty shall be specified in the Faculty Handbook, which shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees in

collaboration with the Faculty through a process defined in the Handbook. The Faculty Handbook will specify the role of Faculty in the shared governance of the Seminary.

- 8.02. Dean: The Board may elect a Dean who shall have been nominated by the President in consultation with the Faculty.

Chapter 9- Inclusiveness and Non-Discrimination

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

Chapter 10 - Conflict of Interest

- 10.01. Policy Defined: A Trustee shall be considered to have a conflict of interest if:

- I. such Trustee has existing or potential financial or other interests which impair or might reasonably appear to impair such Trustee's independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of his or her responsibilities to the Seminary; or
- II. such Trustee is aware that a member of his/her family (which for the purposes of this Chapter shall mean a spouse, parents, siblings, children and any other relative if the relative resides in the same household as the Trustee), or any organization in which such Trustee (or a member of his/her family) is an officer, director, employee, member, partner, trustee or controlling director, has such existing or potential financial or other interest.

- 10.02. Disclosure: Each Trustee shall disclose to the Board of Trustees any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practical time. A Trustee shall neither vote nor participate in any Board or committee discussion on any matter, under consideration at a Board or Committee meeting, in which such Trustee has a conflict of interest. The minutes of such meetings shall reflect that a disclosure was made and that the Trustee having a conflict of interest abstained from voting. Any Trustee who is uncertain whether a conflict of interest may exist in any matter may request the Board or Committee to resolve the question by a majority of those voting.

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

Chapter 11 - Indemnification

- 11.01. Scope of Indemnity: The Corporation shall indemnify any Trustee or Officer and may indemnify any employee or agent of the Seminary who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary, or while a Trustee or Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary, is or was serving at the request of the Seminary as a Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of another organization or another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise including an employee benefit plan or is or was an administrator, trustee or other fiduciary of one or more of such employee benefit plans of the Seminary or another organization as may or have been in effect, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding, whether or not the indemnified liability arises or arose from any threatened, pending or completed action by or in the right of the Seminary, to the extent that such person is not insured or otherwise indemnified and the power so to indemnify has been or continues to be granted by statute, and is not otherwise prohibited by applicable law.
- 11.02. Advance of Expenses: The Seminary may pay expenses incurred by an Officer or Trustee and may pay expenses incurred by any employee or agent of the Seminary in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Trustee, Officer, employee or agent of the Seminary to repay such amount if it shall ultimately be determined that such person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Seminary.
- 11.03. Procedure for Determining Permissibility: To determine whether any indemnification or advance of expenses under this Chapter 11 is permissible, the Board by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of Trustees not parties to such action, suit or proceeding may, and on request of any person seeking indemnification or advance of expenses shall be required to determine in each case whether the applicable standards in any applicable statute have been met, or such determination shall be made by independent legal counsel if such quorum is not obtainable, or, even if obtainable, a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested Trustees so directs, provided that if there has been a change in control of the Seminary between (i) the time of the action or the failure to act given rise to the claim for indemnification or advance of expenses, and (ii) the time such claim is made, then at the option of the person seeking indemnification or advance of the expense, the permissibility of indemnification or advance of expenses shall be determined by independent legal counsel.
- 11.04. Contractual Obligation: The obligations of the Seminary to indemnify a Trustee or Officer under this Chapter 11, including the advancement of expenses when so determined, shall be considered a contract between the Seminary and such Trustee or Officer, and no modification or repeal of any provision of this Article X shall affect, to the detriment of the Trustee or Officer, such obligations of the Seminary in connection with a claim based on any act or failure to act occurring before such modification or repeal.

- 11.05. Indemnification Not Exclusive: The foregoing indemnification and advancement of expenses shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which one indemnified may be entitled, under any agreement, vote of Trustees or otherwise, both as to action in such person's official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office, and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of any such person.
- 11.06. Insurance, Security and Other Indemnification: The Board shall have the power to (a) authorize the Seminary to purchase and maintain, at the Seminary's expense, insurance on behalf of the Seminary and on behalf of others to the extent that power to do so has been or may be granted by statute, (b) create any fund of any nature, whether or not under the control of a trustee, or otherwise secure any of its indemnification obligations and (c) give other indemnification to the extent not prohibited by statute.

Chapter 12 – Amendments

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

Chapter 13- Dissolution Clause

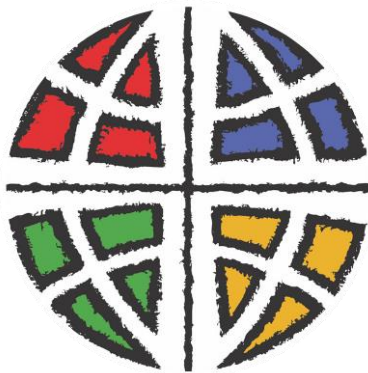
- 13.01: In the event this corporation is dissolved and liquidated, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for payment of all the liabilities of this corporation, distribute the corporate property and assets in accord with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and as approved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

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

United Lutheran Seminary
Amended Bylaws of ULS
Draft amendments March 2022
Page 12 of 12

Amended (Chapter 11) 9/25/19
Amended 9/29/20 Church Council approved 4/21
Amended

**The Constitution, Bylaws,
and Continuing Resolutions
of the
Metropolitan Chicago Synod
of the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church
in America**



DRAFT For Presentation at 2022 Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod

Additions are underlined. Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the text.

Blue – amendments that the Constitution Working Group believe are editorial in nature

Purple – amendments that the Constitution Working Group believe are substantive in nature

Introduction to the *Constitution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

The *Constitution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, like the other governing documents of this church, is an ecclesial, legal, and missional document that reflects the underlying theology and doctrines of this church as well as its polity and governance structures. As the guiding document of one of the three expressions of this church, it reflects that this synod, while fully the church, is not the whole church; and exists in an interdependent relationship with congregations and the churchwide organization and is part of the one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. As such, the *Constitution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod* is deeply rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of this church.

► **Required provisions:** Sections of this *Constitution for Synods* that are marked by a dagger [†] are required provisions. These sections, including constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, are used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible) and reflect the interdependent relationship that exists between this synod, the ELCA churchwide expression and the various congregations and institutions of this synod.

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Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Draft Presentation for 2022

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01. The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as “this synod” or “the synod.”
- †S1.11. This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the articles of incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.
- S1.11.01. Place of incorporation location of office. This synod shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois; its office shall be at Chicago, Illinois, or elsewhere in the territory as the Assembly Synod Council may from time to time determine.
- †S1.21. The seal of this synod is a circular device with the words “METROPOLITAN CHICAGO SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA” on the margin, and the words “CORPORATE SEAL ILLINOIS” in the central portion.

Chapter 2.

STATUS

- †S2.01. This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.
- †S2.02. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.
- †S2.03. No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.

Chapter 3.

TERRITORY

- †S3.01. The territory of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the Counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, and Lake in the State of Illinois.
- †S3.02. “Determined by the Churchwide Assembly,” as stipulated by †S3.01., is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.01. and 10.02.02.

Chapter 4.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- †S4.01. This synod confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- †S4.02. This synod confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

- †S4.03. This synod accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- †S4.04. This synod accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this synod.
- †S4.05. This synod accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- †S4.06. This synod accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- †S4.07. This synod confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 5.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- †S5.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this synod are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- †S5.02. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- †S5.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- †S5.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.

Chapter 6.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- †S6.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- †S6.02. To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator,

Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs.

d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.

e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

†S6.03. This synod, in cooperation with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role and consistent with policies and procedures of this church, the synod shall:

- a. Provide for pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers in the synod;
- b. Plan for, facilitate, and nurture the mission of this church through congregations;
- c. Strengthen interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and foster relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as ecumenical partners.
- d. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public on the territory of the synod.

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

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
 - 1) approving candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Sacrament on behalf of this church;
 - 3) approving ministers of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 4) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church; and
 - 5) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.
- b. providing for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:
 - 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;
 - 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;
 - 3) making provision for pastoral care, call review, and guidance;
 - 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and
 - 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.
- c. providing for discipline of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with Chapter 20 of this church's constitution.
- d. providing for archives in conjunction with other synods.

†S6.03.02. In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. developing of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
- b. leading and encouraging of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
- c. assisting members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world;
- d. encouraging congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and

- the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
- e. providing resources for congregational life;
- f. grouping congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.

†S6.03.03. 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 partners, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. promoting interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and entering into relationships with other synods in the region;
- b. fostering organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities;
- c. developing relationships with social ministry organizations and ministries, participating in their mission planning, and providing supportive funding;
- d. supporting relationships with and providing supportive funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;
- e. maintaining relationships with and providing supportive funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers;
- f. fostering supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries;
- g. fostering supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of the synod;
- h. fostering relationships with ecumenical and global companions;
- i. cooperating with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of the synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.

†S6.03.04. In interpreting the work of this church on the territory of the synod, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. encouraging financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
- b. participating in churchwide programs;
- c. interpreting social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit or office which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues;
- d. providing ecumenical guidance and encouragement.

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

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

†S6.04.02. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

S6.04.03 This Synod has been designated a "Reconciling in Christ" (RIC) synod with a commitment to welcome, include, and celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people. As such, it is the goal of this synod to ensure that the membership within all

synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be comprised of individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+.

- S6.04.A22** *To best live out its Reconciling In Christ designation, this synod encourages the following:*
- That all buildings utilized for synod events, meetings, assemblies, offices, and the like have the availability of a non-gendered bathroom.*
 - That events, meetings, and the like include the ability for people to self-designate their gender pronouns during registration, introductions, on name tags, and the like, except when made impossible by required designations by the ELCA churchwide unit or required constitutional provisions.*
 - That language at all functions be carefully used to acknowledge the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities found in this synod.*
- S6.04.B88** *It shall be the goal of this Synod that at least 20% of the membership of the Synod Council, committees, and boards be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English to include but not be limited to American Sign Language and that this goal be attained within four years.*
- †**S6.05.** Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any synod units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body.
- †**S6.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

Chapter 7.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- †**S7.01.** This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly’s own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- S7.01.01.** Synod Assembly report. For all regular meetings of the Synod Assembly, the secretary of this synod shall prepare a Synod Assembly report. At least 20 days prior to each such meeting, the secretary shall distribute the Synod Assembly report to all Congregations and voting members elect, and file a copy thereof in the public file. The Synod Assembly report shall include a proposed agenda for the meeting; minutes of the preceding regular meeting of the Synod Assembly and of each special meeting since the preceding regular meeting; reports of the bishop, the Synod Council, related and affiliated organizations, Standing committees, and deans; and, the proposed budget. For meetings at which elections are held, the Synod Assembly report shall also include information concerning such elections.
- S7.01.02.** Arrangements for Synod Assembly meetings. The arrangements for agenda, program, and worship at meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be under the supervision of the bishop. This synod shall be responsible for the costs of the Synod Assembly; such costs shall not include voting members’ expenses.
- S7.01.03.** ~~Other members of Synod Assembly. Unless elected as voting members, members of the Synod Council who are not officers shall serve as advisory members of the Synod Assembly, with voice but not vote. Other categories of non-voting members of the Synod Assembly may be established by the Synod Assembly.~~
- S7.01.05.** Synod Assembly committees and officials. The Synod Assembly shall have committees and officials as provided in this bylaw. Generally, eligibility for appointment to a committee of the Synod Assembly is as provided in ~~the first sentence of~~ S11.01.02. Unless the bishop so requires, a Synod Assembly committee or official need not make a formal report covering its or ~~his/her the official’s~~ activities.

- a. The Synod Council shall appoint a Committee on Reference and Counsel consisting of five to ten members. The functions and responsibilities of the committee are to review and advise the Synod Assembly and the bishop (or other person presiding at a meeting of the Synod Assembly) with respect to proposed changes or additions to the constitution and the bylaws and other items submitted to the Synod Assembly which are not germane to items in the agenda of the meeting.
- b. Officials and committees of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the Committee on Reference and Counsel (such as Planning Committee, Credentials Committee, Memorials Committee, Resolutions Committee, convention manager, sergeant-at-arms, tellers, parliamentarian), as deemed necessary by the bishop or the Synod Council, may be appointed by the bishop with the advice of the Synod Council. The specific functions and responsibilities of each such official and committee shall be described in writing before appointment is made.
- c. For special meetings of the Synod Assembly the committees and officials may be the same as for the preceding regular meeting as directed by the bishop.
- d. Committees and officials of the Synod Assembly are accountable to the bishop and the Synod Assembly for due performance of their functions and responsibilities.

S7.01.A22. *The secretary of this synod shall review and propose to the Synod Council for recommendation to the Synod Assembly the "Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Assembly" prior to each Synod Assembly. The secretary shall have access to those officials and committees of the Synod Assembly as is necessary to complete this function.*

S7.01.B22.

- a. Definitions. In this resolution --
 - 1) "this Synod Assembly" means the next or current meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - 2) "the Committee on Reference and Counsel shall have constitution as described in S11.01.05. and responsibilities as described in S7.01.05
 - 3) "Synod Council resolution" means a form of resolution which is presented to this Synod Assembly on behalf of the Synod Council and with the Synod Council's recommendation for adoption.
 - 4) "reported resolution" means a form of resolution, other than a Synod Council resolution, which the Synod Council deems worthy of consideration by this Synod Assembly.
 - 5) "prospective voting member" means a person who is likely to be a voting member to this Synod Assembly and, as to a lay person, has been selected by the individual's Congregation to be but is not yet registered as a voting member. The prospective voting member remains as such until the assembly is seated
 - 6) "additional resolution" means a form of resolution, other than a Synod Council resolution or reported resolution, which a prospective voting member or a voting member intends to propose to this Synod Assembly, and
 - i. seeks to amend the constitution or the bylaws, or
 - ii. seeks to add an item of new business to the agenda of this Synod Assembly, or
 - iii. is not germane to the proposed agenda, the agenda, or the pending question or report before the Synod Assembly.
 - 7) "pre-amendment" means a form of amendment which relates to a reported resolution or additional resolution, is endorsed by five voting members and, if the reported resolution or additional resolution were to be the pending question before the Synod Assembly, may be expected to be pertinent thereto.
 - 8) "prospective movant" means the prospective voting member or voting member who proposes an additional resolution or is responsible for presenting a reported resolution to the Synod Assembly.
 - 9) "registered" means a prospective voting member who is present at the Synod Assembly and who has received their credentials as a voting member for the Synod Assembly.
- b. Synod Council resolutions and reported resolutions
 - 1) Council resolutions and reported resolutions shall be set forth in the Synod Assembly Report. Also, as in the Synod Council's view circumstances warrant, the Synod Council may present revised and additional Synod Council resolutions, and shall furnish each such revised Synod

Council resolution and additional Synod Council resolution, if any, to this Synod Assembly in written form and at the earliest practicable time.

c. Form and initial processing of additional resolutions.

- 1) An additional resolution shall be in written form and identified as such, be addressed to the bishop, include the signature of the voting member or prospective voting member proposing it, and, if the proposer is a prospective voting member, the name of the proposer's Congregation and the proposer's contact information.
- 2) A prospective voting member may pre-submit an additional resolution prior to this Synod Assembly. If a prospective voting member does not register as a voting member on the first day of this Synod Assembly, an additional resolution which was pre-submitted by the prospective voting member will be discarded. The Committee on Reference and Counsel retains discretion to permit a substitute registered voting member to present a pre-submitted additional resolution, in the case that the prospective voting member who submitted the resolution is unable to register for the Synod Assembly.
- 3) The bishop shall resolve under the definition provided any question as to the status of a matter as an additional resolution, and refer each additional resolution to the Committee on Reference and Counsel or, in case of a pre-submitted additional resolution, for the Committee's attention when it convenes.

d. Further processing and status of additional resolutions

- 1) The Committee on Reference and Counsel will endeavor to consider pre-submitted additional resolutions prior to this Synod Assembly and shall provide a written preliminary report with reference thereto for the bishop and for voting members at the time of registration. Each pre-submitted additional resolution shall be set forth in the preliminary report, but the Committee need not then advise as to any additional resolution. No additional resolution shall afford grounds for delay in presentation to or adoption of any matter (including the proposed agenda) by this Synod Assembly.

e. Form and delivery of pre-amendments.

- 1) A pre-amendment shall be in written form and identified as such, specify the additional resolution or reported resolution to which it relates, set forth the proposed form of amendment, and include the signatures of five voting members as endorsers. An endorser of a pre-amendment shall deliver it to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, but no pre-amendment shall be delivered to the Committee prior to the first business session of this Synod Assembly.

f. Processing and status of pre-amendments.

- 1) The Committee on Reference and Counsel will endeavor to consider pre-amendments with the matters to which they respectively relate. If the endorsers of a pre-amendment and the prospective movant of the additional resolution or reported resolution to which the pre-amendment relates so concur in writing, the Committee may deal with the matter as modified by the pre-amendment. No endorser of a pre-amendment may withdraw or revoke endorsement. No pre-amendment shall afford grounds for delay in presentation to or adoption of any matter (including the proposed agenda, any additional resolution and any reported resolution) by this Synod Assembly.

g. Considerations for pre-amendments

- 1) The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall review actions of previous Synod Assemblies regarding similar proposed actions and resolutions, particularly resolutions or continuing resolutions that may still be in effect.
- 2) The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall search for any similar actions, especially memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or Churchwide Council that are being considered by other synods so as to attempt to coordinate language and action.

h. Limitations.

- 1) No member of the Committee on Reference and Counsel may propose an additional resolution or endorse a pre-amendment, but this limitation shall not foreclose the Committee from consultation or concurrence with prospective movants and endorsers as to formal revision of additional resolutions, reported resolutions and pre-amendments.

- 2) *The Synod Council may prescribe reasonable limitations with reference to additional resolutions, reported resolutions and pre-amendments, including limitations as to --*
 - i. *number and priority of pre-submitted additional resolutions;*
 - ii. *the time for pre-submission of an additional resolution;*
 - iii. *the number of additional resolutions a prospective voting member or voting member may submit;*
 - iv. *the time for submission of an additional resolution;*
 - v. *the number and priority of pre-amendments;*
 - vi. *the latest time for delivery of a pre-amendment;*
 - vii. *the number of words comprising an additional resolution or pre-amendment. The Synod Council shall seek advice from the Committee on Reference and Counsel as to limitations which are to be operative during this Synod Assembly. Limitations as to pre-submitted additional resolutions shall be publicized in pre-assembly materials provided to Congregations and prospective voting members, and other limitations shall be announced to this Synod Assembly not later than the first business session.*
- i. Advice by the Committee on Reference and Counsel
 - 1) *The Committee on Reference and Counsel, upon reasonable opportunity to consider the additional resolutions, reported resolutions and pre-amendments, shall advise the bishop and this Synod Assembly concerning disposition of those matters, but shall not advise as to disposition of a reported resolution for which there is no pre-amendment. The Committee shall accord priority to the advised disposition of matters which seek to amend the constitution or the bylaws.*
 - 2) *The Committee on Reference and Counsel may advise also as to the order and time for consideration of a reported resolution for which there is a pre-amendment and items of new business arising from additional resolutions. If the Committee advises that an additional resolution not be placed on the agenda, a majority vote of this Synod Assembly is required to add it to the agenda as an item of new business. If the Committee advises unfavorably as to a pre-amendment, the advice is not subject to review but shall not affect an effort to amend an additional resolution or reported resolution which is the pending question before this Synod Assembly.*
 - 3) *The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall have the services of the parliamentarian, synod legal counsel, the churchwide Office of the Secretary, or similar resources in aid of the Committee's work.*

†S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.

S7.11.01. Frequency, time-of-year and place of Synod Assembly meetings. ~~Regular meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually, normally during the month of May or the month of June, each at a convenient place selected by the Executive Committee. The time and place of the Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced 6 (six) months prior to the assembly.~~

S7.12. Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.

a. The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.

b. If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod, consistent with provision S7.11.01 and S7.12.

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

- †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
 - b. All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.
 - c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men.
 - d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.
- †S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.
- †S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next Synod Assembly.
- S7.21.03. The †S7.21.c. formula. Preparatory to regular meetings of the **Synod** Assembly, the **Synod** Council shall provide the †S7.21.c. formula, with revisions as from time to time necessary. Prior to each such meeting the **Synod** Council shall file a written description of the formula's current version and application in the public file.
- S7.21.A88 *The membership of the **Synod** Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include the retired minister of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service whose names appear on the rosters of this synod and who are elected by the **Synod** Council to such membership.*
- S7.21.B04 *The membership of the **Synod** Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service whose names appear on the roster of this synod and who are serving as interim minister under contract in a congregation of this synod at the time of the assembly.*
- S7.21.C21 *The membership of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include those Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service who have been granted disability status, or on leave from call status, on the roster of the synod may be elected by the Synod Council to such membership.*
- S7.21.D21 *Retired rostered ministers, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod must indicate to the bishop's office their desire and intention to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, normally no less than 60 days before the Synod Assembly is seated. Such persons may be elected to membership of the Synod Assembly by vote of the Synod Council where possible consistent with †S7.21..*
- S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those **designated as disabled granted disability status**, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.22.A22 *The membership of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include those Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service who have been granted disability status, or on leave from call status, on the roster of the synod may be elected by the Synod Council to such membership.*
- S7.22.B22 *Retired rostered ministers, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod must indicate to the bishop's office their desire and intention to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, normally no less than 60 days before the Synod Assembly is seated. Such persons may be elected to membership of the Synod Assembly by vote of the Synod Council where possible*

- consistent with †S7.21.*
- †S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop, shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.
- S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.
- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of congregations under development and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
- S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.
- S7.28. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.
- †S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.32. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.
- S7.33. "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.
- S7.32A98 Applying Continuing Positions**
1. *Definition. In this continuing resolution, "continuing position" means the position of this synod with reference to particular subject matter, as set forth in a position resolution during the resolution's period of effectiveness, or as derived from such a resolution; see continuing resolution S10.02.A98.*
 2. *Purpose. The purpose of this continuing resolution is to enable voting members of the Synod Assembly to propose that the Synod Assembly apply already-established positions of the synod in respect of new or additional situations, and so to avoid Synod Assembly action that would be merely duplicative of an established position.*
 3. *Provisions in aid of applying a continuing position. Each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, by an appropriate official or committee, shall provide to its voting members (a) a list or catalogue of continuing positions of the synod, including specific identification of each continuing position; and, (b) a reasonable period of time, but not more than thirty minutes, for voting members to propose and to deliberate Synod Assembly actions so to apply continuing positions.*
 4. *Procedure. For a voting member who seeks Synod Assembly action so to apply a continuing position, the suggested procedure is to present a motion for that purpose to the Synod Assembly. For example, a suitable form of motion is:
"I move that this Synod Assembly apply the continuing position of this synod, as set forth in (- identify the continuing position-) in respect of (-indicate the new or additional situation-) by (- describe the specific course of action, if any, that movant proposes so to apply the continuing position-)."*

Each such motion (a) is to be presented during the period of time provided and when the member presenting it is entitled to the floor, (b) may not change the substance of a continuing position, and (c) otherwise, is to be governed by all pertinent rules of parliamentary procedure.

5. *Records. Synod records of a continuing position shall reflect and include each instance in which the Synod Assembly has acted so to apply the continuing position.*

S7.33. “*Ex officio*” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 8. OFFICERS

†**S8.01.** The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

S8.10. Bishop

†**S8.11.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S8.11.01. When authorized by the Synod Council in order to address special circumstances, the synod bishop may be compensated as an employee or contractor for specified services to another expression of this church. Such an arrangement may be terminated by the Synod Assembly or Synod Council if determined to be detrimental to the function of the office or if the special circumstances no longer apply.

†**S8.12.** As this synod’s pastor, the bishop shall:

- a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.
- b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service.
- c. Exercise solely this church’s power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).
- d. Ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as ministers of Word and Service of this church.
- e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters of this synod called by the Church Council.
- f. Install (or provide for the installation of) rostered ministers whose calls the bishop has attested.
- g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:
 - 1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;
 - 2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;
 - 3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church’s life and witness in the areas served by this synod;
 - 4) Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod’s life and work; and
 - 5) Advise and counsel this synod’s related institutions and organizations.
- h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:
 - 1) Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;
 - 2) Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of rostered ministers and congregations of this synod;
 - 3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;
 - 4) Be a member of the Conference of Bishops and consult regularly with other synod bishops;
 - 5) Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where

appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;

6) Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and

7) Be *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly.

i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:

1) Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;

2) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the [Synod eCouncil's](#) Executive Committee;

3) Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;

4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;

5) Coordinate the work of all synod staff members;

6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;

7) Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;

8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synod rosters containing the names and addresses of all rostered ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which their retired or disability status took effect;

9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered ministers on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;

10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:

a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod;

b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered ministers in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synod; and

c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;

11) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a roster of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and

12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the parochial reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

S8.12.A87. *Office of ecumenical relations.* Upon recommendation of the bishop, the [Synod Council](#) may establish a synodic office of ecumenical relations to assist the bishop with ~~his~~ the responsibilities under †S8.12.h.3. and provide for the staffing of such office by employees of this synod. The bishop may appoint a board of six persons to advise ~~him~~ the bishop concerning the office; generally, terms and other incidents of service on the board are the same as for members named by the bishop to the Mutual Ministry Committee.

†**S8.13.** The synod bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the secretary of this church. The appointment continues until resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the synod officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney serves without salary but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services requested by the synod.

S8.14. The synodical bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.

- S8.14.01.** Assistants Associates to the bishop. After consultation with and upon the recommendation of the bishop, the Synod Council may call or engage one or more persons to serve as assistants-associates to the bishop in the work and conduct of the bishop's office and of this synod. Such assistants-associates may be ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service, or lay persons, and shall be employees of the synod and perform such work assignments as may be designated by the bishop. Each assistants-associates is a minister of Word and Sacrament shall be on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the synod, and serve an initial term call of not less than one year and not more than six years. Each assistants-associates who is a minister of Word and Service shall be on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of the synod, and serve an initial term call of not less than one year and not more than six years. Each assistants-associate who is a lay person shall reside on the territory and shall be employed for an initial period of not more than six years. After the Synod Council receives the bishop's recommendations, the term of each minister of Word and Sacrament, each minister of Word and Service assistant's-associate's call, or period of each lay assistant's-associate's employment, and the salary, emoluments and other remuneration to be received by each assistants-associates shall be determined by the bishop and approved by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council and incorporated into the provisions of the call or letter of engagement. If the bishop so recommends, any assistant-associate may serve successive calls or periods of employment as determined by the Synod Council, but the term of any successive call or length of any successive period of employment shall be not less than one year and not more than six years.
- S8.14.02.** Support staff. Upon recommendation of the bishop, the Synod Council may authorize employment by this synod of support staff, in an appropriate number, for the bishop and the bishop's assistants-associates in the work of the synod.
- S8.14.A87.** Number of assistants-associates. *The number of assistants-associates to the bishop under S8.14.01., at any one time, shall not exceed five.*
- †**S8.15.** The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the presiding bishop, shall install into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synod bishop.
- †**S8.16. Conflicts of Interest**
- †**S8.16.01.** The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:
- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
 - b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
 - c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synod bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
- S8.20. Vice President**
- †**S8.21.** The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.
- S8.22.** The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.
- †**S8.23.** In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.

- S8.24.** The vice president shall be ex-officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.
- S8.30. Secretary**
- †**S8.31.** The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.
- †**S8.32.** The secretary shall:
- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the printing and distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.
 - b. Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.
 - c. In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.
 - d. Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.
- S8.32.01.** The public file. This synod shall have a public file as the place of filing, as required by the bylaws, and reference for certain documentary materials, including, but not limited to, the Constitution, Book of Reports, Synod Assembly actions/minutes, Synod Council actions/minutes. The secretary of this synod shall have charge of the public file and maintain it in the synod office.
- S8.32.02.** Responsibilities for filing. Where a bylaw or a continuing resolution of this synod requires material to be filed in the public file (a) by an officer of the synod, she/he the individual shall be responsible to make the filing, or (b) by the Synod Council or a committee of the synod, the vice-president of this synod or the committee chairperson, as the case may be, shall be responsible to make the filing.
- S8.32.03.** Access to public file. The public file is open to the people of the synod. The secretary-bishop may make regulations for orderly access such as the requirement for prior appointments and reasonable limitations on time allowed. No document currently required to be in the file may be removed, but, upon request and subject to a reasonable charge, the synod office will provide a copy of any such document to any interested person.
- S8.33.** The secretary shall be ex-officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.
- S8.40. Treasurer**
- †**S8.41.** The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.
- S8.41.01** The Synod Council shall appoint a treasurer following a process guided by the nominating committee, in consultation with the bishop, to provide for a treasurer who can best fulfill the duties as outlined in S8.42.
- S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:
- a. Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.
 - b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.
 - c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church.
 - d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.
 - e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.

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

S8.42.A91. Funds-keeping and Investment Policy

1. *This resolution sets forth the funds-keeping and investment policy of this synod. In this resolution—*
 - o “its purposes” means a purpose indicated in the Statement of Purpose of this synod (Chapter 6 of the constitution).
 - o “current funds” means, at any time, the funds held by this synod for its purposes in an amount appropriate for a period of up to the next forty-five days, but not petty cash
 - o “other financial resources” means the funds and other assets of money-equivalent or ready market value, including reserves, held by this synod for its purposes which would, if invested, yield a return in aid of its purposes, but not current funds.
2. *This synod shall keep current funds, until disbursement, in one or several accounts of one or several banking institutions or in other financial obligor in accordance with this policy. Each account in a banking institution shall be covered by FDIC insurance to the extent consistent with sound financial practices. Such an account may be, for example, a checking account or a certificate of deposit, and may but need not be interest-earning.*
3. *Normally, this synod shall hold at least the greater portion of other financial resources in deposit or debt obligations that afford the highest safety in preservation of value, suitable liquidity and reasonable return. Such obligations may be, for example, interest-earning accounts, including certificates of deposit, of one or several banking institutions, with each account covered in full by FDIC insurance, and shorter-term U. S. Treasury obligations.*
4. *This synod may have a portion of current funds and other financial resources in obligations of worthy obligor related to this church. Such obligations may be, for example, Mission Investments as described in the current ELCA Mission Investment Fund’s Offering Circular.*
5. *Normally, this synod shall have other financial resources only in a form described in paragraphs 3 or 4 of this resolution; however, seeking prudently to minimize or avoid loss in the value of an asset of other financial resources, this synod may hold the asset for a reasonable time in some other form. Such an asset might be, for example, a gift or bequest received in kind.*

S8.43 The treasurer shall be ex-officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.

S8.50. General Provisions

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

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

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

†S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

†S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.

- S8.55.** Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the next Synod Assembly, shall be for the remainder of the unfulfilled term of that officer. If the treasurer is appointed by the Synod Council, the Synod Council shall appoint a new treasurer to a the remainder of the unfulfilled term of that officer.
- †**S8.56.** The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the officer in question at least 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.
- †**S8.57.** The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.
- a. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synod bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:
 - 1) the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
 - 2) the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
 - 3) at least 10 synod bishops; or
 - 4) the presiding bishop of this church.
 - b. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synod bishop, shall be instituted by written petition by:
 - 1) the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
 - 2) the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting; or
 - 3) the synod bishop.
 - c. The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.
 - d. Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Synod Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service in the synod without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee of the synod.
 - e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:
 - 1) the Synod Council will submit a written report of their findings and the basis of their decision to the Committee on Appeals.
 - 2) the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.
 - f. If the synod officer is a minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.23.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline.
 - g. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.41.01. as grounds for discipline.

- h. If the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:
 - 1) the petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals, which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in ELCA bylaw 20.22.14. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this bylaw; and
 - 2) the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.
 - i. Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer and to the Synod Council, and the office shall be vacated.
- †S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, the bishop, with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

Chapter 9.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- †S9.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws. The Synod Assembly shall elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- S9.01.01** Elections by the Synod Assembly. In addition to elections prescribed in the constitution to be made by the Synod Assembly, the Synod Assembly shall elect
- a) voting members of the Churchwide Assembly allocated to this synod.
 - b) the other council members (OCMs) Synod Council Members-at-large and the youth who is a member of the Synod Council.
 - c) the members of the Consultation Committee and the synod[s]ia component of the Committee on Discipline.
- In each election for a position described in this bylaw, the Nominating Committee shall slate one nominee for the position. With the exception of the situations noted below, the Synod Assembly shall permit nominations from the floor for the position provided that any person nominated from the floor must be eligible for election, have affirmed willingness to serve if elected, and meet each specification pertaining to the position, including that, for an elective position within the purview of paragraph (a) of S9.03.02. Nominations from the floor for positions in which nominees have been chosen by conferences must be of people who are voting members of a congregation of the same conference as the conference of the slated nominee. If there are slots that are not filled by a nominee from a conference, or through other constitutional provisions, nominees from the floor may come from any conference, provided the provisions of †S6.04 and S6.04.C88 are fulfilled. Such positions having a term of service of four years or longer shall be arranged so equal or approximately equal numbers of the positions are elected biennially.
- S9.01.02.** Elections at regular Synod Assembly meetings. The elections described in S9.01.01. shall be held at regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S9.01.03.** Elections for Churchwide Assembly. At least one-third of the ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service and at least one-third of the lay persons elected by this synod as voting members of each Churchwide Assembly shall be persons who have not been elected by this synod to be voting members of a previous Churchwide Assembly.
- S9.01.04.** Reelection of other council members (OCMs) Synod Council Members-at-large. Normally, OCMs Synod Council Members-at-large may be reelected once; however, if an expiration of the term of an incumbent OCM Synod Council Member-at-large the incumbent does not meet a specification for the position according to S9.03.04. or otherwise, she/he the individual is ineligible to reelection. If an OCM

- Synod Council Member-at-large was first appointed to fill an interim vacancy and serves for more than half of the current term of the position reckoned from date of appointment, then, for the purpose of determining eligibility for reelection, she/he the individual shall be deemed to have served the full term.
- S9.01.06.** Interim elections and appointments. In the context of this bylaw “interim vacancy” means a position that is vacant because the incumbent died, resigned, or became unable to serve. Should an interim vacancy occur, the vacancy is to be promptly filled in accordance with these provisions:
- An interim vacancy in a position appointed by the bishop shall be filled by a successor appointment by the bishop, under the same conditions, if any, as applied to the original appointment.
 - An interim vacancy in an elective position or a Synod Council-appointed position shall be filled by interim appointment by the Synod Council. The Synod Council may have the Nominating Committee’s recommendation, but need not consider more than one candidate for an appointment. Current specifications for the position under S9.03.04. apply and the term of service shall be for the remainder of the term during which the interim vacancy occurred.
- S9.01.A88.** *The Synod Council, having regard to the provisions of †S7.21. and S7.21.A88., shall elect to the membership of the Synod Assembly, with voice and vote, the ones of the retired ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service whose names appear on the rosters of this synod and who make timely written application for such election. Each such application shall indicate the applicant’s intention to attend the Synod Assembly, bear his/her the applicant’s signature, and be deemed timely if received in the synod office during the month of November or the month of December of the year next preceding the year during which the Synod Assembly is to be held; each such election shall be only for such Synod Assembly. For purpose of †S7.21., retired ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service elected under this Resolution shall be counted as ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service.*
- †**S9.02.** In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.03.** There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of eleven members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.
- S9.03.01** Nominating Committee
- Generally, eligibility for appointment to the Nominating Committee is as provided in the first sentence of S11.01.02., and positions on the Committee may be subject to a specification under S9.03.04. Members of the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline, or a committee convened under S14.13.b would be ineligible for appointment. Synod Council members, other than those eligible to reelection at the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, may be appointed. A member of the Committee may be consecutively reappointed twice.
 - The Synod Council is to complete appointments to the Nominating Committee for the meeting of the Synod Assembly for which the Committee is to serve by January 1 of the year of the meeting.
- S9.03.02** Participation of Conferences in electoral processes.
- Each Conference is to select, for each meeting of the Synod Assembly at which the Nominating Committee is to slate nominees, one person for appointment to a respective one of positions on the Nominating Committee; and, for each such meeting which is to elect voting members of the Churchwide Synod Assembly, one person for nomination to a respective one of those voting member positions.
 - A Conference may not select the same person for more than one position of those to be selected for a meeting of the Synod Assembly described in paragraph (a) of this bylaw, and should endeavor to avoid concentration of the selections with reference to a limited number of Congregations.
 - A Conference may not elect the same person to more than one position of those to be elected at an electoral meeting described in paragraph (c) of this bylaw, and should endeavor to avoid undue concentration of the elections with reference to a limited number of Congregations.
 - Each person selected pursuant to paragraph (a) or elected pursuant to paragraph (c) of this bylaw shall be a voting member of a Congregation of the Conference which selects or elects her/him the individual, otherwise be eligible for the position for which he/she the individual is selected or to

~~which she/he is~~ elected, have affirmed willingness to serve in the position, and meet each specification under S9.03.04, if any, pertaining to the position.

- e) If a selection under paragraph (a) or an election under paragraph (c) of this bylaw fails for any reason -- for example, if a person becomes unable to accept appointment, nomination, or election -- or is in default, then, as the case may be, the **Synod** Council shall appoint an affected position on the Nominating Committee and shall elect an affected position on a team board; and, the Nominating Committee shall slate a nomination for an affected position of voting member of the Churchwide Assembly or of **OCM Synod Council Members-at-large**.

S9.03.03 Adoption of selections under S9.03.02. Normally, the **Synod** Council, in making appointments to the Nominating Committee, is to adopt the selections of Conferences under sentence (1) of paragraph (a) of S9.03.02; and, the Nominating Committee, in slating nominees for positions of voting member of the Churchwide Assembly and of **OCM Synod Council Members-at-large**, is to adopt the selections of Conferences under paragraph (a) of S9.03.02.

S9.03.04 Specifications for Nominating Committee and **OCM Synod Council Members-at-large** positions. So the **Synod** Council and the Nominating Committee, as nearly as practicable and in terms of their full complements, meet inclusivity criteria and/or have members residing in areas throughout the territory, the **Synod** Council may establish specifications for at least some Nominating Committee and **OCM Synod Council Members-at-large** positions, and, for that purpose may have the advice of the Nominating Committee. If such a specification applies to any position for which a Conference is to select a person under paragraph (a) of S9.03.02, the **Synod** Council shall notify the Conference well in advance of the affected electoral meeting.

S9.03.05 Previously-selected or-elected incumbents. A Conference may, but need not, select for reappointment or nomination for reelection, or reelect, an incumbent of a position who was previously selected for or elected to the position by the Conference under S9.03.02 and, otherwise, is eligible to reappointment or reelection, and meets each specification, if any, pertaining to the position.

S9.04. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

S9.04.01. Election of the Bishop. In addition to the provision of S9.04., procedures for election of the bishop include—

- a. Prior to a meeting of the **Synod** Assembly at which an election for the office of bishop is to be held, the **Synod** Council shall appoint a Committee on Pre-election Canvass consisting of five members. Each member of the committee shall meet the same general qualifications as in S11.01.02., shall not be eligible for nomination or election to the office of bishop, and may, but need not be a voting member of the **Synod** Assembly.
- b. The duties of the Committee on Pre-election Canvass shall be
 - 1) to mail directly to each voting member of the **Synod** Assembly, at least sixty (60) days but not more than seventy (70) days prior to the **Synod** Assembly, a canvass instrument and instructions for identification, by means of the instrument, of one person for the office of bishop;
 - 2) to receive those of such instruments bearing postmarks no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the **Synod** Assembly;
 - 3) to obtain, on a uniform basis, and to mail to each voting member of the **Synod** Assembly at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the **Synod** Assembly, biographical information about the six (6) persons (plus ties) who receive the highest numbers of identifications, and are willing to be nominated for the office of bishop, together with a full report concerning the canvass.

- c. The Committee on Pre-election Canvass, on behalf of the **Synod** Council, may arrange and conduct a pre-assembly forum where those of the six (6) persons identified in clause 3, paragraph b, of this bylaw, who desire so to participate, may -- all on a uniform basis -- be introduced to, address, and respond to questions from voting members of the **Synod** Assembly and others in attendance. The forum, if and when arranged and conducted, is to be suitably publicized and held at a convenient place on the territory approximately two (2) weeks prior to the **Synod** Assembly.
- d. The report concerning the canvass and the forum are to be information resources about the election, and shall have no other purpose, status and effect.

S9.04.A99.

- a. In each meeting of the **Synod** Assembly at which an election for the office of bishop is held, and the election is to include a fourth ballot, and as an order of business following the report of the results of the third ballot, the **Synod** Assembly shall conduct Assembly-wide introductions of persons who are to be on the fourth ballot, in accordance with the provisions of this continuing resolution.
- b. Generally, introductions of persons who are to be on the fourth ballot shall be on a uniform and impartial basis, and the introduction of each such person is to include aspects of (i) an address by the person to the **Synod** Assembly and (ii) spoken answers by the person to propounded questions, provided that if the person is not in attendance or otherwise so desires, ~~he/she the person~~ may designate a spokesperson to participate in ~~stead his/her stead~~. During introduction of one such person, the other such persons shall not be present. If such a person opts not to participate in an introduction, that circumstance shall not affect the person's position or status on the fourth or any later ballot. When such a person participates in one aspect of an introduction, ~~he/she the person~~ is expected also to participate in the other aspect. The official presiding at the election shall likewise preside during the introductions.
- c. Each such person, in any aspect of ~~her/his the~~ introduction to the **Synod** Assembly, shall not utilize or authorize any kind of ancillary material or special effects. The assembly, including members and all others in attendance, shall refrain from any kind of demonstration of support or opposition with reference to such a person during ~~her/his the~~ introduction and otherwise in connection with the election.
- d. The address of each introduction is expected to deal with the person's candidacy for the office of bishop; otherwise, content of the address is wholly a matter for the person's discretion. The time provided for an address shall be an undivided period of ten minutes, but the address need not consume the full period.
- e. The propounded questions of the introductions shall normally comprise a series of five questions pertaining to the work the **Synod** and the office of bishop, and shall be prepared by the Elections Committee of the **Synod** Assembly. The Elections Committee shall consult with the official presiding and other appropriate resources, and shall endeavor to formulate questions that are succinct, suitable for answer in the time provided, and widely representative of interests and responsibilities of voting members of the **Synod** Assembly, as, for example, by soliciting exemplary questions or topics from voting members and otherwise. The official presiding shall propound the questions to each such person in the same manner and order. An answer to a propounded question is expected to be responsive. The time provided for answering a question shall be an undivided period of two minutes, but an answer need not consume the full period.

S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

- S9.05.01.** Election of the Vice President shall proceed without oral nominations. The first ballot of the election, unless resulting in election, shall be the nominating ballot. On the first ballot, two-thirds of votes shall elect. On the second ballot, only votes for persons who received votes on the first ballot shall be valid, and a majority of votes shall elect. On the third ballot, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes on the second ballot, and a majority of votes shall elect. A person may withdraw from the election prior to the voting on any ballot, and upon such withdrawal, votes for the person on a preceding ballot shall be deemed invalid as to a subsequent ballot. An invalid vote shall not be counted for any purpose.

- S9.05.A99** *In each meeting of the Synod Assembly at which an election for the office of vice president is held and the election is to include a third ballot, and as an order of business following the report of the results of the second ballot, the Synod Assembly shall conduct introductions of persons who are to be on the third ballot. These introductions shall be on a uniform and impartial basis, and the introduction of each such person is to include an address by the person to the Synod Assembly. Such an address is expected to deal with person's candidacy for the office of vice president; otherwise, the content of the address is wholly a matter for the person's discretion. The time for an address is an undivided period of three minutes, but the address need not consume the full period.*
- S9.06.** *The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.*
- S9.06.01.** Election of the Secretary shall proceed without oral nominations. The first ballot of the election, unless resulting in election, shall be the nominating ballot. On the first ballot, two-thirds of votes shall elect. On the second ballot, only votes for persons who received votes on the first ballot shall be valid, and a majority of votes shall elect. On the third ballot, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes on the second ballot, and a majority of votes shall elect. A person may withdraw from the election prior to the voting on any ballot, and upon such withdrawal, votes for the person on a preceding ballot shall be deemed invalid as to a subsequent ballot. An invalid vote shall not be counted for any purpose.
- S9.06.A99** *In each meeting of the Synod Assembly at which an election for the office of secretary is held and the election is to include a third ballot, and as an order of business following the report of the results of the second ballot, the Synod Assembly shall conduct introductions of persons who are to be on the third ballot. These introductions shall be on a uniform and impartial basis, and the introduction of each such person is to include an address by the person to the Synod Assembly. Such an address is expected to deal with person's candidacy for the office of secretary; otherwise, the content of the address is wholly a matter for the person's discretion. The time for an address is an undivided period of three minutes, but the address need not consume the full period.*
- S9.07.** If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.08.** In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.08.A99** *A person who is nominated for election by the Synod Assembly (a) for ~~an OCM Synod Council Member~~ at-large position, or (b) to the position of voting member of the Churchwide Assembly, is to provide, prior to the election in which ~~she/he~~ the individual is a nominee, a written statement with regard to ~~his/hers~~ the individual's candidacy for the position. The Nominating Committee or the Elections Committee of the Synod Assembly, as appropriate, may receive the statement from the person. The statement is for distribution to voting members of the Synod Assembly as an information resource; it is not to exceed forty (40) words in length; and, otherwise, its content is wholly a matter for the person's discretion.*
- S9.09.** The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.
- †**S9.10.** When notified by the secretary of this church, on behalf of the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Synod Assembly shall nominate two persons in the specified categories for possible election by the Churchwide Assembly to the Church Council.
- S9.11.** The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.
- †**S9.12.** Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synod officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

Chapter 10. SYNOD COUNCIL

- †S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
 - b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be four years.
- S10.01.01. The terms of service of members of the Synod Council shall begin on the first day of the ~~second~~ third month following their election.
- S10.01.02. Youth member. The term of service of the youth shall be two years and shall begin on the first day of the ~~second~~ third month following election. The youth shall be at least 16 years of age when ~~his-her~~ the youth's term begins and not more than 21 years of age when the term ends, and is not eligible to reelection.
- S10.01.03. Young adult member. The term of service of the young adult member shall be two years and shall begin on the first day of the ~~second~~ third month following election. The young adult shall be at least 21 years of age when ~~his-her~~ the young adult's term begins and not more than 30 years of age when the term ends, and is not eligible to reelection.
- S10.01.04. Synod Council meetings. The Synod Council shall hold regular meetings at least four times a year and, normally, once in each calendar quarter. The place of meetings of the Synod Council shall be determined by the Executive Committee. Special meetings of the Synod Council may be called by the Executive Committee as provided in S10.01.07., and shall be called by the bishop upon the written request of ten Synod Council members. The secretary of this synod shall give written notice of each meeting of the Synod Council to Synod Council members.
- S10.01.05. Committee liaison. The Synod Council shall maintain liaison with Synod Program committees, Advisory committees, and any Task Forces and Temporary committees of this synod. For this purpose (apart from the bishop ex officio) members of the Synod Council may attend and have voice at meetings of such committees.
- S10.01.06. Synod Council committees--generally. The Synod council shall have an Executive Committee and such other committees as it may from time to time determine. The Synod Council shall appoint the members of its committees. No one other than a member of the Synod Council may serve on a Synod Council committee. Subject to the Synod Council's directions concerning purpose, procedure, and record-keeping, a Synod Council committee develops its own agenda and sets its own procedure. Unless the Synod Council so requires, a Synod Council committee need not make a report to the Synod Assembly covering its activities.
- S10.01.07. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall comprise the officers and five ~~other council members (OCMs)~~ Synod Council Members-at-large; at least one of the ~~OCMs~~ Synod Council Members-at-large shall be serving a term with an expiration date different than the expiration date of the terms of the other ~~OCMs~~ Synod Council Members-at-large. Normally, the period of appointment for ~~OCMs~~ Synod Council Members-at-large on the committee is two years, with no limitation on reappointment to an available position. The committee shall perform those functions of the Synod Council assigned to it by the Synod Council, and, subject to other or additional directions from the Synod Council, the committee shall oversee preparation of the agenda for Synod Council meetings, and shall set the salary of the bishop. The committee -- by the action or with the common approval of a majority of its members, and, normally, with at least five days' notice -- may call special meetings of the Synod Council. In appropriate circumstances, so recognized by a majority of its members, and provided that all committee members have a reasonable opportunity to participate, the committee may deliberate and do committee work by telephone conferences.
- S10.01.09. Accountability of Synod Council and Synod Council-appointed committees. Synod Council committees and the Nominating Committee are accountable to the Synod Council for due performance of their functions and responsibilities.

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†S10.02. The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions that are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or that are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S10.02.A98 Positions Process

a. Definition. In this continuing resolution, "position resolution" means an action of the Synod Assembly which expresses the synod's position as to indicated subject matter, but is not and is not connected with another action of the Synod Assembly such as an amendment of the constitution, adoption or amendment of a bylaw, a continuing resolution or an annual budget of the synod, an election conducted pursuant to the constitution or the bylaws, or, approval of a report.

a-b. Applicability. This continuing resolution applies in respect of each position resolution and without regard to the date of the resolution.

b-c. Period of effectiveness. The period during which a position resolution may be deemed effective, having regard for the purpose and subject matter of the resolution, and for other pertinent circumstances, should be of reasonable length and not continue after the purpose has been accomplished or the subject matter has substantially changed. In any case, but subject to Paragraph 4 of this continuing resolution, the period of effectiveness of a position resolution is to expire at the end of a specific period set forth in the resolution, or, absent such specific period, three years from the date of the resolution.

e-d. Subsequent status.

(a) *Normally, after the period of effectiveness of a position resolution has expired, as provided in Paragraph 3 of this continuing resolution, the status of the resolution is as an historical record. Nevertheless, if the Synod Council considers the subject matter or purpose of an expiring position resolution to be of continuing interest to the synod, the Synod Council may adopt the substance of the resolution as a continuing position or an operational policy of the synod.*

(b) *The period of effectiveness of a position resolution with a date prior to this continuing resolution shall not be deemed to have expired until the Synod Council has taken action concerning subsequent status of the resolution or unless the resolution provides for its own expiration.*

5. *Resolutions and Positions Review Committee. The Executive Committee in consultation with the bishop may appoint a Resolutions and Positions Review Committee of not more than five members, including Synod Council members and others. The duties and responsibilities of the committee are to include annual review of (a) expiring position resolutions and (b) continuing positions and operational policies which derive from position resolutions, and making recommendations to the Synod Council concerning subsequent status of such position resolutions, continuing positions and operational policies. The committee is to accord priority to review of any recommendations as to position resolutions with dates prior to this continuing resolution.*

S10.03. The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:

- a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.
- b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
- d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of Ministers of Word and Service, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.
- e. Issue letters of call to rostered ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this synod.
- g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.

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- S10.04.** Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.
- S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- S10.05.01** A member of the Synod Council may receive mileage compensation consistent with IRS mileage guidelines currently in force for participation in Synod Council business, as approved by the bishop of this synod.
- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.07.** The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.
- S10.08.** **Robert's Rules of Order**, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.
- S10.08.01.** To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 11.
COMMITTEES

Task Forces, Working Groups) (names of other organizational units)

†**S11.01.** There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S11.01.01. Committees of this synod. Committees of this synod are:

Committees relating to the office of the bishop are the Ministry Committee and the Constitution Review Committee, and their functions and responsibilities are as from time to time provided in the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the synod. The bishop appoints members of these committees, with the approval of the Council, and, generally, for terms of service of four years arranged, with reference to an election cycle, in the same manner as terms of OCM positions. Members of these committees are eligible to reappointment.

1. The Executive Committee, the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline, the Mutual Ministry Committee as provided for in †S11.01.
2. Committees relating to the office of bishop, as provided for in S11.01.16
3. Synod Assembly committees, as provided for in S11.01.05.
4. The Nominating Committee, as provided for in S11.01.06.
5. Synod Council committees, as provided for in S11.01.07

S11.01.02. Eligibility/qualifications for committee service. Other than the bishop ex officio, and subject to the provisions of S11.02.01 (Consultation Committee), and S11.03.01 (Committee on Discipline), no person shall concurrently be a member of more than one of the Standing Committees, as defined in S11.01.10. The standing committees are the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline, and committees relating to the office of the bishop: the Ministry Committee and the Constitution Review Committee. This provision is also subject to the provisions of S11.02.01 (Consultation Committee), and S11.03.01 (Committee on Discipline). Unless otherwise designated by the bishop, persons who are members in good standing in a congregation of this synod are eligible for committee service.

S11.01.03. General provisions pertaining to committees. Except as the bylaws may otherwise provide or require with reference to committees of the Synod Assembly, the Nominating Committee, Synod Council committees, the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline, and any Task Force or other Temporary Committee, the provisions of this bylaw apply to the committees of this synod.

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- 1) A committee develops its own agenda with reference to its function and responsibilities, determines its own procedures, and establishes appropriate sub-committees and working groups.
- 2) A committee shall elect and have a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson presides at committee meetings. The committee secretary is responsible to keep minutes and give notice of meetings. The committee secretary is also responsible to provide such minutes to the synod office, through a process defined in the continuing resolutions.
- 3) The synod shall fund the work and activities of a committee through the synodic budgetary process and the committee shall participate in that process.

S11.01.A22 *Committee secretaries shall provide electronic copies of all committee minutes to the bishop's executive assistant within one week following their approval by the committee.*

S11.01.04. Expenses. Members serving on the committees of this synod or of any other committee or similar body established pursuant to the constitution or the bylaws of this synod shall not receive compensation for such service, but the synod may reimburse them for necessary travel and out-of-pocket expenses while serving.

S11.01.05. **Synod Assembly committees.** Committees of the Synod Assembly include: a Committee on Reference and Council and other Synod Assembly committees (such as Planning Committee, Credentials Committee, Memorials Committee, Resolutions Committee, convention manager, sergeant-at-arms, tellers, parliamentarian), as deemed necessary by the bishop or the Synod Council. Synod Assembly committees have status, composition, appointment process, and functions and responsibilities as described and provided in S7.01.05.

S11.01.06. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee has the status, composition, appointment processes, and functions and responsibilities as described and provided in Chapter 9. (re-numbered)

S11.01.07. Synod Council committees. Synod Council committees include the Executive Committee, and any other committee established pursuant to S10.01.06. Such committees have status, composition, appointment process, functions and responsibilities as provided in the constitution and the bylaws and continuing resolutions pertaining to them.

S11.01.08. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall comprise the officers and five other council members (OCMs) Synod Council Members-at-large, at least one of the OCMs Synod Council Members-at-large shall be serving a term with an expiration date different than the expiration date of the terms of the other OCMs Synod Council Members-at-large. Normally, the period of appointment for OCMs Synod Council Members-at-large on the committee is two years, with no limitation on reappointment to an available position. The committee shall perform those functions of the Synod Council assigned to it by the Synod Council, and, subject to other or additional directions from the Synod Council, the committee shall oversee preparation of the agenda for Synod Council meetings, and shall set the salary of the bishop. The committee -- by the action or with the common approval of a majority of its members, and, normally, with at least five days' notice -- may call special meetings of the Synod Council. In appropriate circumstances, so recognized by a majority of its members, and provided that all committee members have a reasonable opportunity to participate, the committee may deliberate and do committee work by telephone conferences or by other electronic means. (re-numbered)

S11.01.09. Mutual Ministry Committee. The Mutual Ministry Committee has the status, composition, appointment processes, and functions and responsibilities as described and provided in S11.04.01. (re-numbered)

S11.01.10. Standing Committees. The Standing Committees are the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline, and committees relating to the office of the bishop: the Ministry Committee, and the Constitution Review Committee, as stipulated in S11.01.16 and S11.01.17 (re-numbered)

S11.01.11. Reports by Standing committees. The Standing committees shall make annual written reports to the Synod Assembly. Each report shall cover the committee's activities since the preceding report. Such reports by the Consultation Committee and the Committee on Discipline shall not provide indemnificatory particulars with respect to any matter or case pending on the date of any such report. (re-numbered)

S11.01.16 Committees relating to the office of the bishop: The Ministry Committee Committees relating to the office of the bishop are (the Ministry Committee and the Constitution Review Committee), and their-its functions and responsibilities are as from time to time provided in the bylaws and continuing

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resolutions of the synod. The bishop appoints members of ~~these~~ this committee, with the approval of the Synod Council, and, generally, for terms of service of four years arranged, with reference to an election cycle, in the same manner as terms of OCM Synod Council Members-at-large positions. Members of these committees are eligible to reappointment.

S11.01.C22. Ministry Committee. *The functions and responsibilities of the Ministry Committee pertain to pastoral care of Congregations and to ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service. The committee, as appropriate for this synod, develops, guides, supports and oversees programs of ministry in daily life; programs and activities for development of professional leaders (including recruitment, encouragement and evaluation, and subsequent certification of candidates); policies and standards for compensation and benefits for professional leaders; and, programs for the care of and the continuing education for professional leaders. Members of the committee, selected by the candidacy committee, may participate in multi-synodic committees for certification of candidates for ordination and in the certification or accreditation processes for other professional leaders. (re-numbered)*

S11.01.17 The Constitution Review Committee

The Constitution Review Committee and its functions and responsibilities are as from time to time provided in the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the synod. The bishop appoints members of this committee, with the approval of the Synod Council, and, generally, for terms of service of four years arranged, with reference to an election cycle, in the same manner as terms of Synod Council Members-at-large positions. Members of these committees are eligible to reappointment.

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S11.01.F99. Constitution Review Committee. *The functions and responsibilities of the Constitution Review Committee are to review the constitutions of Congregations and organizational documents of Conferences of this synod to determine whether the documents conform with apposite provisions of the constitution, the bylaws and the continuing resolutions of the ELCA (including the Constitution for Congregations); to report to the bishop and the Synod Council concerning such determinations; and, where a document appears deficient, to indicate necessary revision to the Congregation or the Conference. The committee may also advise the bishop and the Synod Council with regard to constitutional matters. The committee shall have six members including, normally, the secretary of the synod.*

S11.01.18. Task Forces and Temporary committees. The Synod Council shall, as directed by the Synod Assembly, and may, by its own action as it from time to time finds necessary, establish task forces and temporary committees of this synod. Normally, a task force or temporary committee shall have a specific assignment not duplicative of a function or responsibility of another committee established pursuant to the constitution, and the Synod Council shall describe the assignment in reasonable detail. The Synod Council shall appoint the members of a task force or temporary committee and may appoint the chairperson or convener. Generally, eligibility for appointment is as provided in the first sentence of S11.01.02. Members of the Synod Council may be appointed, but no member of the Consultation Committee, the Committee on Discipline or a committee convened under †S14.13.b. or pursuant to S14.13.08. is eligible to serve on a task force or temporary committee. A task force or temporary committee may have up to twenty members, and shall normally complete its assignment and submit any required report within a period of not more than 18 months. (re-numbered)

S11.01.19. Accountability. The Standing committees and Task Forces and Temporary committees of this synod -- together with their members -- are accountable to the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly for due performance of their respective functions and responsibilities. Normally, the oversight of such performance -- which may encompass a committee's policies, programs, activities and work-product -- shall be by the Synod Council. (re-numbered)

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

S11.02.01. The Bishop shall be a member of the Consultation Committee ex officio except in instances when the Bishop brings charges against an ordained minister.

- S11.02.02.** The terms of service of members of the Consultation Committee begin on the first day of the third calendar month following election.
- †**S11.03.** The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.
- a. The functions of the Committee on Discipline of this synod are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- b. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.
- S11.03.01.** The Bishop shall not be a member of the Committee on Discipline.
- S11.03.02.** The terms of service of members of the Committee on Discipline begin on the first day of the third calendar month following election.
- †**S11.04.** The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.
- S11.04.01. Mutual Ministry Committee.** The Mutual Ministry Committee consists of seven members, and its function is to provide support and counsel to the bishop. Two members are named by the bishop and serve for the period the bishop may determine, and five members are appointed by the Synod Council and serve for the period the Synod Council may determine; in any case, the period of service of each member shall expire not later than the expiration of the bishop's current term of office. The bishop may seek the counsel and support of any member of the committee at the bishop's pleasure, and may convene meetings of the committee, or of any of its members, to seek their counsel and support on any matter which she/he deems necessary or desirable. Meetings of the committee or consultation between the bishop and any member shall be informal, and votes, minutes or other written memorials or reports not required unless requested by the bishop.
- †**S11.05.** The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom is a member of the synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in †S15.31.
- S11.10. General Provisions**
- S11.11.** This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

Chapter 12.
CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS,
AREA SUBDIVISIONS, AND NETWORKS

- †**S12.01.** This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and entities, as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other affiliates.
- S12.01.01. Conferences.** Groupings of Congregations of this synod, under Chapter 12 of the constitution, are "Conferences."
- S12.01.A21 Number/names/description of Conferences.**
- a. *This synod and its Congregations shall comprise eight Conferences, to be known as the "Central," "Near West," "North," "Northeast," "Northwest," "South," "Southwest," and "West" Conferences. Normally, a Congregation belongs to the Conference within whose boundaries its place of worship is located. The Council may change or adjust such boundaries.*

b. The current rosters of Congregations in each Conference are as follows:

CENTRAL (All in the City of Chicago) (checked)

Bethel (West), Chicago
Edgebrook, Chicago
Edison Park, Chicago
First Evangelical, Chicago
Iglesia Luterana De La Trinidad, Chicago
Martin Luther, Chicago
Mission of Christ, Chicago
Mosaic, Chicago
Purna Jivan, Chicago
St. James on Foster, Chicago
St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square, Chicago
St. Timothy, Chicago
United in Faith, Chicago
Wicker Park, Chicago

NEAR WEST (checked)

Acacia Park, Norridge
Ascension, Riverside
Christ, Clarendon Hills
Community United, Berwyn
Epiphany, Elmhurst
Faith, Brookfield
Gethsemane, Cicero
Gloria Dei, Downers Grove
Good Shepherd, Oak Park
Grace, La Grange
Grace, Westchester
Holy Trinity, Lombard
Lord of Life, Darien
Mision Luterana Unidad, Berwyn
Prince of Peace, Addison
Redeemer, Hinsdale
Resurrection, Franklin Park
St. James, Western Springs
St. Luke's, Elmhurst
St. Michael's, La Grange Park
St. Paul, Villa Park
St. Paul Thai, Forest Park
United, Oak Park
Unity, Berwyn

NORTH (checked)

Christ, Vernon Hills
Evangelical Lutheran Church of All Saints, Fox Lake
Grace, Libertyville
Holy Cross, Libertyville
Holy Spirit, Lincolnshire
Hope, Long Grove
Joy!, Gurnee
Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Barrington

Messiah, Wauconda
Parroquia Luterana Sagrado Corazon, Waukegan
Peace, Lake Zurich
Shepherd of the Lakes, Grayslake
St. Andrew, Mundelein
St. James, Lake Forest
St. Mark's, Waukegan
St. Paul, Waukegan
St. Stephen, Antioch
Trinity Evangelical, Ingleside
Trinity United, Waukegan
Zion, Deerfield

NORTHEAST (checked)

Christ, Chicago
Concordia, Chicago
Ebenezer, Chicago
Evangelical Church of St. Luke, Chicago
First Immanuel, Chicago
Gloria Dei, Northbrook
Grace, Evanston
Holy Family, Chicago
Holy Trinity, Chicago
Holy Trinity, Glenview
Immanuel, Chicago
Immanuel, Evanston
Irving Park, Chicago
Lake View, Chicago
Luther Memorial, Chicago
Lutheran Church of the Ascension, Northfield
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Niles
Messiah, Park Ridge
Pilgrim, Chicago
Redeemer, Park Ridge
Resurrection, Chicago
St. John's, Wilmette
St. Luke's, Park Ridge
St. Paul's, Evanston
St. Philip, Glenview
St. Timothy's, Skokie
Trinity, Evanston
Unity, Chicago
University, Evanston

NORTHWEST (good)

All Saints, Palatine
Bethlehem, Elgin
Christ, Palatine
Christ the Lord, Elgin
Christus Victor, Elk Grove Village
Grace, Mount Prospect

Holy Trinity, Elgin
Lord of Life, Schaumburg
Lutheran Church of Martha & Mary, Mount Prospect
Lutheran Church of the Cross, Arlington Heights
Lutheran Church of Good Shepherd, Prospect Heights
New Light Chinese, Palatine
Our Saviour, Arlington Heights
Prince of Peace, Schaumburg
St. Mark, Mount Prospect
St. Matthew, Itasca
Trinity, Rolling Meadows
Trinity, Des Plaines
True Light, Streamwood
Zion, Elgin

SOUTH (checked)

Ashburn, Chicago
Augustana, Chicago
Bethany, Chicago
Bethel-Imani, Chicago
Bethlehem Evangelical, Chicago
Calvary (Kenneth), Chicago
Christ the Mediator, Chicago
Come Alive Ministry of Faith, Chicago
First of the Trinity, Chicago
Iglesia de la Santa Cruz, Chicago
Lebanon, Chicago
Love, Faith, and Hope SAWC, Chicago
Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, Chicago
Reformation, Chicago
Salem, Chicago
St. James (on Michigan), Chicago
St. James Evangelical, Chicago
St. Mark, Chicago
St. Stephen, Chicago
St. Thomas, Chicago
Tumaini Swahili Chapel, Elk Grove Village
Windsor Park, Chicago
Zion Lutheran Church of Avalon Park, Chicago

SOUTHWEST (checked)

Bethany, Lemont
Evangelical LC of the Good Shepherd, Palos Heights
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Palos Heights
Faith, Homewood
First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Blue Island
Good Shepherd, Robbins
Jubilee Faith Community, Country Club Hills
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Oak Forest
Mount Zion, Oak Lawn
Our Savior, Burbank
Our Saviour Evangelical, Lansing
Redeemer, South Holland

Redeemer's, Oak Forest
Savior Divine, Palos Hills
Shekinah Chapel, Riverdale
St. Andrew's, Glenwood
St. Mark, Worth
St. Philip, Blue Island
St. Stephen, Midlothian
Trinity Evangelical, Oak Lawn
Trinity, Park Forest
Zion, Tinley Park

WEST (good)

Bethany, Batavia
Bethlehem, St. Charles
Faith, Glen Ellyn
Faith, Aurora
Geneva, Geneva
Good Shepherd, Naperville
Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake, St. Charles
Grace, Glen Ellyn
Holy Cross, Wheaton
Living Lord, Bartlett
Lutheran Church of the Master, Carol Stream
Naperville Yuhllin, Aurora
New Hope, Aurora
Our Savior, Aurora
Our Saviour's, Naperville
Prince of Peace, Woodridge
Rejoice, Geneva
St. Andrew, West Chicago
St. Luke, Glen Ellyn
St. Mark's, Aurora
St. Paul, Wheaton
St. Timothy, Naperville
Trinity, Warrenville
Truth, Naperville

c. The **Synod** Council may transfer a congregation from one Conference to another. Normally, such a transfer shall be based upon an application by a congregation proposing to be transferred. The application shall be in writing, addressed to the **Synod** Council, and include rationale in support of the proposed transfer.

12.01.02 Purposes of the Conferences. The purposes of the Conferences are --

- a. to foster clustering of Congregations within one Conference and with those of other Conferences; to encourage gatherings among Congregations for worship; programming, nurture and support; and, to provide monthly meetings of ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of a conference for education, nurturing and fellowship.
- b. to participate in this synod's electoral processes -- that is, processes for nominations and elections - - in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the synod.

12.01.03. Organizational principles. Various organizational forms are available to Conferences. A Conference shall define its own organization by means of an appropriate organizational document. The initial organization and any re-organization of a Conference shall reflect principles in this bylaw and be subject to approval by the **Synod** Council. Individual leadership of a Conference shall be the dean. The dean shall be elected according to a Conference's process for such election and for a term of service of not more than four years; there may, but need not, be a limitation on reelection of the dean. After the organizational meeting, and apart from the process for electing the dean, the voting constituency of a Conference shall include the ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of the Congregations of the Conference and at least one lay person from each Congregation. A Conference shall hold an annual meeting including its voting constituency, and have a planning council elected by the voting constituency. The planning council shall have at least five members, including the dean, who are voting members of different Congregations of the Conference. The terms of service of planning council members shall not exceed four years, and should be staggered to different expiration dates; there may, but need not, be limitations on reelection of planning council members. A Conference may have funds in reasonable amount for which its planning council shall be accountable.

12.01.04 Electoral meetings.

- a) Each Conference shall hold electoral meetings of its voting constituency in order, pursuant to S9.03.02, to select persons for appointment or nomination for meetings of the **Synod** Assembly.
- b) Each electoral meeting is subject to these requirements: An electoral meeting shall be at the meeting of the conference at the **Synod** Assembly or at a meeting held before December, upon due notice to members of the voting constituency, for the purpose of selecting persons for appointment or nomination. Each selection and election of a person shall be by majority vote of the voting constituency and with a quorum of at least one member of the voting constituency from each of Congregations comprising 30% of Congregations of the Conference, and shall be the subject of a written record. Proxy or absentee voting shall not be permitted.
- c) A Conference, by its Dean, is promptly to report each selection and election by an electoral meeting to the **Synod** Council. The **Synod** Council is promptly to advise the Nominating Committee of each such selection and election.

S12.01.05. Dean The dean of a Conference shall --

- a) aid the Conference and its planning council in setting and achieving Conference objectives,
- b) arrange the monthly meetings of ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service,
- c) maintain personal contacts with the ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of the Conference,
- d) serve as a communications link between the synod office and the ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of the Conference,
- e) make an annual written report to the bishop -- including a summary of Conference activities and advising with respect to the conditions and needs of this church within **his/her the** Conference -- to be part of the reports to the **Synod** Assembly, and
- f) perform such other duties as the bishop may from time to time assign.

The deans may attend meetings of the **Synod** Council as spokespersons and observers for their Conferences, with voice but not vote at such meetings.

Chapter 13.

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CONGREGATIONS

- †S13.01. Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the roster of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the *Model Constitution for Congregations* or one acceptable to this synod that is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- a. **New congregations.** A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:
 - 1) Accept the criteria for recognition and reception as a congregation of this church, fulfill the functions of the congregation, and accept the governance provisions as provided in Chapter 9 of the constitution and bylaws of this church.
 - 2) Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* consistent with requirements of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the constitution of this synod, or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.
 - 3) Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of this church as stated in *C6.01., *C6.02., and *C6.03. of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.
 - b. **Congregations from another church body.** If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leadership of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should contact the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located. The synod bishop or synod staff where the transferring or independent congregation is located shall confer with the congregation to assure its understanding and acceptance of commitment to and affiliation with this church.
 - c. **Recognition and reception.** Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the roster of congregations.
- †S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.
- S13.11. When a rostered minister resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.
- S13.12. A congregation under financial obligation to its former rostered minister shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.
- †S13.20. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- †S13.20. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
- †S13.21. A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
- †S13.22. Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America within the territory of this synod, except those which are in partnership with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish and maintain a relationship with this synod.

†S13.23. Provision 9.71. of the constitution of this church shall govern the relationship of this synod and a congregation of this synod regarding the property of the congregation. This synod may transfer or convey property to a congregation of the synod, subject to restrictions accepted by the congregation, including provision that if the Synod Council, in its sole and exclusive discretion, determines (1) that the property is not being used to serve the mission and ministry needs of this church, or (2) that the congregation has transferred, encumbered, mortgaged, or in any way burdened or impaired any right, title, or interest in the property without the prior approval of the Synod Council, then title to the property shall revert to the synod, and the congregation, upon written demand, shall reconvey the property to the synod.

S13.23.01. Property of congregation terminating relationship with this church. This bylaw is subject to provision 9.52. of the ELCA constitution concerning the governing documents of Congregations recognized at the establishment of this church, and does not provide for action inconsistent with the said provision 9.52. Whenever a Congregation has initiated action to terminate its relationship with this church under provision 9.62. of the ELCA constitution and requested to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, the synod ~~is real~~ process set forth in steps a. through e. of this bylaw is established for the consultation concerning title to property of the Congregation, under provision 9.71.e. of the ELCA constitution, by the Synod Council with the Congregation prior to the Synod Council's decision on whether to approve the Congregation's request ~~to retain their property~~.

- a. The Congregation shall, after having submitted the certified copy of the resolution to terminate to the bishop and, in the case of congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America (as constituted prior to January 1, 1988), after the termination is approved by this synod (as required for such congregations by provision 9.62. of the ELCA constitution), deliver to the bishop a written request stating whether the Congregation desires to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body and, if the latter, such request shall identify the non-Lutheran church body and describe any and all action the Congregation has taken or which it intends to take in order to accomplish such relationship.
- b. Within 30 days from receipt of such written request from a Congregation, the bishop shall present the request to the Synod Council.
- c. After the Synod Council receives the request, the bishop shall be afforded opportunity by the Congregation for a meeting with it, at a mutually-agreed time and place, for the purpose of discussing the request. Such meeting shall be informal, and any member of the Congregation and any member of the Synod Council may attend and be given voice. However, no such meeting shall be held unless the pastor or pastors of the Congregation and at least a majority of members of the Congregation Council (or, if such body is identified by a different designation, to the equivalent congregational authority) are also present.
- d. Within 10 days after the said informal meeting, the Congregation shall deliver to the bishop true, complete and correct copies of all documents, papers, letters and records in the possession of the Congregation, as may be requested by the bishop or by any member of the Synod Council who attended the meeting, which pertain to the requested termination.
- e. Within 45 days after the informal meeting, the bishop shall convene a meeting of the Synod Council for the purpose of making the final determination concerning the Congregation's request. Any member of the Congregation may attend such meeting and be afforded reasonable time and opportunity to address the Synod Council on matters pertaining to the requested termination. The Synod Council need not announce the determination at such Synod Council meeting, but as soon as practicable after the meeting, the Synod Council will give written notification to the Congregation by sending copies of the determination to the pastor or pastors, to each member of the Congregation Council (or equivalent authority), and to the secretary of the Congregation. The Synod Council in its sole discretion, may decide whether it would be appropriate or desirable for the notification to set forth the basis or reason for the determination.

†S13.24. The Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of a congregation of this synod to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod, if any of the following apply:

- a. The congregation has disbanded, ceased to worship, or otherwise ceased to exist as a congregation.

- b. The congregation has abandoned its property.
- c. The remaining members of the congregation decide that it is no longer possible to function as a congregation or that they are unable to provide required governance.
- d. The Synod Council determines that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers that it cannot provide required governance or that it has become impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized.
- e. The Synod Council determines that it is necessary for this synod to protect and preserve the congregation's property from waste and deterioration.

The congregation shall have the right to appeal any such decision to the next Synod Assembly.

S13.25. This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence. Such synod administration shall continue only so long as necessary to complete the purposes for which it was requested by the congregation or until the congregation withdraws consent to continued administration.

S13.30. Discipline

†**S13.31.** Congregations and members of congregations are subject to discipline in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The synod's involvement in and responsibility for such disciplinary processes shall be as set forth in that chapter.

S13.40. Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities

S13.41. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Chapter 14.

ROSTERED MINISTERS

†**S14.10. Ministers of Word and Sacrament**

†**S14.11.** The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

†**S14.12.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
 - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline;
 - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of this synod; and
 - 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

- S14.13.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- S14.14.** Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.
- S14.15.** Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a **ministry** report **of his or her ministry** to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †**S14.16.** When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church:
- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective pastor.
 - b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds vote shall be required of voting members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
 - c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective pastor, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.
- S14.17.** No minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Sacrament shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †**S14.18.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) ~~the bishop~~ in ~~his or her~~ **the bishop's** sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition.

When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

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

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

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.22. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the parochial records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.24. With the approval of the synod bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.18., a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.18.

S14.25. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

†S14.30. **Ministers of Word and Service**

†S14.31. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every Minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

S14.33. The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.34. Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

†S14.41. When a congregation of this church desires to call a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Service of this church:

- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective minister of Word and Service.
- b. For issuance of a letter of call to a minister of Word and Service or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.71., a two-thirds vote shall be required of members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
- c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective minister of Word and Service, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.

S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the minister of Word and Service, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
 - 5) suspension of the minister of Word and Service through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the minister of Word and Service from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;

- 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the minister of Word and Service and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee address whether the minister of Word and Service's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the minister of Word and Service, if appropriate. If the minister of Word and Service and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the minister of Word and Service's call, the congregation may dismiss the minister of Word and Service only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- †S14.44. Ministers of Word and Service shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the Congregation Council.
- †S14.45. The minister of Word and Service shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
- a. installation in another call, or
 - b. approval of a request for change in roster status.
- †S14.46. With the approval of the synod bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.43., a congregation may call a minister of Word and Service for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the minister of Word and Service and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.43.

- S14.47.** All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

Chapter 15.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

- †**S15.01.** The fiscal year of this synod shall be February 1 through January 31.
- †**S15.11.** Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church, the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:
- The mission of this church beyond the congregation is to be supported by such a proportionate share of each congregation's annual budget as each congregation determines. This synod shall develop guidelines for determining "proportionate share," and shall consult with congregational leaders to assist each congregation in making its determination.
 - This synod shall receive the proportionate share of the mission support from its congregations, and shall transmit that percentage or amount of each congregation's mission support as determined in consultation with the churchwide organization and approved by the Synod Assembly as part of its budget consideration.
 - Should the Synod Assembly not approve the proportionate share of mission support determined in consultation with the churchwide organization, a new consultation with the churchwide organization shall take place. The Synod Council is authorized to amend the budget adopted by the Synod Assembly to reflect the results of this consultation.
- †**S15.12.** The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to supportive funding with other synods and the churchwide organization.
- S15.13.** On the basis of estimated income, the Synod Council shall authorize expenditures within the budget for the fiscal year. Expenditure authorizations shall be subject to revision, in light of changing conditions, by the Synod Council.
- S15.14.** Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.
- S15.21.** No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.
- S15.21.01.** Intermediaries. A Congregation or organization related to or affiliated with this synod may not utilize an intermediary to avoid the consent required in **S15.21**.
- S15.21.02.** Fund-raising. Generally, for purposes of **S15.21**., consent by this synod for an appeal for raising funds shall be based upon an application for such consent. The process set forth in steps a. through e. of this bylaw is established for such applications and their disposition.
- The application shall be in writing and addressed to the **Synod** Council. The application shall identify, as applicant, all Congregations or organizations seeking the consent, describe the purpose and scope of the proposed appeal, and include all supporting information applicant believes pertinent.
 - The **Synod** Council may summarily deny an application whereof applicant includes a Congregation which is not current in providing proportionate share support according to Chapter 15 of the constitution or an organization which is not fulfilling requirements of its affiliation or relationship.
 - Before deeming an application complete, the **Synod** Council in its discretion shall have a reasonable opportunity to ask applicant for additional information (allowing a reasonable period for applicant's reply) or otherwise to develop such additional information.

- d) Within 180 days after the Synod Council deems an application complete, it shall act on the application, with written notice of the action to applicant. Such action, in the Synod Council's discretion, may include any of the following:
 - i. consent or conditional consent for the appeal.
 - ii. denial of consent which may, but need not, recite a particular reason for the denial.
 - iii. referral of the application, with or without recommendation, to the Synod Assembly.
- e) The Synod Council's disposition of the application is final. An application referred by the Synod Council to the Synod Assembly, may be disposed of in any manner the Synod Assembly deems appropriate.

S15.21.03. Consent not required in certain circumstances. Consent by this synod under S15.21. is not applicable to and is not required for—

- a. reasonable funding of activities of a Conference by Congregations of the Conference.
- b. reasonable funding for a period of not more than one year of specific educational, charitable or benevolence projects within the Statement of Purpose of this church by a Congregation provided
 - i. such funding may not supplant the Congregation's proportionate share support for this church beyond the congregation under Chapter 15 of the constitution,
 - ii. during the period of funding the Congregation is current in providing such support, and
 - iii. the Congregation has invited a proposal for such funding.
- c. reasonable funding for a period of not more than one year of specific joint educational, charitable or benevolence projects within the Statement of Purpose of this church by or on the part of several Congregations provided
 - i. such funding shall not supplant the Congregations' proportionate share support for this church beyond the congregation under Chapter 15 of the constitution,
 - ii. during the period of funding each such Congregation is current in providing such support, and
 - iii. the funding is provided by all or some of such Congregations.

†S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.

†S15.32. This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organization. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation.

Chapter 16.

INDEMNIFICATION

†S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.02.

- a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to †S16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

- b. The term “indemnification” includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys’ fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.

S16.01.A87. *Indemnification for members of certain committees.*

- a. *Members of the Consultation Committee, the synod’s **ieat** component of the Committee on Discipline, the Ministry Committee of this synod, and of each committee convened under †S14.13.b. or S14.13.08., within the scope and proper conduct of the functions and responsibilities of such committees and with reference to certain third persons, are agents of the synod and eligible to be indemnified under †S16.01. of the constitution. “Certain third persons” means only persons who are members of this church and with whom such a committee deals on behalf of this church or this synod, but not persons who are indemnified under †S16.01.*
- b. *As from time to time appropriate for purposes of indemnification according to †S16.01., the **Synod** Council may designate members of committees of the synod, other than the committees identified in provision a. of this resolution, as agents of the synod.*

†S16.02. Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall be entitled to indemnification only if (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.

†S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section †S16.01. or section †S16.02.

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

Chapter 17.

CONSULTATION AND ADJUDICATION

†S17.01. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.

†S17.02. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from rostered ministers of this church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When a concern relates directly to the synod bishop, the synod vice president will lead the Executive Committee’s efforts at resolving the matter. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, applicable procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of a rostered minister of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

†S17.03. When there is disagreement between or among congregations of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the council of an affected congregation may petition the synod bishop for a consultation after informing the other affected congregation(s) of its intent to do so. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of

the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the issue(s), the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

†S17.04. When conferences, clusters, coalitions, or area subdivisions of this synod have a disagreement on a substantive issue that they cannot resolve, the aggrieved party or parties may petition the synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council requesting a consultation after informing the other affected parties of their intent to do so. In this case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that, upon the motion of a member of the Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.

†S17.10. **Adjudication in a Congregation**

†S17.11. When there is disagreement between or among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of the congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of the Congregation Council of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 18.

AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

†S18.10. **Amendments to Constitution**

†S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the *Constitution for Synods*, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

†S18.13. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following procedures:

a. Introduced with the support of at least 100 voting members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, an amendment may be adopted unchanged by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council.

†S18.20. **Amendments to Bylaws**

†S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution or with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

†S18.30. **Amendments to Continuing Resolutions**

†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing

resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.



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

CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL POLICIES

Approved by the ELCA Church
Council, November 2022
Last approved by the Executive Committee
of Church Council, June 2022
Effective November X, 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Welcome

Welcome to the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are pleased that you have joined our staff. We hope you will find your job challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding, and we wish you success. We believe each employee contributes to this church's ministry and mission, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of the churchwide organization.

Please read these policies carefully. We have tried to anticipate questions you may have about your benefits and opportunities as well as our policies and procedures. Do not hesitate to raise any questions you may have.

1.2. Nature and Purpose of This Church

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is part of the universal Church of Christ. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of the Church are to be carried out under his rule and authority.

1.3. About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a nationwide church dedicated to the propagation of the Christian faith in the Lutheran tradition. It began its existence on January 1, 1988, following the merger of three predecessor Lutheran bodies. The name "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" refers, in general references, to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization, which is the employer. The churchwide organization is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation headquartered at 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois. The 65 separately incorporated synods of the church constitute the second expression. The thousands of congregations that are separately incorporated constitute the third expression of this church.

The relationships between the three expressions of the ELCA are ecclesiastical in nature. Under the civil law, the churchwide organization, each synod, and each congregation is separate and distinct from the others. This separate legal status allows each entity to function in the secular world by engaging in activities such as making contracts, hiring employees, and owning property. While legally separate, the three expressions together constitute this church.

The ELCA is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.

1.4. Important Notice About the Personnel Policies of the Churchwide Organization

These policies have been approved by the ELCA Church Council, which is the board of directors of the churchwide organization. Included here are significant policies, practices, and procedures followed by the churchwide organization with regard to the organization's employees. Additional specific policies and practices are provided to employees on the ELCA intranet. Employees who have questions that are not answered in this document or on the intranet should address those questions to their supervisor or People Solutions. Different policies may apply to some employees serving as missionaries or to certain deployed staff. These policies do not apply to employees of any of the ELCA's synods or congregations, nor to other agencies or affiliated organizations.

This document is designed to provide employees with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and important policies affecting employment. These policies are published to provide a convenient resource for all employees, to assist in the orientation of new employees, and to promote consistency in the administration of

the services provided by the ELCA. Employees are expected to read, understand, and comply with all provisions in this document.

No set of personnel policies can anticipate every circumstance or question or summarize every policy. Therefore, these policies are not intended to create, nor do they create, contract rights. Notwithstanding any provision of these policies, the churchwide organization has the right to make employment-related decisions on a case-by-case and at-will basis. Similarly, this church has the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policy or portion of these policies from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole discretion and without advance notice. Any such changes shall apply to both current and future employees. The ELCA will seek to make sure that a current copy of the Personnel Policies is available to all employees. If any provision of these policies is inconsistent with a third-party benefit plan, such as those of Portico Benefits Services or an ELCA governing document, the applicable benefit plan or ELCA governing document will ordinarily be controlling.

As a religious institution, the ELCA has certain protections and rights under the free exercise and establishment clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and similar provisions of state constitutions. Additional rights are granted religious organizations by certain federal and state statutes. These protections are a key element of American law, and nothing in these policies constitutes a waiver of such protections and rights.

The applicability of these policies to ministers rostered by the ELCA or another church body depends on the particular circumstances. Churchwide employees, rostered or otherwise, whose duties are ministerial in nature are not covered by employment discrimination laws or related regulations. The same is true for applicants for employment in such ministerial positions. Further, depending on the particular circumstances, such ministerial employees and applicants for employment may not be covered by other employment-related laws.

In addition, a rostered minister is subject to the standards established and administered by the ELCA and the appropriate synod in their respective governing documents. Because of the nature of the ministerial office, the application of these policies to ministers generally is subject to the following guidelines:

- To the extent that a rostered minister functions as a supervisor of other employees, that minister is expected to follow the guidelines of the Personnel Policies relating to supervision.
- This document describes certain benefits and practices—for example, paid vacation, leave benefits, and holidays—available to all employees of the ELCA, and those benefits will generally be available to rostered ministers as well.
- This document also describes certain policies—for example, no-smoking policies, policies relating to computer and email usage and other electronic communications, and policies describing on-the-job behavior and conduct—that are considered applicable to all employees regardless of the ministerial nature of their work.

Nothing in these Personnel Policies, however, is intended to detract from a person's obligations and responsibilities as a rostered minister, including but not necessarily limited to rights and responsibilities under a letter of call or imposed by reason of the governing documents of the ELCA.

2. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

2.1. Nature of Employment

Employment with the ELCA is voluntarily entered into, and unless a specific written contract containing different terms has been agreed upon, the employment relationship is “at will.” This means that subject to applicable legal provisions and governing document requirements, the employment relationship can be terminated at any time by either party for any reason, with or without cause or notice. The employee is free to resign at any time. Similarly, the church may terminate the employment relationship at any time.

Nothing in these Personnel Policies creates contractual obligations or rights on the part of the churchwide organization. By way of illustration, the churchwide organization retains the following rights:

- To determine the necessary qualifications for employment, and to recruit, select, and hire employees;
- To determine both the extent and the type of work to be performed by all employees and to establish and maintain efficient procedures, standards, and methods necessary to achieve the work;
- To determine the design and size of the workforce, to assign work, and to transfer employees from job to job;
- To classify, promote, and assign employees;
- To take disciplinary action when necessary or appropriate, which may include termination of employment; and
- To determine work schedules, to implement layoffs, and to make all other management decisions.

2.2. Application Form

All applicants for employment with the ELCA must complete the application procedure as specified by People Solutions as well as all forms necessary to complete required background/reference checks.

An applicant who is rostered must ensure that their Rostered Leader Profile is current.

2.3. Management Philosophy

Experience has shown that dealing openly and directly with employees enhances the work environment. This church values and respects integrity, excellence, and interdependence, and believes these values give a sense of shared purpose and help everyone focus on the needs of the people and institutions we serve. Employees are encouraged to ask questions about their jobs and to express any concerns about job-related issues directly to their supervisor.

2.4. Equal Employment Opportunity

The ELCA is an equal opportunity employer committed to employing individuals who are qualified to meet the responsibilities of their jobs. Therefore, the church’s policy is to employ, retain, promote, and terminate employees and applicants for employment on the basis of merit, qualifications, and competence. Subject to Section 1.4 above and the following paragraph, this policy of nondiscrimination governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

However, as discussed in Section 1.4, under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and similar provisions in state constitutions, federal, state, and municipal antidiscrimination laws and regulations, as well as other employment laws, do not apply to ministerial positions or employees, whether or not rostered. In addition, certain positions require ordination, Lutheran theological training or experience, or membership in an ELCA

congregation. The ELCA expressly reserves the right to discriminate on these or similar grounds. Therefore, this equal opportunity policy will be interpreted and applied in accordance with those constitutional and statutory provisions applicable to churches and other religious organizations. Nothing in these Personnel Policies waives any of this church's constitutional or statutory rights.

Any employee with questions or concerns about discrimination in the workplace is encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor, any other supervisor, or any People Solutions employee. Employees can raise concerns and make good-faith reports without fear of reprisal.

2.5. Accommodations

This church aims to make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities of applicants or employees. Generally, any such accommodation must permit applicants or employees to perform the jobs held or applied for without causing an undue hardship for the church. All accommodation decisions are made by People Solutions on a case-by-case basis, taking into account applicable legal and constitutional requirements, the qualifications and particular circumstances of the individual in relation to job-related criteria, and this church's resources.

2.6. Hiring Procedures

2.6.1. Role of People Solutions

People Solutions must be notified in advance of all vacancies, transfers, promotions, demotions, or terminations.

All discussions with prospective or current employees regarding pay, relocation, or benefits require advance consultation with People Solutions.

People Solutions makes all offers of employment.

No commitments or representations that are inconsistent with these hiring procedures may be made without the advance written approval of the executive for People and DEI. In the absence of such advance written approval, any offer, commitment, or representation inconsistent with these hiring procedures is null and void.

2.6.2. Letters of Call

Letters of call will be prepared and sent by the Office of the Secretary to rostered ministers called to serve in positions in the churchwide organization. Such letters will be prepared by the Office of the Secretary in conjunction with offer letters prepared by People Solutions.

2.6.3. Restrictions Applicable to Certain Positions

The churchwide organization will not hire a person for a position with financial oversight responsibility if, during the previous three years, the person was directly or indirectly involved in an independent audit of the organization or an affiliated entity or had a financial interest in the firm performing the audit.

Members of the Church Council and members of a board or advisory committee will be required to resign from such membership prior to accepting a position with the churchwide organization.

Vacancies in certain executive positions are filled in accordance with applicable governing documents.

2.7. Job Posting

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to provide current and prospective employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions. While job openings are normally posted, People Solutions may decide that a particular opening will not be posted. Posted job openings will normally remain open until filled. Each job-

posting notice will normally include the dates of the posting period, job title, essential duties, minimum salary, job location and hybrid/remote details, and required qualifications and skills.

Job posting is only one way to inform current and prospective employees of openings and to identify qualified and interested applicants who might not otherwise be known. Other recruiting sources may also be used to fill open positions.

2.8. Personal Relationships in the Workplace

A relative of a current employee may not occupy a position in which they will directly supervise or be supervised by that employee. An individual involved in a dating relationship with a current employee will not be permitted to supervise or be supervised by that employee. The church also reserves the right to take appropriate action if an actual or potential conflict of interest arises involving relatives or individuals in a dating relationship.

If a family relationship or dating relationship exists between employees who are in a supervisory situation as described above, the supervisor and the supervised employee involved in the relationship must disclose the existence of the relationship to People Solutions.

If a conflict or potential conflict arises because of a relationship between employees, even if there is no supervisory relationship, the employees may be separated by reassignment or have their employment terminated.

2.9. Allegations of Misconduct

Whenever there is any indication that a candidate being seriously considered for employment has been the subject of allegations including criminal conduct, substance abuse, financial misconduct, sexual misconduct, or sexual harassment, the executive for Administration and the general counsel will be notified before any offer of employment is extended to the candidate. This requirement is in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other procedures applicable to the hiring of an individual for the position to be filled. Being “seriously considered for employment” means that the candidate is the only individual or one of the finalists being considered for the position.

The notice required under the previous paragraph must be given in all cases where the candidate, if hired, will be an employee of the churchwide organization, and without regard to the home area involved, the full-time or part-time nature of the position, and the persons involved in the decision-making process. The procedure will also be followed if the particular individual would be an independent contractor rather than an employee.

If the candidate is or was rostered, additional requirements apply:

A currently rostered candidate’s Rostered Leader Profile will be requested from the appropriate synodical bishop for dissemination, in accordance with established procedures, to the head of the home area for which the candidate applied.

If the candidate experienced a break in service—any extended period of time when the candidate was without a call or was not on the roster—all the relevant facts and circumstances must be reviewed and a satisfactory explanation provided if the candidate is to be further considered.

2.10. Ethical Conduct

The ELCA’s reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of applicable laws and regulations, as well as due regard for ethical behavior, standards of conduct, and personal integrity. The church expects its employees to conduct themselves in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent

of relevant laws, regulations, and ELCA procedures and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

The mission and ministry of the ELCA also depend on the trust and confidence of synods and congregations. Employees are expected to act in a way that will merit the continuation of this trust and confidence. All funds and property received and administered by the churchwide organization are entrusted to the organization by God through the faithful financial support of ELCA members and friends. All employees are held to high standards of stewardship and fiduciary responsibility with regard to the receipt, reporting, and use of funds, property, and time.

All employees must sign an acknowledgement of personnel policies during the onboarding process, which includes the matters detailed below.

2.10.1. Duties of Loyalty and Due Care

Each employee is responsible for acting in the best interests of the churchwide organization. All employees are expected to make reasonable efforts to inform themselves of the mission and ministry of the ELCA and to act as a reasonable employee would act under the same or similar circumstances.

2.10.2. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Employees are expected to perform their duties in a way that avoids actual or potential conflicts of interest as well as the appearance of conflicts of interest. A “conflict of interest” means any situation in which the employee may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making or business dealings by any motive or desire for personal advantage other than the success and well-being of the churchwide organization. “Personal advantage” means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, direct or indirect. This standard applies to both actual and contemplated transactions.

All present and potential conflict-of-interest issues must be disclosed.

Employees are required to disclose, in writing, matters and relationships that might appear to conflict with business dealings of the churchwide organization. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial interests or leadership roles with vendors or other organizations doing business with the organization. The head of the employee’s home area will evaluate disclosures and determine the appropriate action to be taken.

Business dealings with friends and family are particularly sensitive and are to be disclosed and carefully evaluated because they can create the appearance of impropriety or of tangible or intangible personal advantage. The mere existence of a family relationship or friendship that may be considered an actual or potential conflict of interest does not violate this policy if the employee involved promptly discloses that family relationship or friendship to their supervisor and appropriate safeguards are followed. Any doubts should be resolved in favor of disclosure.

If the actual or potential conflict of interest is known in advance of any meeting, business transaction, contract, or other activity at which issues may be discussed or on which the issues may have a bearing on the employee’s approach, whether directly or indirectly, the conflict must be disclosed prior to the meeting. Normally disclosure is to be made in writing to the employee’s supervisor.

If the conflict is not known in advance, it must be disclosed as soon as it becomes apparent.

When conflict-of-interest issues relate to a particular meeting, disclosure should be made to the person in charge of the meeting and, at the discretion of that person, to all participants in the meeting. The employee must leave the meeting room to avoid all discussion, voting, and deliberation on the issue. Following full

disclosure, the other people attending the meeting may decide that no conflict of interest exists and invite the employee to participate. All actions relating to the disclosure and action taken must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

2.10.3. Gifts

To avoid the appearance of impropriety, any gifts, gratuities, or hospitality offered to an employee—such as goods, free travel, or lodging—may be accepted and used only for the benefit of the organization. All gifts must be reported to a supervisor. Minimal one-time gifts having a value of less than \$75 and given as part of a special event or seasonal holiday are exempt from this reporting requirement. Gifts that benefit the churchwide organization primarily and not an individual, such as gifts of hospitality given to the churchwide organization by hotels, conventions, and conferences in relation to official churchwide organization business, are also exempt. Employees may also participate in reasonable, normal relationship-building activities such as meals, entertainment events, and similar activities. An employee must report such participation to their supervisor.

Employees may not accept gifts from outside vendors or members of ELCA congregations. A gift from a vendor is defined as anything offered to any employee directly by or on behalf of a vendor, other than the purchase of a business-related meal and promotional materials of little value such as pens, pencils, calendars, and similar items that are intended for wide distribution and bear the donor company's name or slogan. A gift from a congregational member is anything of value other than a personal trinket or food item. Questions about a gift's propriety or appearance of impropriety should be directed to People Solutions.

2.10.4. Confidentiality

Subject to applicable legal requirements, certain information must be held in confidence by all employees, including allegations of misconduct under investigation; financial matters; medical, psychological, and family matters pertaining to rostered leaders; and other sensitive information. All such confidential information is not to be discussed with or divulged to anyone, within or outside the churchwide organization, unless disclosure is required by law or limited disclosure is made for a compelling reason.

2.10.5. Transactions and Reporting

Each employee is required to prepare, process, maintain, and report complete, accurate, and timely records pertaining to their duties, including but not limited to journal entries, expense reports, disbursement requests, and payroll transactions. All employees required to record their working time must do so accurately, and all employees are required to report all absences properly, regardless of the reason for the absence. Employees must safeguard all physical, financial, informational, and other churchwide organization assets. In addition, no undisclosed or unrecorded fund or asset will be established, and no artificial or false entries will be made in the financial or other records of the ELCA. The use of the ELCA's funds for any unauthorized or unlawful purpose is prohibited.

Employees are required to report all violations of this policy by themselves or by others, including misconduct, fraudulent transactions, errors related to overpayment, or any other impropriety. Likewise, employees should factually and objectively report any concerns about the appearance or possibility of violation of this policy. There will be no adverse action for reports made in good faith or for an employee's participation in a follow-up investigation.

Employees may make required reports to their supervisor, the executive for People and DEI, the Internal Audit, the General Counsel, or an officer of the ELCA. All reports relating to accounting, internal accounting controls, or auditing matters should also be forwarded to the Internal Audit for further action and reporting to the Audit Committee.

2.11. Introductory Period

Most employees work on an introductory basis during their initial employment with the churchwide organization. The introductory period is 90 days.

The introductory period is intended to give employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether their position meets their expectations. The organization uses this period to evaluate employees' work habits and overall performance. During the introductory period, an employee is expected to discuss their progress with the appropriate supervisor and to ask questions about the duties they are performing. Each employee should receive a performance review near the end of the introductory period. At the discretion of the supervisor, a second review may be conducted upon the completion of an additional 90 days of employment.

Either the employee or the organization may end the employment relationship at any time during the introductory period without regard to other provisions of the policies that may apply once the introductory period has been successfully completed.

If the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended with approval of People Solutions. Any absence will automatically extend an introductory period by the length of the absence. Employees who are promoted or transferred within the organization may be required to complete an additional introductory period.

2.12. Performance Reviews

After the initial review(s) referred to above, employees generally have their performance appraised on an annual basis. Performance appraisals are used in all aspects of the employment relationship, including promotions, training or retraining, reassignments, pay adjustments, and disciplinary and discharge decisions. Supervisors are therefore required to use the performance appraisal process provided by People Solutions. There are no requirements as to the distribution of ratings that would prevent a fair appraisal of performance in relation to established standards.

2.13. Employee Records

2.13.1. Access to Employee Records

People Solutions maintains an employment record on each employee. The employment record includes information such as the employee's job application, résumé, records of training, hours worked and pay information, and other pertinent employment information.

Home areas within the churchwide organization are required to forward all original employment records to People Solutions.

Employment records are stored both digitally within the human resource information system and in a secure personnel file in People Solutions. All records are the property of the churchwide organization, and access to the information they contain is restricted to the employee and People Solutions. Records may be shared by People Solutions if legally required.

Original (paper) records are filed in People Solutions (Lutheran Center) and may not be removed from the physical office. Employees may review and obtain copies of their own personnel documents in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

2.13.2. Personal Data Changes

An employee must promptly enter into the current Human Resource Information System any changes in their personal home mailing address, email addresses, telephone numbers, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, and similar data.

2.13.3. Accuracy of Information

The churchwide organization relies on the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, including the Rostered Leader Profile when applicable, and additional information provided by the employee as part of the hiring process or during the employment relationship. Any individual who falsifies, misrepresents, or omits material information may be rejected from hiring consideration or, if already hired, terminated from employment.

2.14. Reimbursable Travel Expenses

Employees of the churchwide organization who are required to travel or expend funds in connection with the performance of their work will be reimbursed for approved expenses, including transportation, food, and lodging in accordance with the ELCA Corporate Travel Policy (available on the churchwide organization's intranet). Travel expenses incurred by employees whose positions are classified as remote or hybrid are covered under Personnel Policy 4.5, People First Hybrid Workplace Model.

2.15. Children in the Workplace

Employees are welcome to have their children visit the office for such purposes as lunch, a brief visit to a workstation, or a special occasion when children are specifically invited. The hosting employee is responsible for the children during such visits and should remain with them at all times. Children should not be brought to the work site as a substitute for childcare arrangements. Temporary emergency situations may be addressed by supervisors on a case-by-case basis.

Employees who work from home may modify their schedules to accommodate childcare needs with supervisor approval, however, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and outcomes.

3. EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

The churchwide organization defines employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Unless otherwise required by law, these classifications are subject to change at the discretion of the organization.

As required by the Fair Labor Standards Act, all employees will be designated as either **nonexempt** or **exempt** for purposes of overtime pay. Nonexempt employees will receive overtime pay at the rate of one-and-one-half times their regular rate for hours worked in excess of 40 during a single workweek. The workweek begins on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and ends the following Saturday at midnight. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime pay.

All employees will also be classified in the employment categories described below:

Full-time regular employees are those not in a temporary status and regularly scheduled to work at least 40 hours per week. Generally, they are eligible to participate in the church's benefit programs, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each program.

Part-time regular employees are those regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week. Part-time regular employees regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week are eligible for paid vacation on a prorated basis and certain additional benefits. Other part-time regular employees are not eligible for vacation but are eligible for certain other benefits, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

Specified-term employees are those employed by the church for a specified time under terms and conditions set forth in a written agreement. The agreement normally covers the beginning and ending dates of the employment term, the services to be performed, reporting relationships, compensation, benefits (if any), expense reimbursement, exempt or nonexempt status, and arrangements for performance review. Social Security withholding applies to specified-term employees.

Temporary employees are individuals hired for temporary work. They may be full-time or part-time, exempt or nonexempt. They are not eligible for any of the benefits summarized in this document.

However, the pay of temporary employees is subject to Social Security contributions. All arrangements for the retention of temporary employees must be approved in advance by the executive for People and DEI.

Independent contractors are not employees of the ELCA. Their compensation is not subject to Social Security withholding, and they are not entitled to workers' compensation or other benefits. As is the case with specified-term employees, all arrangements made with an independent contractor must be set out in a written agreement.

4. WORKING HOURS

4.1. Core Hours

Employees are to organize their work schedules within the limits of specified hours, subject to the approval of their home area. Full-time, nonexempt employees will normally work an eight-hour period between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday. The hours of operation may change. Also, an employee's hours may vary depending on particular assigned duties or flexibility of schedule approved by supervisor during any given day.

The needs of the job must be given appropriate priority. Staff members are expected to be flexible in the accommodation of workplace needs and work earlier or later when necessary. Nonexempt employees working outside their normal hours must have their time approved in advance by the appropriate supervisor. Nonexempt employees will be paid for all hours worked.

Nonexempt employees are entitled to an unpaid lunch period of 30 minutes. The lunch break is not work time and is therefore not part of the eight-hour workday.

Nonexempt employees may also take a paid, 15-minute rest break each morning and afternoon. These paid breaks are part of the eight-hour day. They may not be taken at the beginning or end of the day but may be added to the lunch period. Each home area should establish a schedule for lunch breaks and rest breaks providing for the effective operation of the home area. Nonexempt employees must review any deviation from the approved schedule with the appropriate supervisor.

All employees required to record their working time must do so accurately, and all employees are required to report all absences properly, regardless of the reason for the absence.

Supervisors are required to approve and submit timesheets and time-off requests by the established payroll processing deadlines.

4.2. Overtime

At times, job responsibilities may require an employee to work additional hours. Nonexempt employees who are required or permitted to work overtime will receive overtime pay in accordance with the requirements of the Fair

Labor Standards Act and applicable state law. Overtime pay is based on one and one-half of the employee's regular rate for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in each workweek (Sunday through Saturday). "Hours worked" means time actually spent on the job and therefore does not include vacation time, holiday time, sick time, or any other time spent on leave, whether paid or unpaid.

Nonexempt employees may not work beyond their normally scheduled hours without advance approval from their supervisor.

A supervisor may grant a nonexempt employee time off in lieu of overtime pay on an hour-per-hour basis, but only if the time off is taken during the same workweek. For example, if a nonexempt employee worked 40 hours from Monday through Thursday, the employee may be authorized to take off Friday of the same week.

The churchwide organization intends to follow all applicable requirements of federal and state law concerning overtime pay. Supervisors and employees are encouraged to bring all questions relating to hours worked to the attention of People Solutions.

4.3. Attendance and Overtime Records

All employees required to record time worked must do so accurately. Proper recording of hours worked is especially important when working hours may vary from day to day or week to week. The church is committed to paying employees properly and will promptly correct any errors in paychecks and reimburse employees as required. An employee who believes there has been an improper deduction or other pay error should promptly notify the appropriate supervisor or People Solutions.

People Solutions is responsible for maintaining attendance records suitable for payroll purposes and wage-and-hour requirements, including all overtime worked by each nonexempt employee.

4.4. Summer Flexible Schedule

Summer hours may enable eligible employees to enjoy additional personal time away from the office during the summer months by working additional hours on four days of the regular workweek. Depending on the number of hours worked during the four-day period, the summer schedule may allow the employee to free up a full day or half day every week. The hours worked during the summer flexible schedule must fall between 6 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Only full-time regular employees are eligible for a summer flexible schedule. To participate in a particular year, the employee must obtain written approval of the supervisor in the applicable home area and submit the completed approval form to People Solutions no later than one week prior to the first full week of June. Employees who do not obtain the necessary approval will remain on their regular work schedules.

The examples below illustrate potential summer schedules. The first two schedules allow for a half day off each week; the other two allow for a full day off.

- Working Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (30-minute lunch), and Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Working Monday, 1 to 5 p.m., and Tuesday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (30-minute lunch).
- Working Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (30-minute lunch), with every Friday off.
- Every Monday off and working Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (30-minute lunch).

Employees on a summer flexible schedule will work a regular eight-hour day and five-day week during any week that includes a paid holiday or approved vacation time.

The summer flexible schedule is generally available between the first full week in June the last full week in August. Each home area will manage the workweek in that home area. The summer flexible schedule is not guaranteed, and is subject to amendment or termination at any time.

4.5. People First Hybrid Workplace Model

The churchwide organization has adopted the People First Hybrid Workplace [Model](#) as a way to engage together in our work. The model focuses on people first- this includes our colleagues and those we serve. Although classifications of our jobs default toward being remote, the model also includes classifications for jobs that are location dependent.

Job classifications are determined by People Solutions and are as follows:

- Remote: Location independent. Current responsibilities of these positions do not involve any office-based duties.
- Hybrid: Location dependent. Position responsibilities currently include office-based duties that require less than 50% time in physical office.
- Office -Based: Location dependent. Work involves responsibilities that require being in the office more than 50% of the time.

Employees whose jobs have been classified as remote or hybrid may request a change to hybrid or office based with the approval of the home area and People Solutions.

4.5.1. Equipment and Supplies

The home area, in consultation with People Solutions, Information Technology, and the affected employee, will determine the appropriate equipment needs for each employee.

The churchwide organization will arrange for maintenance of the equipment it provides. Such equipment is to be used for business purposes only. The employee is responsible for safeguarding the equipment and for returning it upon termination of the employment relationship.

4.5.2. Secure Working Environment

Employees are expected to secure work within their workplace, update passwords regularly, participate in data security trainings and take other required actions to protect organizational information.

Employees must establish an appropriate work environment within the home or remote work location. Detailed processes regarding reimbursement for equipment and supplies are currently in development and will be addressed in a separate memorandum to CWO employees.

Any injuries sustained by the employee while working at home or another remote work location in conjunction with regular work duties are normally covered by workers' compensation. The employee must promptly notify their supervisor or People Solutions of any such injury. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to their home office

4.5.3. Working Hours

Supervisors and employees will work together to determine the work schedule the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency of communication. Remote and hybrid employees are required to be accessible by telephone and email during the specified work schedule and to arrange to attend staff meetings—whether online or in person—as specified by the home area.

As is the case for all nonexempt employees—see Sections 3 and 4.2—nonexempt employees who are required to obtain advance approval for overtime work and to record all working hours accurately

4.5.4. Travel Expenses

Occasionally, employees may be asked to travel to one of the churchwide offices for in-person onboarding and offboarding activities, meetings or events. Employees whose jobs are classified as remote and live outside a 50-mile radius of the office will be reimbursed for travel expenses. Employees who travel by automobile will receive mileage reimbursement for travel in excess of the 50-mile radius only.

Employees whose positions are classified as hybrid but choose to live outside of the geographical location of the office will not be reimbursed for travel expenses for regular work.

5. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

5.1. Compensation Philosophy

The ELCA believes it is in the best interest of both the organization and its employees to compensate employees adequately for the value of their work. To the extent permitted by budgetary and funding constraints, the churchwide organization uses a compensation system that determines the current market value of a position based on the skills, knowledge, and behavior required of a fully competent employee. All compensation decisions require the approval of People and DEI.

The system incorporates the following criteria:

- Local and industry-specific survey market data where such data is available, focusing primarily on not-for-profit organizations and addressing specialized job differences and market differences due to geographical location.
- An evaluation of external equity, which is the relative worth of an ELCA job directly compared to similar jobs in the local economic marketplace or with entities affiliated with the ELCA.
- An evaluation of internal equity, which is the relative worth of an ELCA job when comparing its required level of competency, formal training and experience, responsibility, and accountability to those of other jobs within the churchwide organization.
- Sufficient flexibility to permit the organization to recruit and retain a qualified workforce while providing the structure necessary to manage the overall compensation program.

5.2. Pay Adjustments and Merit Pay

The churchwide organization evaluates employees' pay annually. Annual pay increases are not guaranteed. Any pay adjustment will be based on the individual's improved or sustained performance and the organization's financial resources. All adjustments require the approval of the home area lead and People Solutions.

- Employees who begin employment from February 1 through October 31 are eligible to receive annual merit pay (prorated if less than 1 year.) Employees whose start date is on or after November 1 will not receive a merit adjustment until the following year.

- Promotional increases will normally result in a salary increase of 5% or the minimum of the new salary band, whichever is greater.

5.3. Pay Periods

The churchwide organization has 24 pay periods per calendar year. The workweek begins on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and ends the following Saturday at midnight. Employees are paid twice per month, on the 15th and 30th of each month except February, when the second payment will be on the 28th. If a scheduled payday falls on a nonworking day, employees will normally be paid on the last working day preceding the scheduled payday.

Direct deposit of pay is encouraged for all employees.

There will be no pay advances to any employee for any reason.

5.4. Fees for Services and Honorariums

Full-time, nonexempt employees will be paid for part-time work performed in their off hours for another home area within the churchwide organization. If the nature of the part-time work performed for the second home area is similar to or an extension of the employee's regular job, the payment must be at one and one-half times the employee's regular hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of 40 during the workweek. If the part-time work is totally different from the employee's regular job responsibilities, then the employee and the secondhome area upon approval of the executive for People and DEI, may negotiate a fee for the part-time services.

Exempt employees will not be paid for part-time work performed for another home area within the churchwide organization if (i) the part-time work is similar to or an extension of the employee's regular job responsibilities, (ii) the part-time work is to be performed when the employee is carrying out their regular job responsibilities, or (iii) the part-time work becomes part of the performance expectations in the employee's work plan and performance review. If the part-time work is totally different from the exempt employee's regular job responsibilities, is carried out apart from the employee's regular work setting, and is outside of the normal expectations for the employee's position, then the employee and the second home area, upon approval of the executive for People and DEI, may negotiate a fee for the part-time services.

An employee is not to expect additional income for performing the normal duties and responsibilities of their position. Any employee who receives an honorarium for performing such duties and responsibilities or for representing the churchwide organization is required to remit the honorarium to the Office of the Treasurer for crediting to the employee's home area.

5.5. Garnishments and Wage Assignments

The churchwide organization must honor garnishments and wage assignments. A garnishment is a court order to withhold and pay out a specified amount from the employees' earnings. A wage assignment is a direction by the employee to the same effect. In either case the organization will comply with applicable legal requirements. The affected employee is responsible for seeking to obtain any desired release or adjustment and providing the churchwide organization with required legal documentation.

5.6. Housing Allowance

An ordained employee of the churchwide organization may request that a portion of their annual salary be designated as a housing allowance, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations. The employee assumes full responsibility for compliance with IRS definitions of "costs to provide a home." Requests for housing allowances, on the form provided, must be forwarded to People Solutions annually for the ensuing year, with sufficient time allowed for the request to be approved and recorded in the official files.

5.7. Employee Benefits—in General

Several of the ELCA’s benefit programs are described below. Benefits involving time away from work are described in Section 6.

The church provides a comprehensive benefit program, administered by Portico Benefit Services, for its full-time employees and other employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week (15 hours per week for rostered employees) for six months or more per year. The program includes health coverage, the ELCA Retirement Plan, a life insurance benefit, long-term disability benefits, and tax-advantaged accounts. Benefits eligibility depends on a variety of factors, including employee classification. Further information is available directly from Portico Benefit Services (www.porticobenefits.org and 800-352-2876).

The ELCA has the right to change benefit programs or to modify eligibility requirements or coverage at any time. Further, as stated in Section 5.15, the churchwide organization is not required to participate in unemployment compensation insurance. Therefore, employees separated from employment with the churchwide organization are not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. Any benefits offered to an employee outside of the normal hiring and employment practices of the churchwide organization or the summaries in these policies must be in a written document approved in advance by People and DEI.

5.8. Health Coverage

Through Portico Benefit Services, the ELCA offers health coverage, including hospital and medical, dental, prescription, vision, and behavioral health, as well as an employee-assistance program. Separate plan documents explain each benefit in detail, and the benefits are controlled by the language of the plan documents and summary plan descriptions. The same is true for the ELCA’s long-term disability and flexible spending plans.

5.9. Retirement Contributions

The churchwide organization provides a retirement benefit for eligible employees through Portico Benefit Services. Detailed information is available to all employees on the Portico website.

5.10. Death Benefit

If an employee dies, four additional weeks of their salary will be added to their final paycheck.

5.11. Relocation Reimbursement

An employee who accepts a position that requires they live in a specific geographic location will be eligible for reimbursement of permitted relocation expenses if their current home is more than 50 miles from their assigned work location. Current eligible relocation allowances are available from People Solutions. The relocation moving expenses must be incurred within a “reasonable time” of the start of a new job, generally construed to be no more than one year after the employee’s start date. Employees who hold jobs classified as remote are not eligible for relocation reimbursement.

5.12. Training and Educational Opportunities

Heads of home areas are encouraged to promote opportunities for growth, both personal and professional, for ELCA employees. Discussion of ongoing educational needs and support should be part of employee performance appraisals. Educational opportunities are based on the need to enhance the work of the churchwide organization, the needs of the employee’s home area, and the aptitude and skills of the employee. Necessary licensing, certification or re-certification requirements for certain employees and continuing education requirements for rostered leaders should also be considered. The head of a home area may, at their discretion, offer special training opportunities within that home area.

Employees may contact People Solutions about taking a limited number of days off each year for continuing education if approved by their supervisor. People Solutions may also offer matching funds for approved continuing education and professional development opportunities, up to an annual limit.

5.13. Social Security

Consistent with the Social Security Act, the churchwide organization makes contributions based on the earnings of nonordained employees. No contributions are made for ordained employees, nor are ordained employees reimbursed for their own contributions.

5.14. Workers' Compensation

The churchwide organization provides workers' compensation insurance coverage for all employees. Workers' compensation laws are designed to protect employees and their families from the financial consequences of accidental injury, disease, or death arising out of and in the course of employment. Workers' compensation laws vary from state to state, but in general they pay for medical expenses and a percentage of lost income while the employee is disabled, as well as death benefits and rehabilitation benefits. A waiting period will apply before income benefits are paid. The length of the waiting period depends on the state.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses, no matter how minor, must inform their supervisor promptly. If necessary, an employee reporting an injury will be sent for medical treatment. The supervisor or the employee must promptly notify the director of facilities (Office of the Presiding Bishop) to complete the necessary documentation, which is also to be sent promptly to risk management (Office of the Secretary) and People Solutions.

The employee is responsible for providing the workers' compensation insurer with the treating physician's name and contact information and other information requested, such as medical bills and related information. The employee must also keep the supervisor and People Solutions informed of any temporary work restrictions and current medical status.

5.15. Unemployment Insurance

As a religious, not-for-profit organization, the churchwide organization is not required to participate in unemployment compensation insurance. Therefore, employees separated from employment with the churchwide organization are not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

6. TIME AWAY FROM WORK

6.1. Prompt Notification of Absence Required

An employee who expects to be absent from work for any reason must inform their supervisor as soon as possible of the nature and expected duration of the absence. As specified in Section 10.5, an absence of three consecutive days without notification from the employee may be considered job abandonment.

6.1.1.

Exempt employees normally must receive their full salary for any day in which they perform any work, without regard to the number of hours worked. Therefore, exempt employees may not take paid time off in less than 8 hour increments.

6.2. Absence Due to Illness

6.2.1. Sick Leave

Employees eligible to receive benefits will begin to accrue paid sick leave at the rate of one day per month, commencing on the first day of employment. Sick leave may accrue up to a maximum of 360 hours. Sick leave may be carried over from year to year, up to a 360-hour maximum. Employees will not be paid for accrued sick leave upon termination of employment. Sick leave accruals will be prorated for part-time regular employees based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week.

An employee who is absent five or more successive business days due to an illness or injury must furnish a physician’s statement confirming the illness or injury to People Solutions on the day they plan to return to work. Failure to provide such a statement may result in the employee being sent home.

6.2.2. Family Illness

An employee may use accrued sick leave to provide support due to the illness or injury of a member of the employee’s immediate family, but only if the employee’s absence is due to the necessity of providing care (including emotional support) to the family member who is ill or injured. The definitions of “family member” in Section 6.19 apply for purposes of this Section 6.2.2.

6.3. Paid Vacation

The churchwide organization recognizes the need for time away from work for rest and relaxation. Paid vacation will accrue from the first day on the job.

Except for the heads of home areas and certain professional employees, full-time regular employees accrue vacation according to the following schedule:

| <u>Years of Service</u> | <u>Annual Vacation</u> | <u>Accrual</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| First through second year | 120 hours | 5.0 hours per pay period |
| Third through fifth year | 160 hours | 6.67 hours per pay period |
| Sixth year and beyond | 200 hours | 8.33 hours per pay Period |

When an employee reaches the anniversary of their hire date and completes their second or fifth year of service the employee will begin to accrue vacation at the next higher level. For example, beginning with the third year of service, the employee will move from 120 to 160 hours of annual vacation.

The amount of pay for a nonexempt employee on vacation is based on the employee’s regular rate of pay exclusive of overtime.

The foregoing vacation allotments and accruals will be prorated for part-time regular employees based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week. For example, a new employee who regularly works 20 hours per week would be entitled to 60 hours of annual paid vacation, which would accrue at the rate of 2.5 hours per pay period. Nonexempt, part-time staff accrue time based upon the number of paid hours worked in a pay period.

Individuals who were employed by a region, synod, congregation, or institution officially affiliated with the ELCA within the five-year period preceding the commencement of their employment with the ELCA will have all of such prior service counted for purposes of their vacation accrual with the churchwide organization. Except as

described in the preceding sentence, no accrual of vacation time will be based on prior service to another organization.

Home area leads and executives accrue 200 hours of paid vacation annually from the commencement of employment.

Holidays observed by the churchwide organization during an employee's vacation time do not count against the employee's vacation allotment.

All staff members should schedule vacation as far in advance as possible and obtain their supervisor's approval for vacation absences. The supervisor has the right to deny a request for vacation based on business needs.

In the absence of special arrangements agreed to in advance and in writing, (i) up to a maximum of 80 hours of vacation not taken by the end of each calendar year will be carried forward to the following calendar year, and (ii) the maximum amount of vacation taken in any calendar year may not exceed 280 hours. Hours will be prorated for part-time regular employees based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week.

Employees are responsible for having their work in a satisfactory condition before leaving on vacation and for coordinating with other employees regarding coverage during their absence.

Employees who leave employment with the ELCA will normally be paid for accrued and unused vacation up to the maximum accrual specified above.

6.4. Paid Personal Days

Three paid personal days are allowed on an annual basis. Persons employed on Jan. 1 or who begin employment with the churchwide organization during January, February, March, or April will be eligible for three personal days for that year. Persons who begin employment during May, June, July, or August will be eligible for two personal days for that year. Persons who begin employment during September, October, or November will be eligible for one personal day that year. All personal days must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Unused personal days do not accrue and may not be carried forward to the following year. Employees will not be paid for unused personal days upon termination of employment. Personal days will be prorated for part-time regular employees based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week

6.5. Paid Holidays

The Churchwide Office will be closed on the days listed below:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day

Full-time regular employees will receive their regular rate of pay for eight hours for each paid holiday. Part-time regular employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week will receive holiday pay based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week,

A holiday falling on Saturday will normally be observed on the preceding Friday. A holiday falling on Sunday will normally be observed on the following Monday.

If an employee's religion requires the observance of a holiday other than those listed above and the employee is scheduled to work on that day, appropriate arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis to accommodate the situation.

6.6. Compassionate Leave

An employee who must be absent because of the death of a member of their immediate family may be allowed a paid absence of up to five working days. The definitions of "immediate family" and "children" in Section 6.19 apply for purposes of this Section 6.6..

The Illinois Support Through Loss Act provides ten days of unpaid leave for employees who experience a miscarriage, an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or other assisted reproductive procedure, a failed or non-finalized adoption match, a failed surrogacy agreement, a diagnosis affecting fertility, or a stillbirth. Employees may use a combination of compassionate leave, and other available paid time off to cover this time. Employees can also use this time off to support a spouse or partner experiencing one of these losses.

6.7. Jury Duty

An employee required to serve on a jury will continue to receive their normal pay during the period of such service and may retain payments made by the court associated with such service.

6.8. Maternity/Paternity and Adoptive Leave

The churchwide organization provides paid maternity/paternity and adoptive leave as set forth below. Such paid leave must be substituted for unpaid leave available under the Family and Medical Leave Act to the extent the employee is eligible for FMLA leave. The purpose of the leave must relate to the parenting of a newly born or newly adopted child within the first three months of the child's birth or placement and may be taken only by an employee who has completed at least six months of full-time or part-time employment. Leave benefits for part-time employees are based on the ratio of their regularly scheduled hours to a 40-hour week. Employees requesting leave under this Section 6.8 must provide their supervisors as much advance notice as possible.

Eight consecutive weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave is available to a new parent following the birth of their child. If the expectant mother's physician determines that it is medically necessary for her to stop working prior to the anticipated delivery date, she will be permitted to use personal leave, accrued sick time, or accrued vacation time to cover the absence. If the expectant mother needs to be cared for by her spouse/partner, the employee may use accrued time off before the birth of the child (Section 6.10. Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act). Eight consecutive weeks of paid adoptive leave is available to a new parent or legal guardian beginning on the date of the child's placement.

6.9. Parental Leave

The churchwide organization will grant eligible nonexempt employees up to eight hours of unpaid leave per school year to attend primary or secondary school conferences or classroom activities that are related to the employee's children and cannot be scheduled during nonworking hours. To be eligible, an employee must have used all accrued vacation and personal days and must have worked at least 20 hours per week during the six-month period preceding the requested leave. An employee may take no more than four of the eight hours on any

one day and will be required to provide verification of the school visit upon their return to work. The head of the employee's home area may allow a nonexempt employee to make up the leave time taken.

6.10. Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") provides an eligible employee with unpaid leave:

- Because of the birth of the employee's child;
- Because of the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- Because the employee needs to care for their spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
- Because the employee is not able to perform job duties due to their own serious health condition;
- Because the employee needs to deal with certain exigencies associated with their spouse, child, or parent on active duty or called to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation; or
- Because the employee needs to provide care for their spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who has an injury or illness incurred on active duty in the armed forces.

The FMLA sets forth detailed provisions relating to eligibility for leave, the definition of important terms, the necessity of obtaining the certification of a health care provider, the scheduling of leave, the substitution of accrued paid leave, the continuation of benefits during leave, and reinstatement upon the conclusion of leave. These provisions are summarized in a separate policy posted on the HR and Payroll system dashboard.

6.11. Personal Leave

An employee who has exhausted all types of paid leave available may be considered for personal leave. All personal leaves are unpaid. Whether such a leave is granted depends on the overall circumstances, including the work requirements of the employee's home area. While the normal length of a personal leave is from one to three months, a leave of up to one year may be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

If the employee has been on a personal leave for medical reasons, the employee's treating physician must provide People Solutions a medical release confirming the employee's fitness to return to work.

An employee returning from an approved personal leave on a timely basis may be reinstated to the same or an equivalent position. All decisions regarding a personal leave require the concurrence of the head of the employee's home area and the executive for people and DEI.

6.12. Sabbatical Leave

The churchwide organization recognizes that employees need to increase and extend their knowledge and competency in their fields of specialization. This may be accomplished through a sabbatical leave, normally a period of one to three months, during which full salary and benefits would be continued.

Sabbatical leaves are restricted and are intended for use only by those employees (without regard to ordained status) whose sabbatical leave will increase their value to the organization. An employee is eligible to request a sabbatical leave after six years of full-time employment with the churchwide organization. Subsequent requests may be considered at six-year intervals.

Requests for sabbatical leave, including the proposed plan for professional development, must be submitted to the head of the employee's home area. If approved, the request will be forwarded to the executive for People and DEI at least one month before the proposed beginning of the sabbatical leave. Both the head of the employee's

home area and the executive for People and DEI must approve the proposed sabbatical leave. As an exception to the preceding sentence, a request for sabbatical leave by a full-time officer of the ELCA must be submitted to and approved by the Church Council's Executive Committee, whose action will be forwarded to the executive for People and DEI.

Except for the Presiding Bishop, no employee may take a sabbatical leave at the completion of their service. The granting of a sabbatical leave to all other employees will normally be contingent upon the employee's commitment to a minimum of six months of service to the churchwide organization following the conclusion of the leave. Any exceptions must be approved by the executive for People and DEI.

Sabbatical leave does not accrue. An employee whose employment terminates without the employee's having taken sabbatical leave is not entitled to any sabbatical payment.

6.13. Leave to Attend Synod Assembly

An ELCA-rostered employee of the churchwide organization is granted paid leave time to permit attendance on normal work days at the synod assembly of the synod in which their membership is maintained. A nonrostered employee who is elected by an ELCA congregation to serve as a lay voting member of a synod assembly will be granted paid leave time to attend the synod assembly on normal workdays. In both cases, the employee's supervisor must grant approval prior to attendance at the synod assembly.

6.14. Military Leave

The churchwide organization grants military leave to employees who perform military service on a part-time and regularly occurring basis or who perform military service on a full-time but temporary basis. An employee with a military obligation should notify People Solutions and submit copies of military orders as soon as practical.

The churchwide organization complies with the requirements of the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, as applied to churches and religious organizations, and with applicable provisions of state law, as well as regulations adopted pursuant to the applicable federal and state laws.

6.15. Victims' Economic Safety and Security Act Leave

The ELCA complies with all applicable requirements of the Illinois Victims' Economic Safety and Security Act ("VESSA"). An employee may be eligible for leave under VESSA if they are a victim of domestic or sexual violence or have a family or household member who has been victimized by domestic or sexual violence. VESSA may provide eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period to seek medical attention or counseling, obtain assistance from service agencies, seek legal counsel, and participate in civil or criminal legal proceedings. Further information is available from People Solutions.

6.16. Community Service Day

Employees of the churchwide organization are encouraged to share their time, talents, and gifts by taking an active, visible role in volunteer activities. To that end, all full-time regular employees may take one day (eight hours) of paid leave each calendar year to use for volunteer activities. Part-time regular employees may take such leave on a prorated basis. No one may use more than one community service day in a calendar year. An unused community service day cannot be carried forward to the next calendar year.

An employee who wants to use community service leave must apply in advance and in writing to their supervisor and provide an explanation of the proposed activity, including the time, place, and sponsor. The supervisor has discretion to grant or deny the request.

6.17. Other Paid Leave

There may be circumstances where the best interest of the churchwide organization is to place an employee on paid administrative leave for a limited period of time. Such a decision can be made only by a churchwide officer or the executive for Administration, at the request of the head of the employee's home area and the executive for People and DEI.

6.18. Time Off for Voting

Work schedules normally permit adequate time for an employee to vote either before or after normal working hours. In unusual circumstances, however, an employee's work schedule or work commitments may make voting during nonworking hours difficult or impossible. In such cases, the employee's supervisor may approve up to two consecutive hours of paid time off for the purpose of voting in a national, state, or local election. The supervisor may specify the hours during which the employee will be absent in order to vote.

Before Election Day, the employee must notify the appropriate supervisor of the intended absence and provide a signed statement describing the specific circumstances that require time off. This statement is to be retained with the employee's time records for the applicable month. The employee may also consider asking the appropriate governmental office about the possibility of voting early or by absentee ballot.

6.19. Definitions Related to Family Member and Immediate Relative for Purposes of Sick Leave and Compassionate Leave

"Immediate family" and "family member" generally refer to the employee's spouse, partner, children, parents and parents-in-law, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, and minors for whom the employee is the legal guardian. The employee's children include not only biological, adopted, or foster children but also legal wards and children and stepchildren for whom the employee provides care and financial support on a daily basis.

This list is descriptive, not exhaustive. The churchwide organization realizes that there are many nontraditional relationships that are equally important to our employees. Therefore, the definition may also apply to any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

7. PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The policies set forth below apply to all ELCA employees and supplement, but do not supplant, the policies set forth elsewhere in these policies. Because these Personnel Policies cannot anticipate every circumstance or question that may arise or summarize every policy that might be necessary, the churchwide organization has the right to revise or add to these policies and adopt additional policies at any time.

7.1. Safety

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules, to exercise caution in all work activities, and to report promptly any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor.

7.2. Attendance and Punctuality

Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees. The ELCA expects employees to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled work and, except for prior authorization or a legitimate reason, to remain throughout the scheduled shift. Employees who cannot avoid being late to work or who are unable to work as scheduled must notify their supervisor promptly, normally before their scheduled starting time.

Acceptable attendance is an essential requirement of every job, and absenteeism and tardiness problems are performance issues. All employees must establish and maintain acceptable attendance and punctuality standards. If attendance issues are due to a medical condition, the employee should contact People Solutions.

Depending on the circumstances, an employee who is absent five or more consecutive workdays may be required to present a statement from a health care provider before returning to work.

Employees are not permitted to work at home or away from the office without approval of the appropriate supervisor.

7.3. Business Attire and Fragrances

During regular business hours or when representing the church, all employees are expected to present a professional appearance and to dress according to the requirements of their positions. Generally, the churchwide office dress code is business casual.

Business casual dress is defined as follows:

Casual shirts: All shirts with collars, business casual crewneck or V-neck shirts, blouses, and golf and polo shirts. Examples of inappropriate shirts include shirts with inappropriate slogans, tank tops, muscle shirts and crop tops.

Pants/skirts/dresses: Casual slacks, trousers, skirts, dresses and jeans without holes, frays, etc. Examples of inappropriate clothing include sexually provocative or revealing clothing, shorts, and pants worn below the waist or hip line.

Footwear: Casual slip-on or tie shoes, dress sandals, and clean athletic shoes.

A supervisor or employee who is unsure of what is appropriate should check with People Solutions.

Employees who work in one of the churchwide organization offices should also be aware that other individuals may suffer physical reactions to fragrances found in cologne, after-shave lotion, perfume, perfumed hand lotion, fragranced hair products, air fresheners and similar items. Therefore, employees are expected to be considerate and to refrain from using any particular products that irritate visitors or other employees.

If you have questions regarding casual dress, please contact People Solutions or your supervisor.

7.4 No Use of Tobacco, Vaping, or Cannabis in the Workplace

Smoking or the use of tobacco, vaping, or cannabis products is not allowed in churchwide offices.

7.5. Safeguarding Property

Employees are responsible for safeguarding all property issued or otherwise made available to them by the churchwide organization during their employment, including computer hardware, software, and manuals; cell phones; and keys and access cards.

All incidents of theft or damage involving organizational or personal property should immediately be reported to a supervisor. All purses and valuables should be secured in a file or desk drawer during working hours.

On or before their last day of work, employees must return all property belonging to the organization. The organization may take all legally appropriate steps to recover or protect its property.

7.6. Inclement Weather or Emergency

7.6.1. Inclement Weather

Weather conditions such as snow, ice, and extreme cold are part of winter. Employees who are expected to be in the office should make every reasonable effort to report to work unless weather and road conditions indicate otherwise.

To determine if the Lutheran Center will be open or closed due to inclement weather, an employee may call 773-380-2660 or 866-735-3522 after 6:30 a.m. A recorded message will provide information regarding the status of the office. Employees who have indicated their Business Continuity Alert preference will also be notified by telephone or text message, depending on their preference, should the Lutheran Center be closed.

When the Lutheran Center is closed for part or all of a day due to weather conditions, all nonexempt staff who are unable to work from home will be paid for the time they would normally have worked. Exempt staff are expected to work remotely.

A nonexempt employee who makes a personal judgment not to come to the office due to weather on a day the office is open may use paid personal time or accrued vacation time to cover the hours missed, or may be allowed to make up the hours missed under arrangements approved by People Solutions.

7.6.2. Other Emergencies

If some other emergency occurs, employees may call 773-380-2660 or 866-735-3522 at any time to check on whether or when to report to work. Employees may also be notified of developments by telephone, email, or text message, or through www.elcawebstatus.org. Should these contact points not be functional, employees may also call Archives at 847-690-9410 for information during a declared emergency. Each employee is responsible for keeping up-to-date on developments during an emergency.

7.7. Dealing With the News Media

Only an authorized representative may speak to reporters on behalf of the ELCA. Reporters seeking a church representative must be referred to Strategic Communications (Office of the Presiding Bishop). Employees should attempt to alert Strategic Communications staff in advance that a reporter or media outlet is or may be seeking to contact them concerning a particular matter or issue.

7.8. Sexual Harassment and Other Inappropriate Behavior

A fundamental policy of the churchwide organization is that the workplace is for work. Our goal is to provide a workplace where employees behave courteously and professionally and feel safe at all times. Tension created by conduct not related to work—including ethnic, racial, or sexual remarks, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, loud swearing or yelling, or similar conduct—does not belong in our workplace. Similarly, inappropriate displays of affection or sexually related conduct, even if welcome, are inappropriate at work and will not be tolerated.

7.8.1. Harassment

Harassment of employees or applicants for employment is prohibited. Harassment is defined as persistently bothering, disturbing, or tormenting another person. Harassment may be based on a variety of factors, such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or personal dislike. The reason for the harassment does not matter. The ELCA prohibits all forms of harassment, including but not limited to:

- Verbal and electronic communication harassment, such as making derogatory statements, epithets, or slurs to or about another person or group;
- Visual harassment, such as displaying offensive posters, cartoons, or drawings; and

- Physical harassment, such as threatening, assaulting, or physically interfering with another person or making other inappropriate or unwelcome physical contact.

7.8.2. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment;
- Submission or refusal to submit to such conduct is used as the basis for a tangible employment action; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or work environment.

Sexual harassment is prohibited. Individuals cannot be forced to submit to sexual harassment as a basis for any employment decision. In addition, the ELCA attempts to prevent and promptly eliminate any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for our employees.

7.8.3. Examples of Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct, when occurring in the workplace or when it may adversely affect the work environment, will be considered to be harassment or inappropriate behavior:

- Sexually suggestive or off-color comments or jokes;
- Sexual flirtation, innuendo, advances, or propositions, or other sexual activities;
- Unprofessional touching, such as massages, or inappropriately putting an arm around another employee;
- Repeated and unwelcome invitations for social interactions outside of the workplace;
- Sexual or racial slurs, derogatory remarks, or offensive gestures;
- Swearing or loud yelling;
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit or otherwise off-color materials, including books, magazines, articles, pictures, greeting cards, photographs, drawings, cartoons, and email messages; and
- Including or excluding any individuals from workplace activities, assignments, or responsibilities based on their refusal to participate in or tolerate sexual or other forms of harassment or based on other factors not related to job performance or legitimate reasons.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

A consensual relationship does not justify inappropriate displays of affection or other sexual statements or activities during working hours or at work-related functions.

Any questions about whether particular conduct is prohibited under this policy should be discussed with the appropriate supervisor or People Solutions.

7.8.4. Reporting Harassment or Other Inappropriate Behavior

If an employee believes that any sort of sexual or other harassment or other inappropriate conduct is interfering with their work or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, they are urged to contact any supervisor or any People Solutions staff member and make a report. The employee may be asked to sign a written complaint or other summary of the information reported.

Employees receiving a threatening telephone call or voicemail at work should attempt to get a caller ID number and as much information as possible about the caller, and promptly notify their supervisor. Employees receiving threatening emails, text messages, or letters should promptly notify their supervisor and save copies of all such communications. Whenever threats are received by any means, reports may be made to law enforcement authorities.

7.8.5. Investigation and Follow-Up

Complaints of harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and the reporting employee will be advised of the results of the investigation. The churchwide organization understands these matters are sensitive and will therefore attempt to keep all employee complaints and communications, such as interviews and witness statements, in confidence.

The organization may take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, against any employee who engages in sexual or other harassment or who otherwise violates this policy. Further, the organization may correct any adverse employment action any employee experienced due to conduct forbidden by this policy.

If an individual involved in harassing or inappropriate conduct is not employed by the ELCA, the individual will be informed of our policy and appropriate action will be taken in an attempt to prevent further misconduct. In all cases, the churchwide organization will make follow-up inquiries to confirm that the inappropriate behavior has stopped. If an employee is not satisfied with the results of the investigation or follow-up action, or if further harassment or other unacceptable conduct occurs, they should contact any supervisor or any People Solutions staff member.

7.8.6. Retaliation

The churchwide organization will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who in good faith complains of sexual or other harassment or who provides information in connection with any such complaint. If an employee believes that they have been retaliated against for bringing a complaint or providing information related to a complaint, the employee should report this to any supervisor or any People Solutions staff member.

7.8.7. Employee Responsibilities

Employees of the ELCA are responsible for:

- Behaving courteously and professionally toward fellow employees.
- Completing mandatory trainings regarding sexual or other forms of harassment and inappropriate behavior provided by People Solutions
- Reading this policy and understanding fully its requirements.
- Refraining from conduct forbidden by this policy;
- Reporting promptly any incidents of sexual or other harassment or other inappropriate behavior; and
- Cooperating in any investigation conducted under this policy by providing accurate and complete information about any incidents with which an employee is familiar.

7.9. Use of Telephone and Mail Systems

The ELCA needs to maintain effective telephone communications, and employees should always use an approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner.

The use of church-paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted.

7.10. Safe Use of Cell Phones, Computers, and Other Electronic Devices

Whether their cell phone, tablet, computer, or similar electronic communication device is provided by the ELCA or supplied personally, ELCA staff members are expected to observe the following guidelines in their use of such devices for ELCA-related business:

- Employees are required to abide by the law or ordinance of a particular jurisdiction with regard to the use of electronic communication devices while driving a motor vehicle, and will be solely responsible for any traffic violations relating to such use.
- Safety must always be of paramount concern, and employees operating a motor vehicle should never place themselves or others at risk to fulfill work-related needs.
- Employees should never attempt to send or review text or email messages while operating a motor vehicle.
- Employees should place calls either prior to driving or while on rest breaks, and should drive to a safe parking location before accepting a call.
- Employees should always be conscious of their surroundings and refrain from discussing confidential matters in a public setting or under circumstances where their conversation could be overheard or their electronic screen viewed by others.

7.11. Electronic Communications Policy

7.11.1. Policy Overview

The churchwide organization is committed to an environment that encourages the use of technical resources and other forms of electronic communications as essential tools to support the ELCA's mission and ministry. The term "technical resources" includes, but is not limited to, all electronic communications systems, computer hardware and software, smartphones, tablets, data, information, email, instant messages, social media sites, Intranet, Extranet and Internet services, domain name registrations, and related systems. All employees are required to abide by this Section 7.11 in their use of the ELCA's technical resources as well as with Section 7.12, which deals specifically with social media. In particular, technical resources are to be used in a manner that is consistent with good stewardship and the mission and ministry of the ELCA; that is responsible, professional, and legal; and that does not compromise the security or confidentiality of proprietary or other sensitive information or the ELCA's technical resources.

Employees are expected to use their ELCA-provided email address only when representing the ELCA, unless authorized by the executive for Information Technology. Employees are personally responsible for any activities they conduct with an ELCA-provided email address, and for any of their activities that can be traced back to the ELCA's domain or assets.

Employees will be held responsible for their use of an ELCA-provided email address or ELCA technical resources to engage in any social media or professional social-networking activity, including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and personal blogs. Employees must obtain written approval from the executives for People and DEI and for Information Technology before establishing any external social media or professional social networks identified with or utilizing equipment or resources of the churchwide organization. Employees should reference the electronic communication procedures on the churchwide organization's intranet for further clarification.

7.11.2. Acquiring Technical Resources

All technical resources provided by or through the churchwide organization are assets of the ELCA and must be acquired only by Information Technology or with the written approval of the executive for Information Technology. No employee may load, download, or receive software on ELCA technical resources without the prior written approval of the executive for Information Technology.

7.11.3. No Expectation of Privacy

ELCA employees do not have a personal privacy or proprietary right in any matter created, received, sent, or stored on ELCA technical resources, telephones, or equipment, or on third-party resources used for work-related matters, whether or not the matter is designated as private or confidential.

The ELCA has the right, at any time and without prior notice, to monitor employees and to read, listen to, and copy all files or data contained on any technical resource, including but not limited to email messages, instant messages, Internet access records, voice messages, faxes, official employee content on Internet discussion groups, and personal file directories.

The ELCA also has the right in its complete discretion to access all technical resources for the purpose of supporting its mission and ministry, complying with statutory requirements and internal policies regarding internal investigations, and any additional issues that may arise in connection with the management of the ELCA's electronic communications systems.

7.11.4. Prohibited Activities

The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional activities that are prohibited in the use of ELCA equipment or technical resources. They include, but are not limited to:

- Violating any law, statute, regulation, or ordinance;
- Violating any ELCA policy or procedure or otherwise interfering with the mission and ministry of the ELCA;
- Jeopardizing the safety and security of ELCA members, employees, or technical resources;
- Jeopardizing the tax-exempt status of the ELCA, any ELCA synod or congregation, or any affiliate listed under the ELCA group ruling for federal income-tax exemption, including transmission of political or partisan campaign materials;
- Violating the legal rights of any person or entity;
- Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization;
- Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without approval;
- Creating unauthorized contractual liability for the ELCA;
- Giving the impression that personal views are those of the organization;
- Sending anonymous email messages;
- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images;
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities, or using the Internet for any sort of gambling;
- Sending or posting messages that defame any other individuals or organizations;
- Attempting to break into the computer system of another person or organization; and
- Downloading or participating in the viewing or exchange of pornographic or sexually explicit materials unless specifically authorized for an investigation or other extraordinary, work-related purposes.

7.11.5. Avoiding Harassing Behavior

When communicating about the ELCA or ELCA-related matters, employees must never send or display any information that may be construed as offensive or harassing. Offensive or harassing messages include, but are not limited to, pornographic images; sexual references; racial slurs; comments regarding an individual's gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law; and comments that threaten or intimidate others.

7.11.6. Speaking on Behalf of the Organization

Unless specifically instructed or authorized, employees are restricted from speaking to the news media or others while purporting or appearing to represent the ELCA.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all information they share in work-related Internet discussion groups, chat rooms, blogs, or social networking sites is accurate, and that any personal opinions they express are clearly identified as personal and not attributed to the ELCA.

7.11.7. Posting Recommendations for Colleagues

Online recommendations and comments about current and former churchwide employees could have unanticipated consequences, even if made personally by an employee and not on behalf of the organization. Therefore, employees must clear all potential recommendations and comments with the executive for People and DEI if they refer to anyone who is or was ever associated with the churchwide organization. Recommendation may not be written using ELCA letterhead.

7.11.8. Safety and Mission

Electronic communications that negatively affect an employee's job performance, the safety of others, the ELCA's mission and ministry, or the business interests of the churchwide organization may be treated as employment-related, regardless of whether the communication took place during or outside of working hours.

7.11.9. Reporting Violations

Employees are expected to report any actual or perceived violations of this policy to any supervisor, the head of any home area, the executive for People and DEI, the executive for Information Technology, or the general counsel.

7.12. Social Media

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands that social media can be helpful and rewarding ways to share one's life and opinions with family, friends, and co-workers around the world. Nonetheless, the use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. This policy, which applies to all ELCA employees, is intended to assist employees in making responsible decisions about use of social media. The churchwide organization has additional requirements for people who are employed to create and use social media communications as part of their employment responsibilities.

For purposes of this policy, "social media" is defined as all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, whether or not associated with the ELCA, including postings to one's own or someone else's blog, journal, diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board, or chat room.

The same principles and guidelines found in these Personnel Policies apply to activities online. Ultimately, each employee is solely responsible for what they post online.

Maintain confidentiality. Never divulge information that would be considered confidential.

Observe all other policies of the ELCA. Refrain from postings that contain discriminatory remarks, harassment (sexual or any other type), or threats of violence, or that constitute inappropriate or unlawful conduct.

Be respectful. Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, members, suppliers, and other people who work with the churchwide organization, synods, or congregations. Keep in mind that resolving work-related complaints by speaking directly with co-workers or supervisors is more effective than by posting to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, an employee who decides to post complaints or criticism must avoid posting

anything that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating; that disparages fellow employees or synods or congregations within the ELCA; or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation and posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other legally protected status.

Be honest and accurate. Make sure that posted information or news is honest and accurate, and if a mistake is made, make sure that it is corrected quickly. Be open about any previous posts that have been altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any rumors or information known to be false about the churchwide organization, any synod or congregation, or other employees.

Represent yourself accurately. When participating in an online community and commenting on topics related to the ELCA, employees must make clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the church. Do not create a link from any blog, website, or other social media site to an ELCA website without identifying yourself as an ELCA employee.

Do not post at work. Refrain from using social media while on work time or on ELCA equipment unless such activities are related to your duties or have been specifically authorized by a supervisor. Employees may not use their ELCA email address to register on social networks or other sites for personal use without approval.

Check comments by others. Any photos or messages that are linked or "tagged" from "friends" and attached to employee site(s) or profile(s) that violate these guidelines are not permitted and, if not promptly removed from the employee's own page or site, will be attributed to the employee.

No Retaliation. The ELCA prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation of a possible deviation.

Nothing in this policy or any other ELCA policy should be interpreted in a manner that unlawfully prohibits any right employees may have to engage in protected concerted activity.

7.13. Use of Facilities and Property

Office supplies or equipment are not for personal use unless the employee has obtained advance written approval from a supervisor.

Equipment, documents, official records, or other property belonging to the ELCA may not be removed from the Lutheran Center for any reason without advance approval.

7.14. Security Inspections

The ELCA wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, the church prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, concealment or use of such materials in the workplace.

Desks, file cabinets, and other storage locations may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of the churchwide organization. Employees should have no expectation of privacy with respect to the contents of their desks or other storage locations on the organization's premises. Accordingly, any authorized agent or representative of the organization may inspect such desks or storage locations, as well as any articles found within them, at any time, either with or without prior notice.

The churchwide organization seeks to discourage theft or unauthorized possession of the property of employees, vendors, and visitors. Any authorized ELCA agent or representative may also inspect people entering or leaving the workplace and any packages, briefcases, backpacks, or other belongings in the possession of such people. Any employee who wishes to avoid inspection of any articles or materials should not bring them to work.

7.15. Preventing Workplace Violence

All employees, visitors, guests, independent contractors, and other individuals should be treated with courtesy and respect. Fighting, “horseplay,” or other conduct that may be dangerous is prohibited. All threatened or actual violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to any supervisor or People Solutions employee. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by visitors, vendors, solicitors, or members of the public. All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible. When making such a report, be as specific and detailed as possible.

The CWO will promptly investigate all reports of actual or threatened violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected to the extent practical. To attempt to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of the ELCA’s investigation, the ELCA may suspend employees, either with or without pay, during any investigation.

The CWO encourages employees to bring any disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors before the situation escalates into potential violence. The Problem Resolution Procedure in Section 9 may be used as appropriate.

The CWO will assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not discipline employees for raising legitimate or reasonable concerns.

7.16. Weapons Policy

The churchwide organization prohibits weapons of any type on the premises of the Lutheran Center or any buildings owned or rented by the churchwide organization, or at any churchwide-sponsored event. This general prohibition includes visible or concealed weapons, even those for which the owner has a valid permit. This policy applies to all ELCA employees and also to contractors, vendors, and visitors. Prohibited items include any form of weapon, as well as any explosive that is illegal under federal, state, or local laws or ordinances.

To ensure that prohibited weapons and other contraband are not present on its property, the ELCA reserves the right to inspect work areas, desks, and personal belongings (including but not limited to employee packages, purses, backpacks, or lunch bags) when it has a reasonable suspicion of possession of prohibited weapons or substances.

Employees who observe or have knowledge of any violation of this weapons policy should immediately report it to any supervisor or any People Solutions employee.

7.17. Vehicle Use and Insurance

Employees who use their personal vehicles for churchwide organization-related business must first provide proof of adequate insurance coverage and maintain the appropriate driver’s license. Such employees must promptly inform People Solutions of any restriction or revocation of their driver’s license and of any cancellation or modification of their personal vehicle insurance coverage.

7.18. Drug and Alcohol Use

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, churchwide employees are required to report to work capable of performing their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While working remotely or in the Lutheran Center or other churchwide office locations, no employee may abuse, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Illegal drug use includes the unauthorized use or possession of a legal drug as well as the unauthorized use or possession of a controlled substance. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace. Depending on the circumstances, employees may consume alcoholic beverages at church-related functions but are expected to use common sense and to avoid intoxication.

Violations of this policy may lead to notification of the appropriate law enforcement authorities, disciplinary action up to and including discharge, or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program.

The ELCA believes it is in the public interest to provide a program to assist employees suffering from alcoholism or other chemical dependencies, through proper referral to appropriate community and professional agencies for help. Employees with drug or alcohol problems that have not resulted in or are not the immediate subject of disciplinary action may request approval to take time off to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program. Sick leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from use of the problem substance; if the employee abides by the ELCA's policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and if the leave will not cause undue hardship on the ELCA. An employee in these circumstances may be requested to sign a conditions-of-continued-employment agreement.

Employees with questions about either this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should contact their supervisor or People Solutions.

7.19. Additional Employment

Employees may not accept additional employment that will conflict with their present job responsibilities. Employees may not conduct other business or employment during ELCA business hours, on churchwide premises, or utilizing churchwide offices or equipment. Such inappropriate additional employment includes employment that interferes with the efficient performance of the employee's duties or creates a conflict of interest. Failing to disclose additional employment or continuing to work at an additional job that interferes with employment with the ELCA may be determined to be a conflict of interest for purposes of Section 2.10.2.

7.20. Solicitation Prohibited

To provide a productive and harmonious work environment, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prohibits nonemployees from soliciting or distributing literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

The churchwide organization recognizes that employees may have interest in events and organizations outside the workplace. Nonetheless, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include meal periods, work breaks, or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.)

There are approved email addresses that allow staff who opt in to send and receive certain "solicitations."

8. DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

8.1. Progressive Discipline

Disciplinary action ordinarily follows counseling by the supervisor and may call for any of four steps—verbal warning, performance improvement plan, suspension with or without pay, and termination of employment—depending on the severity of the problem and the number of previous occurrences.

With respect to most disciplinary problems, the four steps mentioned above will normally be followed:

- A first offense may call for a verbal warning;
- The next offense may be followed by a written performance improvement plan;
- Another offense may lead to a suspension; and
- Still another offense may then lead to termination of employment.

By using such progressive discipline, the churchwide organization seeks to correct most employee problems and improve performance at an early stage. The policy of progressive discipline does not change the employment-at-will relationship, however. The churchwide organization may bypass any one or more of the progressive disciplinary steps. Problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension or discharge will be dealt with accordingly even if counseling or warnings were not previously given.

Generally, in the administration of discipline, the organization will give primary consideration to the employee's disciplinary record for the past two years. Depending on the frequency, pattern, and seriousness of previous violations, however, the organization may consider the employee's total employment record with the organization.

8.2. Grounds for Discipline or Discharge

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are not acceptable at work; many are detailed throughout these policies. The actions listed below are additional examples of conduct that may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. They include, but are not limited to:

- Unsatisfactory job performance;
- Unauthorized disclosure of any confidential information;
- Violating any of the ELCA's policies or rules, whether described in these Personnel Policies or elsewhere;
- Excessive tardiness, absenteeism, or absence without call (no call, no show);
- Theft of, or inappropriate removal or possession of, property or money;
- Falsifying time records or other organization-related documents, including but not limited to an application for employment, a request for a leave, or any business document;
- Violating safety or health rules at work;
- Working or attempting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Possessing, distributing, selling, transferring, or using alcohol or illegal drugs at work, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment;
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace, including malicious gossip;
- Negligence or improper conduct that causes or could have caused injury to other person(s) or damage to property, equipment, or vehicles;
- Intentionally injuring or damaging, or attempting to injure or damage, other people or property, equipment, or vehicles;
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct toward managers or supervisors;
- Smoking or using other tobacco products in the building;

- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment or inappropriate behavior;
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the office;
- Unauthorized absence from your workplace during the workday;
- Unauthorized use of computers, telephones, the Internet, or other electronic communications systems, the mail system, or other equipment; and
- Other unsatisfactory performance or conduct, whether or not described in these Personnel Policies.

This list is not comprehensive and does not alter the at-will status of churchwide employees. The ELCA has and will exercise the right to take appropriate action based on the individualized circumstances of a particular case. The ELCA's action may include any level of discipline up to and including discharge based on conduct that warrants that action, whether or not the conduct is described in these Personnel Policies.

9. PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

All ELCA employees are expected to treat each other with respect and to offer positive and constructive criticism. The churchwide organization encourages an atmosphere in which any job-related problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response. Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but the organization will consider complaints in accordance with the following procedure.

Employees who disagree with established policies, practices, or rules of conduct, or a particular decision or action, may express their concern through the problem resolution procedure described below. No employee acting in a reasonable manner will be penalized for voicing a complaint or using this problem resolution procedure. The steps described below are intended to facilitate an informal resolution, and attorneys are not allowed to participate directly in the process.

Step 1. The employee describes the problem to the immediate supervisor within five days after the problem arises. If the supervisor is unavailable or is the source of the problem, the employee may describe the problem to any other supervisor. If the matter is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, they may proceed to Step 2.

Step 2. The employee presents a written complaint to the supervisor within five days of the occurrence of the discussion referred to in Step 1. The supervisor has ten days to give a written reply. If the written reply does not resolve the complaint to the employee's satisfaction, they may proceed to Step 3.

Step 3. Within five days after receiving the written reply referred to in Step 2, the employee sends the written complaint and the reply to People Solutions with an explanation of why Step 2 is not sufficient or fully satisfactory. The executive for People and DEI (or their designee) will try to send a written reply to the employee within ten days. If the written reply does not resolve the complaint to the employee's satisfaction, they may proceed to Step 4.

Step 4. Within five days after receiving the written reply referred to in Step 3, the employee sends a written statement, together with all prior documentation, to the executive for Administration requesting their consideration of the complaint and reasons why there has been no satisfactory resolution or treatment. The executive for Administration may, but is not required to, consult with other members of the Administration team and may, but is not required to, meet personally with the employee and others while considering the matter. The executive for Administration will send a written decision to the employee normally within 30 days after the receipt of the employee's written statement requesting their consideration. The executive for Administration's decision is final.

10. ENDING THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

This Section 10 reviews the various ways the employment relationship may come to an end. Regardless of the reason for termination, the churchwide organization requests that the employee cooperate in the transition process and participate in an exit interview. This is especially true when an employee resigns or retires. In addition, the organization asks that, on the effective date of the resignation or retirement, all work assignments be completed to the extent possible and all files be brought up to date.

Exit interviews provide a way for the employee to reflect on their experience at the churchwide organization and to offer comments, advice, or suggestions regarding the organization's policies and practices.

10.1. Resignation or Retirement

Resignation or retirement is a voluntary decision on the part of the employee to terminate the employment relationship. The churchwide organization asks that employees give at least two weeks' advance notice. The last day of employment must be a day on which the employee is working.

10.2. Completion of a Specific Term

Employees of the churchwide organization serving for a specific term—whether because of a term call, election to an office with a specific term, a written employment agreement for a specified time, or other reason—will be separated from employment at the end of that period. The preceding sentence does not preclude employment in a different capacity.

10.3. Discharge Based on Performance or Behavior

Subject to any applicable restrictions and procedures in the ELCA's governing documents, there may be situations where the ELCA decides the employment relationship must be terminated for disciplinary reasons. The organization's preference for progressive discipline (see Section 8) does not alter the existence of an at-will relationship or preclude the imposition of discharge if the organization determines that discharge is the appropriate action.

The ELCA considers employment-related decisions on a case-by-case basis, and these Personnel Policies cannot address every situation that may arise. Therefore, nothing in this document prevents the dismissal of an employee where dismissal is in the best interest of the church. For example, personal misconduct by an employee that could adversely affect the ELCA's relationship with its synods, congregations, or the general public or the ELCA's ability to communicate its mission and message would lead to the prompt termination of employment.

All involuntary terminations must be approved by the executive for People and DEI and the head of the affected home area. Depending on the particular circumstances, it is generally appropriate to consult with the executive of Administration or with an officer of this church.

10.4. Termination for Other Reasons

There may be situations where this church decides to separate an employee or group of employees based on program changes or budgetary reasons having nothing to do with job performance. This church recognizes the difficulty of such separations, especially because, as noted in Section 5.15, unemployment insurance benefits are not available. Therefore, this church will attempt to achieve mutually acceptable termination arrangements with the separating employee. Depending on the particular situation, such arrangements might include salary continuation for a specified period, a lump-sum payment, subsidized health benefits for a specified period, outplacement assistance, or a combination of such benefits.

10.5. Job Abandonment

If an employee fails to report to work or call their supervisor for three consecutive days when scheduled to work, the organization may determine the employee's job has been abandoned as of the first day of absence.

10.6. Rehire

A former employee's eligibility for rehire may depend on past performance. Former employees are not guaranteed rehire. Generally, rehired employees start over with respect to eligibility for benefits if the break in the employment relationship lasted more than a year.

10.7 Non-Disclosure Provisions

The ELCA limits the use of non-disclosure provisions to the small minority of cases in which they are truly necessary to protect confidential and sensitive materials related to donors, personnel, legal, information technology, and similar categories of information.

11. BIOMETRIC INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

11.1. Purpose

The ELCA's Biometric Information Security Policy describes the ELCA's procedures for safeguarding, retaining, and destroying biometric data.

The Illinois Biometric Information Security Act (BIPA) defines biometric identifiers as a retina or iris scan, fingerprint, voiceprint, or scan of hand or face geometry.

The ELCA does not directly use or process the biometric information of its employees. However, third party devices requiring or providing for the use of biometric identifiers (to gain access to those devices) are used throughout the organization. This policy addresses the use of those devices by ELCA employees as it pertains to the retention and deletion of biometric identifiers.

11.2. Policy

The ELCA's policy is to protect biometric data in accordance with applicable laws and industry standards, including, but not limited to, the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act.

An employee's biometric data will not be collected or otherwise obtained by the ELCA aside from the employee's use of third-party devices and technology provided by the ELCA to the employee in furtherance of the employee's work-related tasks.

In no event shall the ELCA willingly and knowingly provide an employee's biometric information to any unauthorized third party. Nor, will the ELCA sell, lease, or trade any biometric information.

This policy does not govern the employee's use of personal technology or devices to perform work related tasks.

11.3. Retention Schedule

When the initial purpose for which one's biometric information was provided has passed, all biometric data are permanently erased and are not archived or kept on ELCA servers or devices. In most instances, this means that the ELCA's information technology team will wipe and reset all devices (i.e. mobile device, computers, etc.). In no event, shall any biometric information be kept more than 1 year following an employee's last interaction with the ELCA.

11.4. Guidelines for Storage and Permanent Destruction of Biometric Identifiers

The ELCA will store, transmit, and protect biometric data using a reasonable standard of care and in a manner that is congruent with or exceeds standards of care followed in maintaining other confidential employee information.

All biometric data stored on ELCA servers or devices are encrypted. Additionally, third party devices used by the ELCA, requiring, or providing for the use of biometric information, are encrypted.

The ELCA will use industry accepted best practices to wipe devices and permanently delete and destroy biometric information.

A copy of this policy shall be made available to the public at elca.org.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

By signing this form, I acknowledge that as of the date of my signature as shown below, I have received a copy of the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies dated **November** 2022 and as updated from time to time, from my employer, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (referred to for convenience below as the “ELCA”). I understand that the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies describe important information about working for the ELCA and that it is my responsibility to read and become familiar with the contents of the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies and to comply with these policies. I also understand that the ELCA may change or add to these policies or adopt or change other policies as it deems appropriate, with or without advance notice, and it is my responsibility to become familiar with such revisions. I further understand that I should ask my supervisor or Human Resources any questions not answered in the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies.

I acknowledge that I have entered into my employment relationship with the ELCA voluntarily and that I am an employee at will. I understand that, subject to applicable law, the employment relationship of an employee at will can be terminated at any time for any legal reason, with or without cause or notice. I understand that no manager or supervisor has any authority to change this employment-at-will relationship.

If I am on an ELCA roster and I receive a call from the Church Council for churchwide employment, I understand that the Church Council has the right to terminate my Roster status call and that it will terminate in any case whenever this employment terminates.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies are not a contract of employment, and I understand that the ELCA has and will exercise the right to take necessary action, including discharge, for conduct that requires such action, whether or not such conduct is referred to in this document.

Employee’s Signature

Date Signed

Summary of Changes to Portico's Bylaws

The Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA dba Portico Benefit Services ("Portico") provides its bylaws can be amended only with prior approval of the Church Council or the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA.

Subject to approval by Portico's Board of Trustees on November 3, 2022, Portico respectfully requests approval of amendments to its bylaws to accomplish two purposes.

- The first amendment is needed to facilitate the memorial "Salary Equity in the ELCA" from Churchwide Assembly action CA22.02.22 by permitting changes to Portico's privacy policies.
- The second amendment is to expand Portico's Board of Trustees to permit election of up to three additional advisors, with voice but no vote.

The proposed amendments are attached as Appendix A.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PORTICO'S RESTATED BYLAWS

1. Amendment: Facilitate the memorial "Salary Equity in the ELCA" from Churchwide Assembly action CA22.02.22 by permitting changes to Portico's privacy policies.

SECTION 9.10 Confidentiality of Records. Files maintained by the Board of Pensions in respect to the members of its various plans, their dependents or beneficiaries, shall be maintained in a manner consistent with its privacy policies. ~~as confidential records as to non Board of Pensions' personnel. Release of any information from such files to third persons shall only be made with written consent of the person for whom the file is maintained, the member's personal representative or a duly appointed professional agent.~~

2. Amendment: Expand the Board of Trustees to include advisors, with voice but no vote.

SECTION 4.1 Election and Composition of Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall be elected in the manner and for terms specified by the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA. Members of the Board of Trustees shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance and pensions, and shall include at least four persons who are members of the plans maintained by the Board of Pensions, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member. Up to two trustees may be members of the congregations of church bodies with which the ELCA is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.

The Board of Trustees shall be composed of fourteen to eighteen persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Approximately one-third of the Board of Trustees shall be elected each triennium for a three-year term with up to two consecutive re-elections. The terms of the new trustees shall commence at the commencement of the first regular meeting of the Board of Trustees following the close of the Churchwide Assembly at which they are elected and shall expire at the commencement of the first regular meeting of the Board of Trustees in the year in which their successors are elected.

The presiding bishop (or a person designated to serve as the presiding bishop's representative), the bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops, and the treasurer of this Church shall serve as advisory members of the Board of Trustees, with voice but not vote.

One to three additional advisory members may be elected to the Board of Trustees, with voice but not vote. Advisory members shall be nominated for a three-year term by one or more Trustees and elected to serve by vote of no less than two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Trustees. Following election, an advisory member's term, vacancy and removal shall be governed by Sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in a manner identical to a trustee.

SECTION 4.2 Vacancy on Board of Trustees. In the event of an interim vacancy on the Board of Trustees, the Church Council, following consultation with the Board of Trustees, shall elect a trustee to serve the balance of the vacated term. Trustees who are elected to fill a vacancy on the Board of Trustees and who served less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for re-election for up to three full terms served consecutively upon the conclusion of the partial term.

SECTION 4.3 Removal of Trustee. A trustee's position shall be deemed vacant following three (3) absences during any rolling two (2) years commencing with the first absence. In accordance

with the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Board of Trustees, a trustee's position shall be declared vacant. A trustee may be removed from office, with or without cause, by the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the trustees present at a duly held meeting; provided that not less than five (5) days and not more than thirty (30) days notice of such meeting, stating that removal of such trustee is to be on the agenda for such meeting, shall be given to each trustee; provided, however, no such removal of a trustee shall be effective without the approval of the Church Council.

SECTION 9.9 Conflict or Duality of Interest. All trustees, advisors, officers, agents and employees of this corporation shall disclose all real or apparent conflicts or dualities of interest which they discover or which have been brought to their attention in connection with this corporation's activities. "Disclosure" as used in the Bylaws shall mean providing promptly, to the appropriate persons, a written description of the facts comprising the real or apparent conflict or duality of interest. An annual disclosure statement shall be circulated to trustees, officers and certain identified agents and employees to assist them in considering such disclosures, but disclosure is appropriate and required whenever conflicts or dualities of interest may occur. The written notices of disclosure shall be filed with the President or such other person designated by the President to receive such notifications. All disclosures of real or apparent conflicts or dualities of interest shall be noted for the record in the minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

An individual trustee, advisor, officer, agent or employee who believes that s/he or an immediate member of her/his family might have a real or apparent conflict of interest shall, in addition to filing a notice of disclosure, abstain from: (1) participating in discussions or deliberations with respect to the subject of the conflict (other than to present factual information or answer questions), (2) using their personal influence to affect deliberations, (3) making motions, (4) voting, (5) executing agreements, or (6) taking similar actions on behalf of the corporation where the conflict or duality of interest might pertain by law, agreement or otherwise. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees or a committee thereof, a person with a real or apparent conflict or duality of interest may be excused from all or any portion of discussions or deliberations with respect to the subject of the conflict.

A member of the Board of Trustees or a committee thereof, who, having disclosed a conflict or duality of interest, nevertheless shall be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at any meeting where the subject of the conflict is discussed. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon, the abstention from participation and voting by the individual making disclosure.

There shall be no business transactions, whether in the nature of employment, contract, purchase or sale, between the corporation and a trustee during her or his term in office and, except in the case of employment, for a period of one year thereafter. For purposes of this Section 9.9, the payment of any benefit to which the trustee or advisor might otherwise be entitled, shall not be deemed a business transaction.

The President shall ensure that all trustees, advisors, officers, agents, employees and independent contractors of the corporation are made aware of the corporation's policy with respect to conflicts or dualities of interest.

Response to Restructure the Governance of the ELCA

Background

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly received memorials from 10 synods concerning restructuring the ELCA's governance. The assembly adopted 738-72 the following action on these memorials:

To direct the Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church comprised of leaders of diverse representation from all three expressions that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, shall reconsider the statements of purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism, and will present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. [CA22.01.06]

In addition, there was assembly action on "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility ELCA Governance Audit." Adopted 538-175, the action was, in part:

To direct the Church Council to engage an external auditor to conduct a comprehensive audit for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA and related governance documents and present a report of the findings by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; [CA22.04.26]

The Office of the Secretary engaged the Conference of Bishops about the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church and the process by which the commission would be formed.

Recommended Process

The Church Council will spend time in its November 2022 meeting to discuss the assembly's actions related to the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC; Commission). There will be two critical parts to this recommended process.

The first is for the Church Council to determine how the CRLC will be structured and established, recognizing it is to be comprised of leaders of diverse representation from the three expressions of this church, as instructed by the assembly, and consistent with this church's representational principles.

The second part is for the Church Council to review the statements of purpose for each of this church's expressions and the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being attentive to this church's shared commitment to dismantling racism. From a governance perspective, the Church Council has an overarching responsibility to engage proactively in discussion and analysis. In doing so, the discussion would provide the opportunity for the Church Council to consider the CRLC's potential impact on the future of this church and assess potential opportunities and challenges.

Once the CRLC is established, it will need to develop a charter to outline its responsibilities and guide its work. The findings and recommendations are to be presented to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. Below is a possible timeline for the work to be completed by the Churchwide Assembly.

Timeline

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 2022: | Church Council discusses CRLC structure, responsibilities, process |
| March/April 2023: | Further conversation on CRLC; Appoint members to CRLC |
| Late Spring 2023: | CRLC holds first in person meeting to outline its work |
| Summer 2023: | Subsequent CRLC meetings held remotely Opportunity to engage rostered ministers at Rostered Ministers Gathering |
| Fall 2023: | CRLC consults CoB as needed, per CWA action |
| November 2023: | Findings reported on DEIA audit of CBCR CRLC consults CC as needed, per CWA action |
| Winter 2023/2024: | CRLC work continues |
| Spring 2024: | CRLC consults with CoB and CC at meetings Initial draft of findings, particularly as it relates to CBCR |
| Summer 2024: | CRLC work continues |
| Fall 2024: | CRLC consults with CoB and CC at meetings |
| November 2024: | CC acts on forwarding CBCR amendments to 2025 CWA |
| Winter 2024/2025: | CRLC work continues |
| Spring 2025: | Draft report shared with CoB for comment Final report shared with CC for comment and consideration to forward report and recommendations to 2025 CWA for its consideration |
| July 28-Aug. 2, 2025: | CWA considers report and recommendations from CRLC |



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns

The 1997 Churchwide Assembly affirmed the adoption by the ELCA Church Council of “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” as a substantial modification of its predecessor, “Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Principles and Procedures” (adopted by the 1989 assembly). The 1997 assembly also authorized the ELCA Church Council to make appropriate adjustments in these policies and procedures as further experience of this church would indicate (CA97.5.21). Adjustments were made in 2006, titles were updated in 2011. This revision was approved by the Church Council at its meeting Nov. 11, 2018, and titles and constitutional references were updated in 2022.

I. PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT

Purpose

Faithful participation in society is integral and vital to the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to serve the triune God revealed in the Scriptures. As individual members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and across the many connections in Christ, this church lives out Christian faith as a publicly engaged church. It is a church that seeks to exercise responsibility in and witness to God’s just and loving intention for all of creation. The call to God’s people to care for human society is unmistakable in the Christian Scriptures (Amos 5:22-24; Luke 4:16-22) and is given direction in the ELCA constitution.

The ELCA’s first social statement, “The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective,” formulates this responsibility and witness in three overarching commitments:¹

- “To sustain and support its members in their baptismal vocation to serve God and neighbor in daily life” (6).
- “To serve God and neighbor in its life and work as an institution” (7).
- “To foster moral deliberation on social questions” (7).

Practically speaking, these commitments are woven on the frame of four distinct but interrelated spheres of activity:²

1. Nurturing and Equipping Members.
2. Encouraging Learning, Conversation and Discernment.
3. Developing and Enacting Social Teaching and Policy.
4. Interpreting and Applying.

Attentive to these commitments and within these spheres, this document sets forth the policies and procedures of the ELCA for addressing social concerns. It gives extended attention to the procedural elements of “Sphere Three” even while charting the multiple means through which we together as a church carry out this calling in responsibility and witness. The rationale and procedural description established here are intended to clarify, order and facilitate the life and mission of the ELCA as a networked church.

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II. GOD'S CALL TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WITNESS IN SOCIETY: CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES AND THE ELCA CONSTITUTION

1. The ELCA is called to address social concerns

The ELCA addresses social concerns as a public church in grateful response to God's saving grace in Jesus Christ. Through faith in the gospel, Christ's church is freed to love the neighbor and seek justice in society, as it hopes and prays for "a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1). While this world is corrupted by sin, it also belongs to the triune God, who promises ultimate fulfillment of purpose and continues to sustain it. In this world, the church is called to live its faith, love and hope by caring for and transforming the structures of society, working for justice and preserving the earth. For "what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8).

This recognition of God's call is expressed clearly in the constitution of the ELCA. Fundamentally, it confesses the gospel to be "the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world" (ELCA 2.07.).³

Likewise, it signifies that this church shall:

- Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity,

justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed and committing itself to their needs.

(ELCA 4.02.c.).

- Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world (ELCA 4.02.e.).

To fulfill these purposes, this church shall:

- Encourage and equip all members to worship, learn, serve and witness; to fulfill their calling to serve God in the world; and to be stewards of the earth, their lives, and the Gospel (ELCA 4.03.b.).
- Lift its voice in concord and work in concert with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged (ELCA 4.03.g.).
- Study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world (ELCA 4.03.l.).
- Work with civil authorities in areas of mutual endeavor, maintaining institutional separation of church and state in a relation of functional interaction (ELCA 4.03.n.).

2. Constitutional directives

The constitution articulates that:

- The congregations, synods and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent expressions sharing responsibly in God's mission. In an interdependent relationship, primary responsibility for particular functions will vary among the expressions (ELCA 5.01.c.).
- This church shall seek to function as people of God through

congregations, synods and the churchwide organization, all of which shall be interdependent. Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in an interdependent relationship with the others (ELCA 8.11.).

- This church shall seek to meet human needs through encouragement of its people to individual and corporate action, and through establishing, developing, recognizing, and supporting institutions and agencies that minister to people in their spiritual and temporal needs (ELCA 8.23.).

In fulfillment of the purposes of this church, the churchwide organization shall:

- Provide resources to equip members to worship, learn, serve, and witness in their ministry in daily life (ELCA 11.21.b.). Witness to the Word of God in Christ by united efforts in proclaiming the Gospel, responding to human need, caring for the sick and suffering, working for justice and peace, and providing guidance to members on social matters (ELCA 11.21.d.). Develop and administer policies for this church's relationship to social ministry organizations and cooperate with public and private agencies that enhance human dignity and justice (ELCA 11.21.i.). Determine and implement policy for this church's relationship to governments (ELCA 11.21.j.).
- The Office of the Presiding Bishop shall “serve the Church's theological work by promoting, coordinating, and facilitating theological discernment of the Church's message and its theological foundations in collaboration with all who share in the responsibilities to be teachers of the faith in the Church” (ELCA 15.12.D21.).
- The Service and Justice unit shall use this church's foundational and theological statements and messages to “engage with communities, coalitions and networks, congregations, and synods in service and justice work” and “provide guidance to [ELCA] members on matters of social justice.” (ELCA 16.12.D21.).

In fulfillment of that same purpose, each synod, as an interdependent expression of this church, has responsibilities.

- In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, synods shall:
 - a. Assist members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world.
 - b. Encourage congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - c. Provide resources for congregational life (ELCA 10.21.02.).
- In interpreting the work of this church on the territory of the synod, synods shall:
 - a. Interpret social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit or office which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues (ELCA 10.21.04.).

Among its purposes, the congregation shall:

- Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society (ELCA 9.41.f.).

The ELCA's identity, expressed through the three commitments and the activity in the four spheres as described in this document, is to be consistent with these directives of the "Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

III. FOUR INTERRELATED SPHERES IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WITNESS

The framework expressed through these four interrelated spheres of activity signify a comprehensive approach to social responsibility and witness. Each sphere of activity contains distinct initiatives and varied responsibilities or procedures for the three expressions of a networked church serving together to address social concerns. Each sphere is necessary and depends on the others if the ELCA is to make a robust witness in society. The initiatives and responsibilities, especially in spheres One and Two, represent challenging ideals to achieve within the expressions of this church. While challenging, they do express this church's salutary aspirations for living faithfully into the identity it has accepted in response to God's call.



1. Sphere One: Nurturing and Equipping Members

Description

The first sphere of activity involves nurturing and equipping members in the covenant God makes in baptism with each person, a covenant that is lived out in everyday callings as part of different communities. All expressions and ministries of this church participate in this ongoing task to form faithful individuals and communities of disciples for daily life in society. This sphere of activity is rooted in and expands the catechetical work of this church.

The development of capacity for faithful daily life and social responsibility requires constant attentiveness to the Scriptures and effective familiarity with the Lutheran Confessions. It requires nurturing of attitudes and values, behaviors and practices that foster good character and conscience. Such nurturing also includes attention to the meaning of discipleship, the place of

experience and reason in moral decision-making, and skills for moral discernment and deliberation. Equipping and nurturing is a long-term task that involves all expressions of the ELCA.

Initiatives and responsibilities

1. Ultimately, the equipping and nurturing of God's people for their callings in the world are grounded in word and sacrament and centered typically in the activity of the worshiping community. The moral formation of disciples requires intentional resources – preaching and teaching, practices and conversation – directed toward that purpose.
2. Synod attention to matters of formation and discipleship aid vitality in this sphere through collaborative efforts that may be synod-wide or occur among networks of congregations. The Christian Community and Leadership unit of the churchwide organization, in collaboration with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and other appropriate churchwide unit(s), has primary responsibility for coordinating churchwide resources in support of this sphere of activity.

2. Sphere Two: Encouraging Learning, Conversation and Discernment

Description

The second sphere of activity encourages learning and conversation among members around social concerns. The ELCA's identity as a community of moral deliberation is much broader and deeper than the ELCA-wide deliberation that results in social documents adopted by legislative bodies of the ELCA. This sphere of activity seeks open-ended learning and discernment of the mind of Christ (Romans 12:2) on specific contemporary social concerns without the pressure of legislative decisions or community consensus.⁴ Routine practices in moral reflection, conversation and discernment within congregations, homes, campus ministries, social ministry organizations and other settings build the content and context for when this church discerns a need to deliberate toward normative corporate conclusions.

Activity in this sphere is rooted in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and draws upon the rich Lutheran theological

heritage. It also uses resources that encompass analysis of particular social concerns within the framework of basic Christian theology and morality. It includes educational resources of many types, as well as the development of models for and networks of resource people to support conversation and discernment. The needs and approach will vary from issue to issue and group to group, but all approaches shall aim to encourage an inclusive, in-depth process of learning and reflection.

Activity in this sphere registers the importance of the ELCA's official social teaching even as it employs multiple types of educational materials, exploratory studies, continuing education events, conferences and conversation experiences. Resources for this sphere of activity should be regularly under development for widespread use throughout this church.

Initiatives and responsibilities

1. Attention to learning, moral conversation, and discernment about social concerns within congregations and synod settings need to be integrated with other activities such as the study of the Scriptures or practical decision-making. At the same time, this sphere depends on resources dedicated to social questions. Media and written resources here should seek to nurture lively conversation and consideration from a diversity of perspectives. Efforts should be made to frame and foster discussion using ELCA social teaching whenever relevant.
2. Synods and other church-related entities, such as seminaries and church-related colleges, may support efforts in this sphere by providing resource materials, leadership, or networks dedicated to learning and conversation.
3. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, because of its responsibility for this church's teaching office, shall have oversight for churchwide activities in collaboration with appropriate churchwide units. However, it often will be the case that units will take the lead for developing resources and carrying out activities in accord with the principle of interdependence.

4. In developing resources or establishing conversational groups, efforts should be made to draw upon the wealth of expertise and interest throughout this church and to develop materials and programs through wide-ranging consultation with relevant members and groups. Churchwide efforts are expected to bring together people from congregations, synods, institutions and agencies of this church in accord with this church's principles of representation.

3. Sphere Three: Developing and Enacting Social Teaching and Policy

Description

The third sphere of activity comprises procedures for developing official documents that articulate this church's teaching and policy. Both social statements and social messages serve as teaching documents, although statements are primary, and messages may have a more deliberative character. ELCA social policy resolutions set focused and explicit directives and so serve as the main form of policy expression, although teaching documents often carry policy implications.

In these three documents, the ELCA's activity in spheres One and Two become the context for bringing Lutheran theology into conversation with broad social institutions and concerns or specific topics seeking corporate conclusions. These conclusions always are open to further testing in the Spirit, but they set forth this church's theological and ethical understanding and establish policy regarding individual and corporate Christian responsibility in the world. Together, they articulate church teaching, govern institutional action, provide for communal and personal discernment, and project moral vision.

Guiding perspectives for social teaching and policy

The perspectives outlined below summarize key elements for the ELCA's understanding, development, consideration and use of these documents.

1. Social teaching is theological. ELCA social teaching and policy arise from and address the changing circumstances of the world in light of God's living word of law and gospel. With the aid of

contemporary experience and knowledge, they bring this church's understanding of its faith to bear on social questions. Because they view and express these matters from the perspective of the church's faith, social teaching documents are to be clearly rooted in the biblical and confessional witness of the ELCA. They are subject to the testing of whether they are faithful to the Scriptures as "the authoritative source and norm of [this church's] proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA 2.03.) and to its creeds and confessions (ELCA 2.04., 2.05., and 2.06.). They themselves are not new creeds or confessions.

2. Social statements and messages are teaching documents. In their preparation, content and use, these teaching documents bring into dialogue the convictions of faith with the realities of the world and the experience of Christians living out their baptismal vocation. They give voice to the prophetic mandate of this church, its calling to care for God's world, and its commitment to reason together on social concerns. In so doing, they inform, guide and challenge this church and its members. They present teaching intended "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12).

Church members are called on to give the ELCA's social teaching careful consideration as they form their own judgments. Their teaching function, however, is persuasive rather than coercive, building upon and seeking to nurture the freedom of Christians to discern and act responsibly. Social teaching helps shape moral vision and the conscience of Christians by appealing to faith, character, moral convictions and reason. The respect they evoke comes from the truth and wisdom they embody, which has been subject to widespread assessment by various forums within this church during their development. Their effective teaching significance is determined by the intrinsic quality of their content and by their use in this church.

3. Social teaching involves this church in the ongoing task of theological ethics. In these teaching documents, this church addresses the question: "What ought we as Christians and the church think and do about this social question?" Social teaching documents seek to discern God's will for today, offering insight

and direction on how people should view an issue and act justly in relation to it. Their focus is most commonly on ethical material that mediate between broad moral principles and detailed reasoning in a particular situation.

Social teaching documents seek to reflect the qualities of a community of forgiven sinners called to do God's will. They probe for shared convictions and the boundaries of faithful action; within this framework, they acknowledge diversity. These documents recognize the complexity of society and the power of sin, as well as the calling of this church to speak and to act with hope and boldness. They appeal to theology, ethics, secular knowledge and analysis, history, and contemporary experience to offer coherent and plausible reasons for their judgments. As the work of a community that stands under God's judgment and grace, social teaching exhibits openness to the Holy Spirit's further guidance.

They are meant to raise a moral vision for discipleship and to frame and foster the art of moral conversation and discernment in congregations and other expressions of this church. As a body, they chart connections across ELCA social thinking, especially in a time of cultural upheaval and moral quandary. Their use both depends on and expresses the identity of the church as a community of moral deliberation in which serious communication on matters of society and faith is vital to its being. United in baptism, members are free to discuss and disagree, knowing that they are ultimately bound together in the body of Christ by the gospel and not by their moral judgments.

4. Social teaching and policy result from extensive, inclusive, and accepted processes of deliberation throughout this church.

Social teaching and policy documents are shaped by careful and critical listening to this church and to society, as well as to other church bodies and ecumenical organizations in this country and around the world. The development of social teaching embodies the justice principle of participation⁵ and is guided by the constitutional mandate to "provide structures and decision-making processes for this church that foster mutuality and interdependence and that involve people in making decisions that affect them" (ELCA 4.03.o).

The theological ethics portfolio within the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop has lead responsibility here as a function of the teaching office of this church. The processes of development, however, call on those with specialized knowledge, representative concerns and diverse experiences through robust research, study and deliberation. Broad participation by congregations and synods, as well as by other churchwide units, is to be encouraged and facilitated. The Church Council and the Conference of Bishops (ELCA 10.81.A16.f.) provide essential forums.

5. Social teaching and policy documents govern the institutional life of this church. They set forth the principles, parameters and directives that the ELCA considers necessary to govern the internal and external policy and practices of its social responsibility in accordance with its understanding of God's will. They express mutual expectations and provide for mutual accountability in this church.

Social teaching governs the establishment of policy and directions for the ELCA's work in the areas of advocacy and corporate social responsibility (ELCA 11.21.i. and j; ELCA 14.21.14.), enabling, limiting, and directing these activities. It is expected that ELCA-affiliated agencies and institutions will develop policies and practices consistent with the principles and directives of ELCA social teaching.

Social teaching also establishes the stance of ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations. Teaching documents represent an ecumenical contribution to the body of Christ, which has ongoing responsibility to discern on pressing social matters. They undergird the means for common decision-making on critical issues of faith and life, especially with regard to our full communion partners. They are a primary means to aid all our partners in understanding us, holding us accountable, and identifying possible areas of collaboration and joint advocacy.

Those on the rosters of public ministry are expected to present the teaching and policy positions as those of the ELCA. This expectation recognizes their freedom to disagree with these positions in their personal convictions.

6. Social teaching documents are intended to be used widely in the life and mission of this church and to reflect awareness of the various audiences and ministries that they are to serve.

They are informed by expertise and data as they address the broader society in ways fitting for public discussion of and speaking to social questions. They are critical resources for bishops, rostered ministers, teaching theologians, and other teachers and leaders in this church. To help stimulate consideration of social issues in congregations, their language is to be clear and appropriate for congregational life. Social teaching documents offer individual members guidance and support for their callings and participation in society.

A. SOCIAL STATEMENTS

Description

Social statements are the ELCA's primary teaching documents; they bring the Christian Scriptures and Lutheran theology into dialogue with social analysis regarding broad social institutions and questions or the most controversial social topics. Typically, they provide analysis, set forth basic theological and ethical perspectives, offer vocational insight, and provide guidance for the corporate witness of the ELCA and its members.

Social statements are documents of the highest quality even as they vary in scope, length, frequency and form of moral discourse, according to the needs of their subject matter. In all cases, social statements are the product of the most extensive, participatory and inclusive discernment and deliberation within this church, using procedures that are an integral part of their educational and formative purpose. They require adoption at a churchwide assembly by a two-thirds vote.

This church invests this considerable rigor and the necessary resources in their development because social statements represent the most authoritative form of articulated social teaching and policy. In questions of a conflict of interpretation or application, social statements have priority.

Procedures

Selection and oversight

1. Synods may propose the need for development of a social statement “through (a) Synod Assembly memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or (b) resolutions for referral from the Synod Assembly through the Synod Council to the Church Council and (c) Synod Council resolutions addressed to the Church Council” (CC88.11.124). The Church Council may recommend topics for social statement development to a churchwide assembly.
2. A churchwide assembly shall approve issues for development.
3. The Church Council shall exercise oversight of the development process, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This oversight includes the capacity to authorize when a social statement process should begin and when hiatus is warranted. It also includes the capacity to determine that an issue would be handled more appropriately through a social message process rather than one of social statement development. Examples of need for wise management or for use of the social message process include matters of churchwide staff capacity, subject content overlap with existing social teaching, budgetary concerns, and ELCA-wide capacity for the intensive process of social statement development. Such matters cannot be assessed adequately during a churchwide assembly but need thorough consideration.

Development

1. The Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Church Council, shall direct the processes of social statement development in accordance with the principle of interdependence. The process shall ensure that:
 - A task force is identified to develop a proposed social statement that includes members with specialized knowledge and those directly affected

by the issue. Membership in the task force is approved by the Church Council or its Executive Committee.

- Ways are found to encourage broad participation throughout the whole church.
 - The development of a social statement includes preparation of preliminary resources as appropriate and shall be preceded by the issuance of a draft. Decisions about preliminary documents shall be made on a case-by-case basis according to the scope of concerns that the proposed social statement involves and the extent of this church's previous engagement with the questions. A draft, with a format designed for response, shall be available at least 18 months before a proposed social statement is to be considered at a churchwide assembly.
2. Synods and congregations shall receive multiple announcements about and means to participate in learning, discussion and discernment using preliminary studies and drafts. Synods shall cooperate in the discernment around social statements by encouraging study of and response to preliminary documents by congregations, individuals and synod committees, and through synod forums or hearings.
 3. The Church Council and the Conference of Bishops shall be consulted as forums for review and discernment regarding drafts.
 4. The ELCA task force responsible for developing a proposed statement (see No. 1 above) also may develop a proposed set of implementing resolutions to accompany the statement. If developed, these indicate how basic principles and policy direction shall or may be carried out by various expressions of this church. Extreme care should be exercised in their development, a care sensitive to realistic capacity and financial implications. Aspirational resolutions should be clearly indicated in contrast to directives. Implementing

resolutions, if any, accompany the proposed statement but are considered independently for adoption.

Adoption

1. The Church Council shall receive a proposed social statement, and any implementing resolutions, from the statement's task force through the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The Conference of Bishops shall review and may offer recommendations to the Church Council. By a reasonable and announced date prior to a meeting of the Church Council, any bishop or voting member of the council may submit suggestions for amendments to the director for theological ethics. A collected list of proposed amendments, with recommendation by the director, shall be discussed by the council's Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee. The Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee shall share its recommended textual changes with the Church Council during plenary consideration. The Church Council shall send a recommended proposed social statement to a churchwide assembly (ELCA 12.12.01.). A set of recommended implementing resolutions may accompany it.
2. The text of the recommended proposed social statement and accompanying implementing resolutions shall be posted within 10 days after action by the Church Council. Synod assemblies may act to memorialize their support, concern or objection to the whole or to certain portions of the recommended documents.
3. Only a churchwide assembly shall adopt ELCA social statements (ELCA 12.21.d.).
 - a. Amendments offered at a churchwide assembly to the recommended proposed social statement or the accompanying implementing resolutions must be submitted in writing to the secretary of this church prior to a published deadline.

- b. An ad hoc committee shall be seated by the chair, with the consent of the assembly, for the express task of providing recommendations to the assembly regarding proposed amendments. The ad hoc committee shall be chaired by a member(s) of the Church Council and be composed of the chair(s) of the task force, the bishop(s) from the task force, the director for theological ethics and the assistant to the presiding bishop for theological discernment. Other individuals may be appointed by the chair of the assembly if appropriate, but additional individuals normally are invited as consultants, without vote, to support the work of the ad hoc committee.

Voting members who submit amendments may be requested to meet with this committee. If a voting member wishes to offer an amendment that was not submitted prior to the deadline or was not recommended by the ad hoc committee, the assembly, by a majority vote, may consent to the consideration of such an amendment (adapted from Churchwide Assembly “Rules of Organization and Procedure,” Part Ten).

- c. “A proposed social statement shall require for adoption a vote of two-thirds of those voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly” (ELCA 12.12.01.); the vote tally shall be recorded on the printed statement.
- d. An addendum of amendments that elicited significant division in a churchwide assembly shall be included in the statement’s published forms.
- e. Implementing resolutions also shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote and shall be printed within the social statement document.⁶

Use

1. All expressions of this church are expected to encourage use of social statements and implement the resolutions as appropriate. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, through the Theological Discernment Team, shall provide counsel when questions of interpretation or application arise.
2. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, through the Theological Discernment Team, shall cooperate with other churchwide units and synods to develop accompanying resources (e.g., study guides, short videos, case studies, “tool kits,” etc.) and encourage the use of social statements in this church.
3. Synods shall interpret social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation of the Office of the Presiding Bishop (ELCA 10.21.04.c.), including those resolutions adopted by a synod assembly that address social issues raised on the territory of the synod.
4. The Office of the Presiding Bishop or other churchwide offices and units shall provide reports upon request to the Church Council on the use and implementation of social teaching.

Reconsideration

1. Churchwide assemblies may authorize reconsideration of previously adopted social statements by a two-thirds vote.

2. As the interim legislative body, the Church Council also may authorize a provisional process to begin reconsideration of an existing social statement. If so authorized, reconsideration procedures may begin, but the question shall be added to the agenda of the subsequent churchwide assembly. Provisional authorization becomes final when supported by a two-thirds vote. If not sustained by the assembly, the process shall be terminated.
3. Alternately, the Church Council by a majority vote may place on a churchwide assembly agenda the question of reconsideration.
4. Forms of reconsideration include:
 - a. *Edit*, the update of particular wording for the sake of accuracy and relevance to a contemporary social context but involving no change in substantive meaning.
 - b. *Revise*, changes to designated portions of a statement involving substantive change.
 - c. *Archive*, assigning the whole to the category of historical documents as an archive of the ELCA.

Reconsideration procedures

1. The action of a churchwide assembly for – or of a Church Council for provisional initiation of – reconsideration of a social statement shall specify which of the three are indicated. In the case of an edit, this requires designation of which wording would be reconsidered. In the case of a revision, this requires designation of which paragraphs or sections would be reconsidered. A resolution to archive shall not be combined with the other two.
2. When reconsideration, or provisional reconsideration, is authorized, notice shall be referred to the Office of the Presiding Bishop to form a task force to re-study and address the specific concerns indicated.
3. The reconsideration cycle shall reflect standard protocol for the development of a social statement, including

commitments such as the presence on the task force of diverse perspectives and review by the Conference of Bishops. The listening and study phases necessarily will be constrained by time, but the process shall include at least a brief period of public comment on a draft of any proposed changes or on the recommendation to archive. In the case of revision or archive, the period of public comment shall begin no later than 15 months before the churchwide assembly at which recommended changes to the social statement will be considered.

4. When the proposed changes involve matters of editing alone, the ELCA Church Council, as the interim governing body, may choose to act upon the recommendation of the task force and finalize them. Adoption of editorial amendments shall require two-thirds support. If two-thirds is not received, or if the Church Council considers it wise, recommended edits shall be referred to the subsequent churchwide assembly.
5. Recommended proposed revisions adopted by the Church Council or its recommendation for archive shall be posted within 10 days following the Church Council meeting. Official notice of proposed actions shall be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church.
6. A two-thirds vote of an assembly shall be required to edit, revise or archive a social statement.

B. SOCIAL MESSAGES⁷

Description

Social messages are teaching documents that address social topics narrower in scope and complexity or of less controversy than social statements and are, therefore, generally briefer. Like social statements, messages address the contemporary situation in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of the Scriptures. They point to human suffering, grave injustice, pending danger, social perplexity or hopeful developments, and urge that evil be resisted, justice done, and commitment renewed.⁸ They provide this church flexibility

to respond to pressing questions that arise from the ELCA's mission in the world.

Social messages are secondary teaching documents in the sense that they depend on and are to be consistent with this church's social statements. They also may be more deliberative in character, calling the church to additional discernment about specific aspects of a topic. In the case of conflict, social statement teaching shall prevail. Insofar as they are not inconsistent with social statements, messages do provide institutional rationale and policy direction for their topic within the corporate body, especially in the areas of advocacy and corporate social responsibility. As social teaching their authority for the conscience of members is persuasive, not coercive.

Social messages provide this church the opportunity to expand theological and pastoral address and analysis. The development of social messages shall reflect the participatory principles undergirding social statement development, but the process is intended to provide a timely response and involve significantly fewer resources. As such, social messages normally are adopted by the Church Council.

Procedures

Selection

1. The procedures for receiving proposals for a social message reflect those for social statements, but a churchwide assembly, the Conference of Bishops or churchwide units may submit requests to the Church Council to consider authorizing development of a social message. The Church Council shall ask the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to review all proposals and bring a recommendation on how to address the social questions entailed in these requests. This review shall consider financial implications and alternative means for addressing the social topic, such as development of a study resource, yearlong ELCA-wide emphasis or others.
2. The Office of the Presiding Bishop shall be guided by the following criteria in its recommendations:

- a. Relevance and implications for this church's ongoing mission.
 - b. Significance in society.
 - c. Timeliness and urgency.
 - d. Need for address in light of existing social teaching or policy.
 - e. Capacity issues affecting adequate address including ELCA-wide constraints, churchwide staff and finances.
3. The authorization of a message process, normally, rests with the Church Council. Normally, no more than one message shall be considered in each meeting.

Development

1. The Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop shall direct the development and implementation of social messages in accordance with the principle of interdependence. The process elements reflect those of social statement development, but under normal circumstances should require nor more than a year from authorization to adoption. The process shall ensure that:
 - An appropriate team of consultants be identified to aid staff in development.
 - A draft shall be made available (typically online) during a public comment period.
 - The Church Council and the Conference of Bishops are forums for review and discernment regarding drafts.
 - Means for communication to and participation by congregations, ELCA-related institutions and members of this church are considered.
2. After a comment period on a draft, the director for theological discernment shall bring a proposed social message to the Church Council for final consideration. Under unusual circumstances, the Church Council may refer a proposed message to a churchwide assembly for

its adoption. This referral shall carry the Church Council's recommendation for or against adoption.

3. Because messages depend on social statements and are adopted by a Church Council, social messages shall not be accompanied by a set of implementing resolutions.⁹
4. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Theological Discernment Team, at the direction of the Church Council, may abbreviate the procedural cycle to respond to an especially urgent situation.
5. The titles of social messages shall indicate the topics they address.

Adoption

1. The Church Council shall act upon the recommendations from the Office of the Presiding Bishop regarding adopting a proposed social message as a teaching document of the ELCA.
2. Social messages shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote.

Use

The use of social messages as teaching documents of this church reflect what is said about social teaching above.

Reconsideration

1. The Church Council, by a two-thirds vote, may call for reconsideration of an existing social message.
2. Such a call may request one of the following actions:
 - a. *Edit*, the update of particular wording for the sake of accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context involving no change in substantive meaning.
 - b. *Revise*, changes to designated paragraphs or sections of a message involving substantive alteration.
 - c. *Archive*, assigning the whole to the category of historical documents as an archive of the ELCA.

Reconsideration procedures:

1. After authorization by the Church Council, the action for reconsideration shall be referred to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for attention through a cycle not to exceed the next Church Council meeting in the case of an edit, or one year in other cases. Revision or archival consideration shall include a reasonable period for public comment.
2. The proposed revision or archive, along with the reasons for the proposed action, shall be reviewed by the Conference of Bishops prior to the subsequent Church Council meeting at which a vote to edit, revise or archive is to be taken.
3. A two-thirds vote of the Church Council shall be required to edit, revise or archive the social message.
4. In the case of reconsideration for an edit only, the Church Council shall have the prerogative to receive recommendations for update from the Office of the Bishop and to act at that same meeting. If the Church Council determines that the request is a matter of substance rather than an edit, appropriate reconsideration procedures shall be followed.

C. SOCIAL POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Description

Social policy resolutions refer to actions, other than social statements or messages, of a churchwide assembly or Church Council that establish specific policy-related directives on matters of social concern. Normally, social policy resolutions shall rely on or be consistent with the teachings of this church expressed in statements and messages.

Procedures

Proposal and adoption

1. The Church Council, synods and voting members of a churchwide assembly may propose the adoption of social policy resolutions. Such proposals shall be managed

according to the established rules and procedures of the Church Council, synods, and churchwide assembly.

2. All social policy resolutions must be approved by a churchwide assembly, or, in the interim, by the Church Council. Normally, a majority vote is sufficient for adoption.
3. In exceptional cases where proposed social policy resolutions are not expressly grounded in existing teaching or other policy and yet are not contradictory, a two-thirds majority of the assembly or council shall be required for adoption. The chair of the voting body, in consultation with the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, may be called upon to make this determination. The Theological Discernment Team shall have the responsibility to develop rationale and supporting foundational theological material to accompany the proposed resolution.

Review and archive

Social policy resolutions serve as this church's policy directives until a) replaced by subsequent resolutions, b) rendered mute 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.

Review procedure:

1. Approximately a year prior to a churchwide assembly, the director for theological ethics shall compile into one document all resolutions that will be 25 years or older at the time of the next assembly. This list shall be made available for a reasonable period, generally three months, of public comment regarding their continued relevance and suitability as policy directives of the ELCA. Notification regarding the list and request for comment shall be given to churchwide units, the Conference of

Bishops, the Church Council, social ministry organizations and others whose activities or policies are related to the resolutions under review.

2. The director for theological ethics shall bring a recommendation to the Church Council regarding which resolutions should remain in force and those that should be archived in the category of historical documents.

The recommendation should be guided by comments from those consulted and the following criteria:

- Relevance to the ELCA's contemporary mission.
 - Continued significance for society.
 - Congruence with ELCA social teaching.
3. The Church Council shall vote to recommend archive for resolutions it deems no longer of service to this church's mission by a majority vote. Those deemed relevant to the church's continued mission in society shall be reviewed thereafter every 10 years. All social policy resolutions recommended by the Church Council for archive shall be placed on the en bloc agenda of the pending churchwide assembly for final action. Only a majority vote is required.

D. HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The category of historical documents includes those of the ELCA's predecessor bodies¹⁰ as well as those previously serving as ELCA teaching and social policy that have been archived by vote of a legislative body. As historical documents, they no longer carry institutional authority. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary, will arrange for historical documents to be available for the sake of reference and research.

4. Sphere Four: Interpreting and Applying

Description

The fourth sphere of activity is that of interpreting and applying the social teaching and policy of the ELCA. While distinct in character, scope and longevity, all ELCA teaching and ELCA social

policy documents need careful interpretation and application for the sake of robust social responsibility and witness.

The procedures described here spotlight formalized institutional means of this activity. It should be stressed, however, that lay members, rostered ministers, bishops, leaders of social ministry organizations, ELCA-related entities and others engage in significant and wide-ranging interpretation and application of ELCA social teaching and policy as well. Examples include articles in congregational newsletters, public communications by deacons, the submission of letters to the editor by laypeople, the framing of organizational policies and many more. These are to be encouraged even though not given extensive attention here.

The work of *institutional* interpretation and application typically is expressed in communications and narratives, practices and actions that are expository or directive in nature. These employ ELCA social teaching and policy to illuminate, comment on, critique, and urge action in relation to events and developments in both church and in society.

Procedures

1. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with churchwide units, carries oversight responsibility for churchwide activity in this sphere.
2. The Conference of Bishops, as an essential leadership body of this church, addresses public issues through various means. Procedures for presenting the Conference of Bishops' voice or its individuals' voices are established by that body in its responsibility to assist bishops in their role as teachers of the church (10.81.A16.f.).
3. ELCA advocacy work is governed by this church's social documents as it strives to provide education, generate conversation, encourage networks of advocates, and give voice to public policy consistent with ELCA teaching and policy.
4. The work of Corporate Social Responsibility in the ELCA entails the creation of issue papers and screens and other instruments that provide bridges from teaching and

policy to socially responsible action in economic sectors of society. It facilitates a moral spotlight on investment holdings, corporate dialogue and economic decisions. It is especially significant in connection with Portico's activity that is guided by ELCA teaching and policy.

5. ELCA strategies depend on existing teaching and policy of this church to create comprehensive designs for sustained address to designated crises. They guide churchwide staff in a comprehensive use of resources for education, programmatic action, advocacy and more. Dependent on the commitments and scope entailed, strategies may need churchwide assembly authorization, and, in all cases, the Church Council has oversight responsibility. Strategies shall not establish new ELCA teaching or policy.
6. The employment of social teaching and policy by ELCA-related entities (social ministry organizations, colleges, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, etc.) enable address to social concerns in ways that reach multiple audiences beyond those directly affected by the three expressions of this church.
7. The decisions, most often coordinated by churchwide office units or offices, regarding development of interpretative material (e.g., summaries, video clips, study guides and other educational resources) should be guided by criteria such as timeliness, urgency, expressed need, and relevance for ecumenical or interreligious coalitions.
8. The interpretation and application of this church's teaching and policy advance this church's responsibility for faithfully addressing social concerns. All activity in this sphere may be subject to review by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, with the option for review by the Church Council or, ultimately, a churchwide assembly.

IV. CONCLUSION: ABIDING ATTITUDES AND AIMS

It is in grateful response to God's saving grace in Jesus Christ that the ELCA participates in God's just and loving intention for all

of creation by addressing social concerns. This church sets forth these policies and procedures in order to enable faithful social responsibility and effective social witness. Throughout the four spheres of activity and guided by the three commitments from “Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective,” may God empower this church to instantiate salutary attitudes and aims in which:

- The theological gifts of the Christian church for social life as witnessed in the Lutheran theological heritage are used faithfully.
- Postures are self-critical, modest and authentic.
- Conversations are characterized by accurate information as well as respect for participants and others.
- Discernment and deliberation are based upon careful attention to the Scriptures and social analysis.
- Engagement with complex issues does not simplify those issues or accept easy answers to difficult problems.
- All activity uses the rich resources of members, agencies and institutions, as well as engaging those of other churches and ecumenical bodies.
- This church together lives in the Spirit to “discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

ENDNOTES

1 For more, go to [ELCA.org/socialstatements](https://www.elca.org/socialstatements).

2 These four spheres were first identified in the 1997 document; they are revised here consistent with the experience of this church.

3 All these references are taken from the ELCA constitution as it stands in August 2022.

4 Such conversation and the related practice of discernment is a contemporary expression of the fourth mark of the church: “The mutual conversation and consolation of brothers and sisters.” See Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article IV, on the Gospel, p. 319.[4:] (*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Fortress Press, 2000).

5 See the social statements *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice*, *Sustainable Livelihood for All*, and *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* ([ELCA.org/socialstatements](https://www.elca.org/socialstatements)).

6 “Significant division” has been interpreted to mean any amendment receiving substantive discussion that was ultimately defeated yet received over 33 percent of assembly support. Each of these, if any, is indicated by a superscripted capital letter inserted at the point of contention in the text and is summarized in full on a list in the addendum.

7 A description of “Messages on Social Issues” was approved initially by the board of the ELCA Commission for Church in Society, Oct. 7, 1989, and adopted by the Church Council, Nov. 19, 1989. However, the character and purpose of social messages as described here adjusts ELCA policies and procedures consistent with the emerging need for social messages as a form of social teaching focused on specific topics.

8 See ELCA 4.03.g, 4.03.l, 11.21.d.

9 It is possible, however, for the Church Council at any time to call for or adopt social policy resolutions that are related to statements and messages.

10 In 1987, the constituting convention of the ELCA resolved to “receive the social statements of the existing churches as historical documents” (ELCA 87.30.13). The board of the Commission for Church in Society in 1987 voted “that the term ‘historical documents’ in the resolution of the constituting convention to the Commission for Church in Society regarding AELC, ALC, and LCA social statements be interpreted to mean that common elements of the former statements be utilized as the interim contextual basis and guiding principles for present advocacy work until such time as the ELCA develops and adopts new social statements” (minutes of Commission for Church in Society board meeting, Sept. 17-19, 1987, [ELCA.org/archives](https://www.elca.org/archives)). Since that time, the ELCA has developed its own relatively comprehensive body of social teaching. Predecessor body documents no longer continue to have this interim status, and the category of historical documents now includes those of the ELCA that have been archived according to the procedures described above.

Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns

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ORDERING INFORMATION

Single complimentary copies of this social message may be obtained by calling 800-638-3522.

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A Spanish translation of this social message is available online at ELCA.org/socialmessages or by calling 800-638-3822.

Una traducción española es accesible** en línea
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ELCAOB1024

Internal Memo from ELCA Witness in Society

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OVERVIEW

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

The CSR program addresses environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors with corporations through tools such as investment screens, issue papers, and shareholder advocacy. ESGs are widely used, non-financial assessment factors.

CSR TOOLS

- **INVESTMENT SCREENS:** Social criteria investment screens discourage investing in certain kinds of companies, such as those producing or distributing tobacco and alcohol. The ELCA CSR program applies screens to: alcohol, community development, the environment, gambling, military weapons, political and civil human rights, pornography, private prisons and tobacco. Find these resources at elca.org/csr.
- **ISSUE PAPERS:** Issue papers interpret ELCA social teaching as it relates to investments. Issue papers outline how corporations and others might play a role in solving an issue, identify any screens the ELCA would implement, and set boundaries on the kinds of shareholder actions the ELCA might endorse. Issue papers are reviewed and updated regularly. Current ELCA CSR program issue papers are: climate change, codes of conduct, domestic access to capital, domestic access to health care, environmental topics, extractive industries, genetics, human rights, international access to pharmaceuticals, nondiscrimination in business, sustainability and violence in our world. Find these resources at elca.org/csr.
- **SHAREHOLDER ADVOCACY:** Owners of shares in publicly held corporations can cast ballots in favor of socially responsible shareholder resolutions, as well as engage in dialogue, roundtable discussions and shareholder resolutions such as those done with ELCA partners.

CSR PROCEDURES

Use of these CSR tools is described in CSR resources, including standards for use of a boycott. A boycott would be the final step in the continuum of private sector advocacy by the ELCA, taken after other steps are exhausted and careful deliberation has been concluded. Find the ELCA Boycott Policy with other resources at elca.org/csr.

PARTNERSHIPS

ELCA CSR works in partnership with Portico Benefits and the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#) (ICCR). Portico's social purpose funds align with the social teachings of the ELCA. About one-third of Portico retirement plan members invest some or all of their retirement savings in a social purpose fund. Some examples of recent shareholder advocacy can be found in Portico's "[Socially](#)

48 [Responsible Investing Information Update](#)" (8/17/22). The ELCA also maintains membership in the ICCR,
49 which engages in ongoing dialogues with corporations and files more than 200 shareholder resolutions
50 annually.

51
52

53 **CSR WORK FACILITATION**

54

55 CSR work is supported by a CSR Associate within the ELCA Witness in Society team. The CSR Review
56 Team, comprised of bishops, churchwide staff and at least one member of the Church Council, and advised
57 by Portico, meets regularly to offer advice and direction on the work of CSR and to oversee the revision of
58 CSR's working documents.

59
60

61 **CSR WORK PLAN**

62

63 Attached is a revised version of the CSR workplan. Per its policies and procedures, CSR revises at least
64 one screen per year and three issue papers. In its July 2022 meeting, the CSR Review Team approved a
65 request by staff to revise two screens per year, and this new schedule is reflected in the workplan.

66

67 **CSR Work Plan Note: Introduction of Privatized Immigration Detention Screen**

68

69 The CSR Review Team has approved the development of a privatized immigration detention screen. The
70 ELCA has screened out private prisons since 2014. In 2021, President Biden signed an [executive order](#) to
71 phase out private federal prisons, but this initiative, with racial justice motivations, does not affect for-profit
72 U.S. immigration detention facilities. Private Prison corporations, sensing changes, had already begun
73 seeking out government contracts for privatized immigration detention.¹

74

75 A social criteria investment screen is comprised of three parts: authority, wording of the screen, and
76 definition of the problem. The screen draws its authority from both the criminal justice social statement and
77 the immigration message, both of which address the issue of detention of migrants. The wording of the
78 screen is generally quite similar across screens. The definition of the problem describes the issue in terms
79 of the theological, moral, and economic challenges presented by privatized immigration detention. This
80 section draws upon social teaching from the social statements on criminal justice and government and civic
81 engagement, and the social message on human rights,

82

83 **CSR Work Plan Note: Status of Military Weapons Screen**

84

85 Initially the Military Weapons Social Criteria Investment Screen was due to be revised in 2022. However,
86 CSR staff proposed, and the CSR Review Team agreed, to delay the revision of the screen for two years to
87 give the international community some more time to coalesce around language and specifics to be used
88 regarding autonomous weapons systems. Autonomous weapons systems are not currently explicitly named
89 in the screen.

90

¹ From 2015-2019, Federal contract spending for immigration detention, and related enforcement and processing activities [rose nearly 40 percent](#), most of it going to Geo Group, and CoreCivic, the two largest corporations in the for-profit prison sector. Nearly one-fourth ([24 percent](#)) of GEO Group's global revenues from the third quarter of 2020 to the third quarter of 2021 already came from ICE—in documents submitted with the Securities and Exchange Commission, GEO Group suggested expansion opportunities existed in immigration detention.

91 The response to a social policy resolution brought to the 2022 churchwide assembly on nuclear weapons
92 mentions the revision of the screen, and advocates for the continued use of the military weapons screen.
93 The current wording of the screen reads as follows:

94

95 *The ELCA makes no investment in firms which are contributors to nuclear, biological or chemical*
96 *weapons research and development, or certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be*
97 *excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects, the production of key components for such*
98 *weapons or the management of US Government owned facilities for such weapons.*

99

100 Nuclear weapons are therefore already covered in the screen and not affected by the timing of the next
101 revision.

102

103

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Work Plan for 2022 -2029

Ongoing: ELCA CSR Resource Policy & Procedures tab – All documents on the tab will updated with current church structure, including: [Boycott policy](#), [Issue Paper Policies and Procedure](#), [CSR overview](#), [Roles and Responsibilities](#), and [Social Criteria Investment Screens Policy](#).

Screens and Issue Papers tab – Timing: See Tables I and II.

Table I: Screens- the CSR investment screen [policies and procedures](#) calls for at least one screen to be updated each year. the addition of the privatized migrant detention screen stretches the time out between revisions, *so staff advises updating two screens per year instead of one.* The table below details what the schedule would look like.

| Screens | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name | Original approval | Revisions | Next revision (two per year) | Comments or Questions to address in next revision |
| Alcohol | CC April 1990 | CC Nov 2007 CC Nov 2018 CC Nov 2019 | 2025 | This screen was revised again in 2019 after the question was raised why beer was excluded and staff did sufficient research to recommend including beer. |
| Community Economic Development | CC Nov 1988 | CC Nov2008 CC Nov 2015 | 2023 | difference with this + screen and social impact first funds |
| Environmental | CC April 1990 | CC Nov 2007 CC Nov 2014 CC Nov 2017 | 2024 | may come back at CWA for stricter fossil fuel &/or divestment |
| Gambling | CC April 1990 | CC Nov 2008 CC Nov 2016 | 2023 | |
| Human Rights | ? CC April 2018 | | 2024 | |
| Military Weapons | CC Nov 1988 | CC Nov 2007 CC Nov 2014 | 2022/2024 | Use of autonomous weapons |
| Pornography | CC April 1990 | CC Nov 2007 CC Nov 2013 | 2026 | |
| Private Prisons | CC Nov 2014 | CC Nov 2021 | 2026 | |
| Private Migrant Detention | CC Nov 2022 (Anticipated) | | | |
| Tobacco | CC April 1990 | CC Nov 2007 CC Nov 2012 CC Nov 2019 | 2025 | |

Table II. Issue Papers- the CSR issue paper [policies and procedures](#) calls for issue papers to be reviewed at least every four years. We got somewhat off schedule due to the human rights and environmental work from the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. The timeline below puts us back on track to revise 3 issue papers a year and for every paper to be revised every four years.

| Issue Papers | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Name | original approval | revisions | Next two revisions |
| 1 Environmental topics | 2003 | 2007, 2010,2015, 2021 | 2025, 2029 |
| 2 Climate Change | 2003 | 2007, 2010, 2015,2017, 2021 | 2025, 2029 |
| 3 International Access to Pharmaceuticals | 2003 | 2007, 2010, 2021, | 2025, 2029 |
| 4 Domestic Access to Capital | 2003 | 2004, 2007,2010, 2015 | 2022, 2026 |
| 5 Sustainability | 2003 | 2008, 2012, 2016, | 2022, 2026 |
| 6 Human Rights | 2004 | 2008, 2012, 2019 | 2024, 2028 |
| 7 Violence in our World | 2004 | 2008, 2012, 2019 | 2024, 2028 |
| 8 Non-Discrimination in Business Activities | 2004 | 2008, 2013, 2019 | 2024, 2028 |
| 9 Code of Conduct | 2004 | 2008, 2013, 2020 | 2023, 2027 |
| 10 Domestic Access to Health | 2004 | 2008, 2013, 2020 | 2023, 2027 |
| 11 Extractive Industries | 2004 | 2009, 2014, 2020 | 2023, 2027 |
| 12 Genetics | 2012 | 2016 | 2022, 2026 |

1 AREA: Domestic Capital

2 DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper

4 POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council

5 REVISION DATE: 7/7/22

7 MARKER DATES:

8 RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 6, 2003

9 ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003

10 APPROVED at Church Council, November 2003

11 AMENDMENT RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, March 11, 2004

12 AMENDMENT ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 22, 2004

13 AMENDMENT APPROVED at Church Council, Nov. 11, 2004

14 UPDATED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 28, 2007

15 APPROVED at Church Council, November 2007

16 UPDATED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 10, 2010

17 APPROVED at Church Council—

18 ~~EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA~~
19 ~~Corporate Social Responsibility~~

20 ~~-, November 2010~~

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

22 ~~UPDATED by Advisory Committee, July 7, 2022~~

23 ~~APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022~~

27 **Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: Domestic Access to Capital**~~Issue Paper~~

29 **~~I. Background~~**

31 **BACKGROUND**

33 The ELCA social statement “*Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*”~~“Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”~~
34 ~~(ELCA, ” (1999)†~~ is a benchmark for our role as Christians in economic life. Because of sin, we ~~have fallen~~fall
35 short of our responsibilities to one another in this world, but we live in light of God’s promised future that
36 ultimately there will be no hunger ~~and~~or injustice. This promise makes us restless with a world that is less
37 than what God intends. In economic matters, this draws attention to:

- 38 • The scope of God’s concern: “for all”~~,”~~
- 39 • The means by which life is sustained: “livelihood”~~,”~~
- 40 • What is needed: “sufficiency”~~,” and ”~~
- 41 • Long-term perspective: “sustainability” (pp. 3).~~-~~

43 “The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains. Humans,
44 called to be stewards of God’s creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the earth and its resources”

† ~~<http://downloads.elca.org/html/jlc/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm>~~

(pgp. 14). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices that will further sustainability. This vantage point also motivates us to seek “fairness in how goods, services, income, and wealth are allocated among people so that they can acquire what they need to live” (pgp. (p. 10). The multitudes around God’s global table ~~are all~~ should be recognized as neighbors rather than competitors or strangers (pgp. 17).-

Economic systems are just that — systems, which are fallible and imperfect, and even sinful in various ways. The recognition of structural sin is important here: “Sin is not only individual; it is also collective or communal. Sinful humans create structures, organizations, and societies that perpetuate sin, sometimes unintentionally” (Faith, Sexism, and Justice, p. 19). Lutherans are called to assess and address social systems as part of a biblical prophetic tradition (“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States,” p. 16) when they fail to meet the needs of the neighbors they are supposed to serve.

For example, nearly 100 years ago the federal government sought to address a housing shortage through housing policies that mandated racial segregation, institutionalizing a process known as “redlining.”² Following World War II, the G.I. Bill was historically credited for helping build America’s middle class through offering college education and mortgage assistance, but benefits were denied to thousands of Black service members seeking the same opportunities. As the U.S. domestic economy grew in the latter half of the 20th century, there was a concern that more people be provided opportunities for access to credit. Congress enacted the Community Reinvestment Act, with regulations first issued in 1977 and revised in 1995, encouraging depository institutions to meet the credit needs of all communities in which they operate, including low- and moderate-income communities.³ ~~In 2009, the Home Affordable Modification program was created in an effort to address the housing crisis related to the recession.~~⁴ ~~In 2010~~ the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was ~~begun in 2010 to give~~ founded to enforce federal consumer financial laws and protect consumers, including provision of information ~~they~~ consumers need to understand agreements with financial institutions for all types of credit.- This agency also works to restrict unfair, deceptive or abusive practices in the financial markets.

Although many institutions and legislatures have addressed practices leading to individual credit crises, and although progress has been made, many people today are still suffering.⁴ In and of themselves certain practices are not necessarily predatory in nature, excessive and/or inappropriate. However, ~~the~~ use of the following practices ~~often is an indicator of~~ raises concerns about predatory practices:

- ~~flipping~~⁵ Flipping⁵ and inappropriate asset-based lending;
- Excessive points fees, yield spread premiums, and interest rates;
- Steering to subprime loans, when unnecessary;
- Forcing credit insurance;
- Excessive prepayment penalties; ~~and,~~
- Refusing to report good credit.

~~Concerns regarding these abuses as well~~ These practices are ripe for abuse, as the steering of minorities toward

² <https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>

³ <http://www.federalreserve.gov/dcca/cra/> and <https://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov/> ~~and~~ <https://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov/pages/default.aspx>

⁴ <http://www.consumerfinance.gov/the-bureau/>

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/hec/OHC_PREDLEND ⁵ ~~Loans refinanced with high additional fees, rather than working out a loan that is in arrears.-~~

⁵ Loans refinanced with high additional fees, rather than working out a loan that is in arrears.

85 the subprime market ~~contribute to the problem today.~~⁶ demonstrated.⁷ “Principles for Global Corporate
86 Responsibility,” *The Corporate Examiner* 31, nos. 4–6 (2001),⁸ stipulates that financial services—including
87 ~~micro-financing~~ microfinancing, discounted loan services, and other fair lending practices—be made available
88 to local communities, including those underserved, on a fair and equitable basis. Most recently the credit
89 crisis has included housing foreclosures, predatory practices in the credit card industry,⁷ and lack of access to
90 credit.

91
92 Despite interventional measures, a November 2021 report by the Brookings Institution found that access to
93 capital is still unevenly distributed based on race: “Interest rates on business loans, bank branch density,
94 local banking concentration in the residential mortgage market, and the growth of local businesses are
95 markedly different in majority Black neighborhoods.”⁹ The dearth of Black-owned financial institutions and
96 local branch offices in majority-Black neighborhoods signals lower availability of credit, higher fees and
97 lower savings. The number of Black-owned banks declined — from 48 in 2001 to 18 in 2020¹⁰ — as did the
98 number of bank branches in majority-Black neighborhoods.¹¹ The disparate and discriminatory treatment of
99 people of color by lending and banking institutions exacerbates underlying inequities and inhibits the ability
100 of communities to create new opportunities, experience sustainable growth and foster financial well-being
101 for residents.

102 103 104 ELCA ~~Social Policy~~ DECLARATIONS

105
106 In “Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent” and “A Declaration of the ELCA to American
107 Indian and Alaska Native People,” the ELCA confessed the history of racism, colonialism and white
108 supremacy that removed money and power from the hands of people of color: “Descendants of formerly
109 enslaved Africans are still denied equal access and opportunity in church and society while white people
110 collectively benefit from unequal access, opportunity, and power.” (“African Descent,” p. 1). Both
111 statements call for repentance and commitment to solidarity or socioeconomic equity.

112 113 114 ELCA SOCIAL TEACHING

115
116 “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (ELCA, 1999): In its social statement, the church delineates
117 principles dedicated to sufficient and sustainable economic life for all people, especially the poor and
118 disenfranchised. It calls for “scrutiny to ensure that new ways of providing low-income people with
119 assistance and services do not sacrifice the most vulnerable for the sake of economic efficiency and profit”
120 (pgp. 12).

121
122 The ELCA social statement “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture” (ELCA, 1993) acknowledges
123 economic forces that work against people of color, calling for advocacy to address this injustice.

⁶ http://lobby.la.psu.edu/_107th/105_Predatory_Lending/Agency_Activities/HUD/HUD_PredatoryLending.htm

⁷ <https://lawcommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1218&context=pilr> ^{6d} ~~edition revised and released April 2003,~~

⁸ *Corporate Examiner* 31, no. 4-6 (2001), 3rd edition revised and released April 2003, <http://www.bench-marks.org>

⁹ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/an-analysis-of-financial-institutions-in-black-majority-communities-black-borrowers-and-depositors-face-considerable-challenges-in-accessing-banking-services/>

¹⁰ <https://www.blackenterprise.com/black-banks-struggle/> McKinney, 2019.

¹¹ Since 2010, the number of banks in majority-black neighborhoods decreased 14.6%, with JPMorgan shrinking its branch footprint in majority-Black neighborhoods by 22.8% from 2010 to 2018, compared to a decline of just 0.2% in the rest of the U.S. (Fox, et al., 2019).

124 -
125 ~~H. Responses~~
126
127

128 RESPONSES
129

130 Since the inception of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the faith community has engaged
131 the financial services community through it. Public information, analyzed through the lens of those living in
132 poverty, serves as a basis for working with financial institutions. Trends in lending to low-income and
133 minority borrowers as well as policies regarding these borrowers are the focus of the work. Dialogues over
134 the last decade have moved from the community reinvestment act to predatory lending to loan servicing and
135 foreclosure. Most recently the ICCR has been addressing the financialization of housing. This phenomenon
136 occurs when housing is treated as a commodity — a vehicle for wealth and investment — rather than a
137 social good and a human right. With roots in the 2008 financial crisis, the impact of the shift from housing
138 as a place to build a home to housing as an investment has been devastating.¹²
139 -

140 ~~III. Social Criteria Investment Screens~~
141

142
143 SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS
144

145 A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company's activities are evaluated.
146 The community development social criteria investment screen relates to positive investments relating to
147 issues addressed in this paper.¹³
148 -

149 ~~Resolutions~~
150

151 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA -- ISSUE SPECIFIC¹⁴
152 -

- 153 1. We support fair-lending community reinvestment policies.
- 154 2. We support a general program goal for housing loans to low- and moderate-income people,
155 with the focus on minorities, so that an institution would achieve average industry levels in the
156 market area.
- 157 3. We support annual reports to shareholders on lending achievements.
- 158 4. We support oversight by outside committees to ensure that no employee or broker engages in
159 predatory practices.
- 160 5. We support reports on avoidance of predatory lending practices, including instructions to

¹² Real estate can play an important multigenerational role as an asset for financial well-being. However, when profit is prioritized over the human right to affordable, adequate and fair access to housing, that right is at risk. This is especially concerning when ownership of land and real estate is held by investors from outside a community, or without concern for the long-term well-being of the community. For example, in many economies, existing neighborhoods in desirable locations are subject to evictions and displacement to make way for speculative investment from outside the community. Residents are often rendered homeless, replaced by luxury housing that frequently stands vacant. For more information, click on the report to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

¹³ <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Corporate-Responsibility>

¹⁴ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

- 161 employees on avoidance of predatory lending practices.-
162 6. We support higher standards in securitizing loans as well as procedures to ensure loan screening
163 and originator screening for predatory loans. -
164 7. We support reports on evaluating overdraft policies and practices and the impact these practices
165 have on borrowers.
166 8. We support reports evaluating a company's credit card marketing, lending and collection
167 practices and the impact these practices have on borrowers.
168 9. We support reports that oversee and report on the development and implementation of a
169 consistent loans-servicing policy and a comprehensive consumer lending policy, including loan
170 modifications. Other issues addressed could include overdraft fees, ~~non-sufficient~~insufficient
171 funds, and direct deposits on advanced loans.
172 10. We support public reporting of both the trades and their value in over-the-counter credit default
173 swaps.
174 11. We support reports of a company's foreclosure policies, loan approval rates, home preservation
175 rates and foreclosure statistics and staffing to accomplish this work. This report should
176 disaggregate the data for all racial and ethnic groups, including African-American, Hispanic,~~as-~~
177 ~~well as~~ and Caucasian mortgage borrowers.-
178 12. We support reports to (a) develop a standard of suitability for a company's products, (b)
179 develop internal controls relevant to the implementation of the suitability standard, and (c)
180 create a public reporting standard that assesses the company's success in providing loans that
181 meet the suitability standard.
182 13. We support reports on policies that are in place to safeguard against the provision of any
183 financial services for any corporate or individual client that enables capital flight and results in
184 tax avoidance.
185 14. We support reports on the risk management structure, staffing and reporting lines in place to
186 protect the institution, clients, customers and ~~the~~ financial system across all operations of the
187 company's business lines. This could include timelines for changes needed to implement U.S.
188 financial system reforms.
189 -
190 15. ~~VI.~~ We support requests to take steps to assess and mitigate the risks relating to human rights
191 and the company's reputation that may be involved in the financialization of housing. This
192 includes acknowledging that housing is a human right and developing a human rights due-
193 diligence tool that can be used to assess and mitigate the risks of doing business with clients or
194 potential clients whose business practices have the potential to exacerbate the negative effects
195 of the financialization of housing.
196
197

198 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL–

199 We support practices of good governance, specifically: -

- 200 • A company having an independent board chair or independent lead director;_
- 201 • Reports on policies and transparency of procedures for political contributions and expenditures
202 (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds;_
- 203 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization
204 or trade association that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
205 political;_
- 206

~~125~~ ~~□~~ Guidelines or policies governing ~~the~~ company's political contributions and

- expenditures; ~~and~~
- ~~□~~ Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹⁵

~~128~~

~~129~~

~~Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 6, 2003~~

¹⁵ ~~http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820_~~

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

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

~~APPROVED at Church Council, November 2003~~

130

*Amendment recommendation by the
Advisory Committee on Corporate Social
Responsibility, March 11, 2004*

134

~~Amendment endorsed by the Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 22, 2004~~

~~AMENDMENT APPROVED at Church Council, Nov. 11, 2004~~

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

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Approved at Church Council November 2007

Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. ~~10, 2010~~

~~138~~ ~~APPROVED at Church Council~~
~~November 2010~~

Approved by Church Council CC15.11.52j, November 2015

Working Document

1 AREA: Domestic Capital
2 DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper
3
4 POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
5 REVISION DATE: 7/7/22
6
7 MARKER DATES:
8 RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 6, 2003
9 ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003
10 APPROVED at Church Council, November 2003
11 AMENDMENT RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, March 11, 2004
12 AMENDMENT ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 22, 2004
13 AMENDMENT APPROVED at Church Council, Nov. 11, 2004
14 UPDATED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 28, 2007
15 APPROVED at Church Council, November 2007
16 UPDATED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 10, 2010
17 APPROVED at Church Council, November 2010
18 APPROVED by Church Council [CC15.11.52j], November 2015
19 UPDATED by Advisory Committee, July 7, 2022
20 APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022
21
22
23

24 Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: Domestic Access to Capital

25 BACKGROUND

26
27
28 The ELCA social statement “[Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All](#)” (1999) is a benchmark for our role
29 as Christians in economic life. Because of sin, we fall short of our responsibilities to one another in this
30 world, but we live in light of God’s promised future that ultimately there will be no hunger or injustice.
31 This promise makes us restless with a world that is less than what God intends. In economic matters, this
32 draws attention to:

- 33 • The scope of God’s concern: “for all.”
- 34 • The means by which life is sustained: “livelihood.”
- 35 • What is needed: “sufficiency.”
- 36 • Long-term perspective: “sustainability” (p. 3).

37
38 “The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains. Humans,
39 called to be stewards of God’s creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the earth and its
40 resources” (p. 14). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices that will further sustainability. This
41 vantage point also motivates us to seek “fairness in how goods, services, income, and wealth are allocated
42 among people so that they can acquire what they need to live” (p. 10). The multitudes around God’s
43 global table should be recognized as neighbors rather than competitors or strangers (p. 17).
44

45 Economic systems are just that — systems, which are fallible and imperfect, and even sinful in various
46 ways. The recognition of structural sin is important here: “Sin is not only individual; it is also collective
47 or communal. Sinful humans create structures, organizations, and societies that perpetuate sin, sometimes
48 unintentionally” ([Faith, Sexism, and Justice](#), p. 19). Lutherans are called to assess and address social

49 systems as part of a biblical prophetic tradition (“[Government and Civic Engagement in the United](#)
50 [States](#),” p. 16) when they fail to meet the needs of the neighbors they are supposed to serve.

51
52 For example, nearly 100 years ago the federal government sought to address a housing shortage through
53 housing policies that mandated racial segregation, institutionalizing a process known as “redlining.”¹
54 Following World War II, the G.I. Bill was historically credited for helping build America’s middle class
55 through offering college education and mortgage assistance, but benefits were denied to thousands of
56 Black service members seeking the same opportunities. As the U.S. domestic economy grew in the latter
57 half of the 20th century, there was a concern that more people be provided opportunities for access to
58 credit. Congress enacted the Community Reinvestment Act, with regulations first issued in 1977 and
59 revised in 1995, encouraging depository institutions to meet the credit needs of all communities in which
60 they operate, including low- and moderate-income communities.² In 2010 the Consumer Financial
61 Protection Bureau was founded to enforce federal consumer financial laws and protect consumers,
62 including provision of information consumers need to understand agreements with financial institutions
63 for all types of credit. This agency also works to restrict unfair, deceptive or abusive practices in the
64 financial markets.

65
66 Although many institutions and legislatures have addressed practices leading to individual credit crises,
67 and although progress has been made, many people today are still suffering. In and of themselves certain
68 practices are not necessarily predatory in nature, excessive and/or inappropriate. However, use of the
69 following practices raises concerns about predatory practices:

- 70 • Flipping³ and inappropriate asset-based lending.
- 71 • Excessive points fees, yield spread premiums and interest rates.
- 72 • Steering to subprime loans when unnecessary.
- 73 • Forcing credit insurance.
- 74 • Excessive prepayment penalties.
- 75 • Refusing to report good credit.

76
77 These practices are ripe for abuse, as the steering of minorities toward the subprime market
78 demonstrated.⁴ “Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility”⁵ stipulates that financial services—
79 including microfinancing, discounted loan services, and other fair lending practices—be made available
80 to local communities, including those underserved, on a fair and equitable basis. Most recently the credit
81 crisis has included housing foreclosures, predatory practices in the credit card industry and lack of access
82 to credit.

83
84 Despite interventional measures, a November 2021 report by the Brookings Institution found that access
85 to capital is still unevenly distributed based on race: “Interest rates on business loans, bank branch
86 density, local banking concentration in the residential mortgage market, and the growth of local
87 businesses are markedly different in majority Black neighborhoods.”⁶ The dearth of Black-owned
88 financial institutions and local branch offices in majority-Black neighborhoods signals lower availability
89 of credit, higher fees and lower savings. The number of Black-owned banks declined — from 48 in 2001

¹ <https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>

² <http://www.federalreserve.gov/dcca/cra/> and <https://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov/>

³ Loans refinanced with high additional fees, rather than working out a loan that is in arrears.

⁴ <https://lawecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1218&context=pilr>

⁵ *Corporate Examiner* 31, no. 4-6 (2001), 3rd edition revised and released April 2003, <http://www.bench-marks.org>

⁶ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/an-analysis-of-financial-institutions-in-black-majority-communities-black-borrowers-and-depositors-face-considerable-challenges-in-accessing-banking-services/>

90 to 18 in 2020⁷ — as did the number of bank branches in majority-Black neighborhoods.⁸ The disparate
91 and discriminatory treatment of people of color by lending and banking institutions exacerbates
92 underlying inequities and inhibits the ability of communities to create new opportunities, experience
93 sustainable growth and foster financial well-being for residents.

94
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96 ELCA DECLARATIONS

97

98 In “Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent” and “A Declaration of the ELCA to
99 American Indian and Alaska Native People,” the ELCA confessed the history of racism, colonialism and
100 white supremacy that removed money and power from the hands of people of color: “Descendants of
101 formerly enslaved Africans are still denied equal access and opportunity in church and society while
102 white people collectively benefit from unequal access, opportunity, and power.” (“African Descent,” p.
103 1). Both statements call for repentance and commitment to solidarity or socioeconomic equity.

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105

106 ELCA SOCIAL TEACHING

107

108 “*Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*” (1999): In its social statement, the church delineates principles
109 dedicated to sufficient and sustainable economic life for all people, especially the poor and
110 disenfranchised. It calls for “scrutiny to ensure that new ways of providing low-income people with
111 assistance and services do not sacrifice the most vulnerable for the sake of economic efficiency and
112 profit” (p. 12).

113

114 The ELCA social statement “*Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*” (1993) acknowledges
115 economic forces that work against people of color, calling for advocacy to address this injustice.

116

117

118 RESPONSES

119

120 Since the inception of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the faith community has engaged
121 the financial services community through it. Public information, analyzed through the lens of those living
122 in poverty, serves as a basis for working with financial institutions. Trends in lending to low-income and
123 minority borrowers as well as policies regarding these borrowers are the focus of the work. Dialogues
124 over the last decade have moved from the community reinvestment act to predatory lending to loan
125 servicing and foreclosure. Most recently the ICCR has been addressing the financialization of housing.
126 This phenomenon occurs when housing is treated as a commodity — a vehicle for wealth and investment
127 — rather than a social good and a human right. With roots in the 2008 financial crisis, the impact of the
128 shift from housing as a place to build a home to housing as an investment has been devastating.⁹

⁷ <https://www.blackenterprise.com/black-banks-struggle/> McKinney, 2019.

⁸ Since 2010, the number of banks in majority-black neighborhoods decreased 14.6%, with JPMorgan shrinking its branch footprint in majority-Black neighborhoods by 22.8% from 2010 to 2018, compared to a decline of just 0.2% in the rest of the U.S. (Fox, et al., 2019).

⁹ Real estate can play an important multigenerational role as an asset for financial well-being. However, when profit is prioritized over the human right to affordable, adequate and fair access to housing, that right is at risk. This is especially concerning when ownership of land and real estate is held by investors from outside a community, or without concern for the long-term well-being of the community. For example, in many economies, existing neighborhoods in desirable locations are subject to evictions and

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SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

A screen is a framework of principles, specific to an issue, by which a company’s activities are evaluated. The community development social criteria investment screen relates to positive investments relating to issues addressed in this paper.¹⁰

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - ISSUE SPECIFIC¹¹

1. We support fair-lending community reinvestment policies.
2. We support a general program goal for housing loans to low- and moderate-income people, with the focus on minorities, so that an institution would achieve average industry levels in the market area.
3. We support annual reports to shareholders on lending achievements.
4. We support oversight by outside committees to ensure that no employee or broker engages in predatory practices.
5. We support reports on avoidance of predatory lending practices, including instructions to employees on avoidance of predatory lending practices.
6. We support higher standards in securitizing loans as well as procedures to ensure loan screening and originator screening for predatory loans.
7. We support reports on evaluating overdraft policies and practices and the impact these practices have on borrowers.
8. We support reports evaluating a company’s credit card marketing, lending and collection practices and the impact these practices have on borrowers.
9. We support reports that oversee and report on the development and implementation of a consistent loans-servicing policy and a comprehensive consumer lending policy, including loan modifications. Other issues addressed could include overdraft fees, insufficient funds and direct deposits on advanced loans.
10. We support public reporting of both the trades and their value in over-the-counter credit default swaps.
11. We support reports of a company’s foreclosure policies, loan approval rates, home preservation rates and foreclosure statistics and staffing to accomplish this work. This report should disaggregate the data for all racial and ethnic groups, including African American, Hispanic and Caucasian mortgage borrowers.
12. We support reports to (a) develop a standard of suitability for a company’s products, (b) develop internal controls relevant to the implementation of the suitability standard and (c) create a public reporting standard that assesses the company’s success in providing loans that meet the suitability standard.
13. We support reports on policies that are in place to safeguard against the provision of any financial services for any corporate or individual client that enables capital flight and results

displacement to make way for speculative investment from outside the community. Residents are often rendered homeless, replaced by luxury housing that frequently stands vacant. For more information, click on the [report](#) to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

¹⁰ <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Corporate-Responsibility>

¹¹ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

- 171 in tax avoidance.
172 14. We support reports on the risk management structure, staffing and reporting lines in place to
173 protect the institution, clients, customers and financial system across all operations of the
174 company's business lines. This could include timelines for changes needed to implement U.S.
175 financial system reforms.
176 15. We support requests to take steps to assess and mitigate the risks relating to human rights and
177 the company's reputation that may be involved in the financialization of housing. This
178 includes acknowledging that housing is a human right and developing a human rights due-
179 diligence tool that can be used to assess and mitigate the risks of doing business with clients
180 or potential clients whose business practices have the potential to exacerbate the negative
181 effects of the financialization of housing.
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184 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA – GENERAL

185
186 We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- 187 • A company having an independent board chair or independent lead director.
- 188 • Reports on policies and transparency of procedures for political contributions and
189 expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.
- 190 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization
191 or trade association that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
192 political.
- 193 • Guidelines or policies governing a company's political contributions and expenditures.
- 194 • Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹²
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https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

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GENETICS

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AREA: Genetics
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper
-



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

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
REVISION DATE: 7/7/22

MARKER DATES:

ADOPTED by Church Council, April 2012 [CC12.04.09]
APPROVED by ~~the ELCA~~ Church Council, November 2016 [CC16.11.46n]-

~~Background~~ UPDATED by Review Team, Nov. 7, 2022
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022 [anticipated]

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Genetics

BACKGROUND

The dawn of a new millennium has brought advances in scientific knowledge on many fronts, including the field of genetics. In 2003, the [Human Genome Project](#)¹ was completed, and the [International Declaration on Human Genetic Data](#)² and the [Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights](#)³ were adopted. These stand as international points of reference in the field. [In 2017 the technology for “editing” of germ cells became available.](#)⁴

These advances in science [and technology](#) impact the corporate community on issues of bioethics, patents and licensing, [germline editing technology](#), appropriate use of genetic data, individual choice, and respect for diversity, to name a few.⁵

ELCA SOCIAL POLICY-

“The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) believes in one God, who created in the beginning, who creates now, and in whom all things, visible and invisible, hold together (Colossians 1:3–20). We confess that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will redeem all that has been, is, and will be — including human choices involving genetic knowledge and its application” ([Genetics, Faith, and Responsibility](#)⁶, p. 5). These choices create issues regarding the relationships between human power and life on this planet and call for discernment of [God’s](#) will with respect to genetic developments. The ethic of respecting and promoting the community of life with justice and wisdom in the pursuit of genetic knowledge and its use is essential if the web of life on earth is to flourish. In terms of regulation and best practices, the social statement, [“Genetics, Faith and Responsibility”](#) (adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August 2011), [calls for development and implementation of protocols for assessing long-term, ecological, social, and economic impact studies \(sections 4.5 and 4.7\). The statement encourages the exploration of new technologies but also “calls for wise care and restraint in response to extraordinary uncertainty, speed and potential harm due to technological innovation” \(p. 28\).](#)

In addition, the [twelfth](#) Churchwide Assembly in 2011 reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the social policy resolution [“Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply,”](#)

¹http://web.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/project/index.shtml

²<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/bioethics/human-genetic-data/>

³http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID%3D17720%26URL_DO%3DDO_TOPIC%26URL_SECTION%3D201.html

⁴“There are two different categories of gene therapies: germline therapy and somatic therapy. Germline therapies change DNA in reproductive cells (like sperm and eggs). Changes to the DNA of reproductive cells are passed down from generation to generation. Somatic therapies, on the other hand, target non-reproductive cells, and changes made in these cells affect only the person who receives the gene therapy.” This quote and more information are available at the website of the National Human Genome Research Institute.

⁵<https://www.genome.gov/about-genomics/policy-issues>

http://www.who.int/genomics/publications/en/ethical_issues_in_medgenetics%20report.pdf is a good place to start reading about these issues.

⁶<http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GeneticsSS.pdf>

~~Organisms in the Food Supply~~⁷ (ELCA Church Council action CC04.11.57). This resolution coheres with the call for using the social ~~statement's~~statement's deliberative framework, lifting up justice principles such as sufficiency and sustainability, ~~or~~and themes such as stewardship and livelihood for all, as guidance.

~~II. Response~~

RESPONSE

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, with participation from the faith and the socially responsible investing communities, has been addressing multinational corporations concerning genetic issues. Groups have sought transparency through reports on the impacts on people in least-developed countries where genetic research, knowledge and technology are ~~used~~employed. Good corporate stewardship in this area begins with disclosure that articulates a vision, outlines policies, and provides measurement of impact for efforts in the field of genetics.

~~III. Social criteria investment screens~~

SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

No social criteria investment screens currently apply to this paper. ~~As research institutions~~If social criteria investment screens related to genetics are developed in the future, they should take account of germline manipulation and ~~corporations around the world become involved in~~ human reproductive cloning, ~~a new social criteria investment screen will need to be developed.~~

~~IV. ISSUE-SPECIFIC RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA~~⁸

1. We support reports reviewing a ~~company's~~company's policies for food products containing genetically engineered ingredients.
- ~~I.~~ We support reports asking a company to identify the risks, financial costs
2. (Including opportunity costs) and benefits, as well as environmental impact, of the use of genetically engineered food products it sells or manufactures.
3. We support reports on a ~~company's~~company's internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically engineered organisms, including post-marketing monitoring, removing seed from the ecosystem, and risk management for different geographical environments.
4. We support reports on the adequacy of corporate policy, plans, and strategies to address changes in consumer attitudes toward nutrition, quality, and safety of genetically engineered foods.
5. We support reports providing evidence of independent long-term safety testing that demonstrates genetically engineered crops are safe for humans, animals, and the environment.
6. We support reports on the impact of genetically modified food on ~~least developed~~least-developed economies and their food resources.
7. We support calls to a corporation to discontinue any research into human reproductive cloning.

⁷ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GMOs_Food_SupplySPR04.pdf

⁸ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation. _

8. We support reports requesting a comprehensive monitoring of herbicide utilization and grower compliance with best practices and adherence to “technology use agreements” with its seed products due to the use of herbicide-resistant seeds.
9. We support reports on the use of nanomaterials and neonicotinoids in products and in the supply chain.
10. We support requests for an independent ethics committee to advise the board of directors on genetically modified ~~product~~products.
-
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11. ~~We support reports on the potential use of gene-editing technology in products, as well as reports on potential drawbacks of the use of this technology.~~
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GENERAL RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA⁹

1. We support a company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
2. We support reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.
3. We support reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
4. We support guidelines or policies governing a ~~company's~~company's political contributions and expenditures.
5. We support reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.¹⁰

⁹ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

¹⁰ http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820_
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

AREA: Genetics
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
REVISION DATE: 7/7/22

MARKER DATES:

ADOPTED by Church Council, April 2012 [CC12.04.09]
APPROVED by Church Council, November 2016 [CC16.11.46n]
UPDATED by Review Team, Nov. 7, 2022
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022 [anticipated]

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Working Document

Genetics

BACKGROUND

The dawn of a new millennium has brought advances in scientific knowledge on many fronts, including the field of genetics. In 2003 the [Human Genome Project](#) was completed, and the [International Declaration on Human Genetic Data](#) and [Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights](#) were adopted. These stand as international points of reference in the field. In 2017 the technology for “editing” of germ cells became available.¹

These advances in science and technology impact the corporate community on issues of bioethics, patents and licensing, germline editing technology, appropriate use of genetic data, individual choice and respect for diversity, to name a few.²

ELCA SOCIAL POLICY

“The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) believes in one God, who created in the beginning, who creates now, and in whom all things, visible and invisible, hold together (Colossians 1:3-20). We confess that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will redeem all that has been, is and will be — including human choices involving genetic knowledge and its application” (*Genetics, Faith, and Responsibility*, p. 5). These choices create issues regarding the relationships between human power and life on this planet and call for discernment of God’s will with respect to genetic developments. The ethic of respecting and promoting the community of life with justice and wisdom in the pursuit of genetic knowledge and its use is essential if the web of life on earth is to flourish. In terms of regulation and best practices, the social statement *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August 2011) calls for development and implementation of protocols for assessing long-term, ecological, social and economic impact studies (sections 4.5 and 4.7). The statement encourages the exploration of new technologies but also “calls for wise care and restraint in response to extraordinary uncertainty, speed and potential harm due to technological innovation” (p. 28).

In addition, the 12th Churchwide Assembly in 2011 reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the social policy resolution “[Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply](#)” (ELCA Church Council action CC04.11.57). This resolution coheres with the call for using the social statement’s deliberative framework, lifting up justice principles such as sufficiency and sustainability, and themes such as stewardship and livelihood for all, as guidance.

RESPONSE

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, with participation from the faith and the socially responsible investing communities, has been addressing multinational corporations concerning genetic

¹ “There are two different categories of gene therapies: germline therapy and somatic therapy. Germline therapies change DNA in reproductive cells (like sperm and eggs). Changes to the DNA of reproductive cells are passed down from generation to generation. Somatic therapies, on the other hand, target non-reproductive cells, and changes made in these cells affect only the person who receives the gene therapy.” This quote and more information are available at the website of the [National Human Genome Research Institute](#).

² <https://www.genome.gov/about-genomics/policy-issues> is a good place to start reading about these issues.

issues. Groups have sought transparency through reports on the impacts on people in least-developed countries where genetic research, knowledge and technology are employed. Good corporate stewardship in this area begins with disclosure that articulates a vision, outlines policies and provides measurement of impact for efforts in the field of genetics.

SOCIAL CRITERIA INVESTMENT SCREENS

No social criteria investment screens currently apply to this paper. If social criteria investment screens related to genetics are developed in the future, they should take account of germline manipulation and human reproductive cloning.

ISSUE-SPECIFIC RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA³

1. We support reports reviewing a company's policies for food products containing genetically engineered ingredients.
2. We support reports asking a company to identify the risks, financial costs (Including opportunity costs) and benefits, as well as environmental impact, of the use of genetically engineered food products it sells or manufactures.
3. We support reports on a company's internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically engineered organisms, including post-marketing monitoring, removing seed from the ecosystem and risk management for different geographical environments.
4. We support reports on the adequacy of corporate policy, plans and strategies to address changes in consumer attitudes toward nutrition, quality and safety of genetically engineered foods.
5. We support reports providing evidence of independent long-term safety testing that demonstrates genetically engineered crops are safe for humans, animals and the environment.
6. We support reports on the impact of genetically modified food on least-developed economies and their food resources.
7. We support calls to a corporation to discontinue any research into human reproductive cloning.
8. We support reports requesting a comprehensive monitoring of herbicide utilization and grower compliance with best practices and adherence to "technology use agreements" with its seed products due to the use of herbicide-resistant seeds.
9. We support reports on the use of nanomaterials and neonicotinoids in products and in the supply chain.
10. We support requests for an independent ethics committee to advise the board of directors on genetically modified products.
11. We support reports on the potential use of gene-editing technology in products, as well as reports on potential drawbacks of the use of this technology.

GENERAL RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA⁴

³ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

⁴ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

1. We support a company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
2. We support reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.
3. We support reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
4. We support guidelines or policies governing a company's political contributions and expenditures.
5. We support reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.⁵

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https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

AREA: Privatized Immigration Detention
DOCUMENT TYPE: Screen

POINT IN PROCESS: Transmission to Church Council
REVISION DATE: 7/20/21

MARKER DATES:

RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, July 20, 2022
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022 [anticipated]

Privatized Immigration Detention

AUTHORITY

“Detention is a severe, under-scrutinized and expensive method of migration control. ... The outdated and inadequate U.S. immigration system is highly complex, controversial and difficult to address, both in terms of its origin and in terms of solutions. In a social message and in a social policy resolution the ELCA, nevertheless, repeatedly has articulated principles for just and wise treatment of immigrants. Consistent with these documents, this church urges that arbitrary and indefinite detention and dehumanizing isolation of migrants should be discontinued and the use of humane alternatives expanded” ([Criminal Justice](#), pp. 14-15).

“We support efforts to ensure that due process is followed and that the conditions of detention are humane” (“[Immigration](#),” p. 10).

WORDING OF SCREEN

The ELCA recommends no investment in corporations involved in the private, for-profit detention of migrants.

DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

The concerns of this church about privatizing migrant detention are economic, moral and theological. Economically speaking, privatizing the immigrant detention system creates an economic incentive that encourages for-profit corporations to expand detention regardless of the actual need for detention. Humans are treated as economic goods with dollar figures attached rather than as beings created in the image of God whose detention should be a last resort. The economic motivation to engineer higher margins of profit for private stakeholders can also lead to attempts to cut down costs that result in overcrowding and understaffing, which manifest as poor conditions, inadequate medical care, vulnerability to sexual abuse and neglect, and sometimes death.

Morally speaking, our social teaching guides us to advocate for humane alternatives and to speak in opposition to the inhumane detention of migrants. Giving custody of people detained by the government to a private entity that then profits from that detention blurs the “sharp distinction between public service and private gain” (“[Government and Civic Engagement](#),” p. 10) that guides our sense of the proper role of

38 government vis a vis private industry. Furthermore, the poor conditions and psychological, emotional and
39 financial toll imposed on families impacted by detention compel the church to speak and take action in
40 the spirit of neighbor love to ensure our neighbor has enough.¹

41

42 Theologically, the human rights message holds that “human dignity is God’s gift to every person”
43 (“[Human Rights](#),” p. 2) and commits the church to upholding human rights. Within the criminal justice
44 system, “Each participant is a human being with dignity who deserves to be heard” (*Criminal Justice*, p.
45 8) and yet individuals detained for immigration purposes routinely lack “adequate due process and
46 meaningful access to legal counsel” (p. 15). Without representation and adequate due process, people
47 detained for immigration purposes are not being afforded the dignity of their basic rights in the decision
48 to detain them.

49

50 The ELCA recommends no investments be made in private, for-profit migrant detention corporations;
51 however, we recognize that various investors will implement these criteria along a continuum. The ELCA
52 also includes in the recommendation for screening investments that could be made in for-profit companies
53 involved in the marketing of or supplying of key components or services to private, for-profit prison
54 corporations.

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¹ *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, p. 11; *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, p. 49.

~~SUSTAINABILITY~~

AREA: Sustainability
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper



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

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

MARKER DATES:

RECOMMENDED by ~~the~~ Advisory Committee

~~on Corporate Social Responsibility~~, Sept. 6, 2003

ENDORSED by ~~the Board of the~~ Division for Church in
Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003

APPROVED by ~~the~~ Church Council,
November 2003

UPDATED by ~~the~~ Advisory Committee ~~for~~
~~Corporate Social Responsibility~~, Jan. 11, 2008

APPROVED by Church Council, April 2008 [CC08.04.XXa]

APPROVED by Church Council, Nov. 11, 2012 [CC12.11.44w]

APPROVED by ~~the ELCA~~ Church Council, November 2016 [CC16.11.46n]

UPDATED by Advisory Committee, July 7, 2021

APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022 [anticipated]

Sustainability

BACKGROUND

Since the mid-1980s, the concept of sustainable development-

The ELCA - “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” - has been a driving force in the way development is understood. The ELCA social statements *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice* (1993)¹-

“Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”, *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999)² and *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (2011)³ provide benchmarks for our role as Christians in economic and social life on questions of sustainability. Because of sin, we have fallen short of our responsibilities to one another in this world, but we live in light of God’s promised future that ultimately there will be no hunger, injustice or climate degradation. This promise makes us restless with a world that is less than what God intends. In economic matters, this draws attention to:-

- The scope of God’s concern: “for all”⁴”
- The means by which life is sustained: “livelihood”⁵”
- What is needed: “sufficiency”⁶ and “”
- Long-term perspective: “sustainability” (*Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, p. 3).

“The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains. Humans, called to be stewards of God’s creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the earth and its resources” (p. 14) (*Livelihood*, p. 15). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices concerning sustainability. The multitudes around God’s global table are recognized as neighbors rather than competitors or strangers (p. 17).

Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. Thus it combines ecological, social and economic concerns and offers business opportunities for companies to improve the lives of the world’s people and care for the environment (see, for example, the *World Business Council for Sustainable Development* *World Business*).

For example, in 2015, after two years of consultation, the United Nations revised its Millennium Development Goals and laid out a 15-year series of goals and targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *Council on Sustainable Development*⁴). *The International Institute for Sustainable Development*⁵. *The International Institute for Sustainable Development* further develops the concept to include using, disposing of and transforming resources in a way that minimizes harm to the environment while supporting the well-being of people.⁶

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

² http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Economic_LifeSS.pdf

³ <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics>

⁴ <http://www.wbcsd.org/home.aspx>

⁵ <http://www.iisd.org/>

⁶ https://www.iisd.org/sites/default/files/publications/sustainable-consumption-production-indicators-futuresdgs_0.pdf

In 2003 the third edition of “Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance” was released. Faith-based investor groups from Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, South Africa, Colombia and the United Kingdom, as well as the U.S.-based Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, gathered to develop these principles and offer a long-range view for corporations focused on protecting the environment, creating sustainable communities and ensuring human dignity.

Although the concept of sustainability continues to evolve, several instruments, guidelines and benchmarks have been developed and are being used in the governmental and corporate sectors. The first of these, the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines ~~Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines,~~ is a long-term, multi-stakeholder, international process with a mission to develop and disseminate globally applicable sustainability reporting guidelines. ~~Many corporations, including non-profits, have embraced these guidelines on issues of sustainability.~~

~~In 2003, With these and other tools such as the third edition of “Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance” was released. Faith-based investor groups from Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, South Africa, Colombia Economic Cooperation and Development guidelines and the Guiding Principles United Kingdom, as well as on Business and Human Rights (the U.S.-based Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, gathered to develop these principles and offer a long-range view for corporations focused on protecting the environment, creating sustainable communities and ensuring human dignity.~~

~~With these tools, “Ruggie Principles”), corporations are able to look at a “triple bottom line” — the integration of social, environmental and economic performances. This holistic approach is also referred to as a corporation’s corporation’s sustainability performance.~~

ELCA SOCIAL TEACHING-

~~“Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” develops this church’s vision of sufficiency and sustainability focusing on economic life, with an emphasis on those who are poor and disenfranchised. It particularly calls for companies to bear the wider social and environmental costs of what they produce (pg. 14). “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice” (ELCA, (1993): The social statement develops the church’s vision of creation and lifts up sustainability as a central part of that vision. In terms of the environment, it calls for providing an acceptable quality of life for present generations without compromising that of future generations. (pg. 7). The ELCA social statement “Genetics, Faith and Responsibility” enlarges on both, articulating the meaning of sustainability in light of unprecedented human technical power. It lays out the imperative of responsible action that promotes the capacity of natural and social systems to survive and thrive together over the long-term (pg. 21). term (p. 21). The ELCA social message on human rights accords humans the “right to sufficient and sustainable levels of physical goods such as water, food, shelter and health care. This includes treating creation sustainably so the next generation has sufficient physical goods” (“Human Rights,” p. 6). Its message on faith, sexism and justice affirms sustainability as a path to justice for women (Faith, Sexism, and Justice, p. 48).~~

Numerous Church Council actions support standing with those who are poor and disenfranchised around a variety of environmental and social issues. ELCA advocacy plans have outlined a variety of taxation, environment, employment, globalization and fair-trade issues.

The 2019 Churchwide Assembly endorsed the [Earth Charter](#), which addresses equitable sustainability and sufficiency for all communities. With the support of the ELCA's Sustainability Table, ELCA ministries carry out the [implementation work](#) to fulfill the charter endorsement. The ELCA participates in the Lutheran World Federation initiative known as [Waking the Giant-](#)

[Response](#), which works to empower churches to contribute effectively to the 2030 U.N. Agenda for Sustainable Development.

RESPONSE

In responding to calls for increased disclosure, accountability and transparency, many in the corporate world are voluntarily reporting on sustainability and the triple bottom line. The call is not only for individuals to be called to high ethical practices but also for corporations to review their corporate ethics and the impact of their operations on people and communities in a public and verifiable manner.

The majority of the Fortune 500 companies have implemented some type of sustainability reporting. It is reasonable to ask all companies to begin looking at ~~this type of sustainability~~ reporting if they are not already doing so. Additionally, companies might be asked to increase the quality and relevance of triple-bottom-line reporting and use the format established by the [Global Reporting Initiative](#) or using the [Principles for Responsible Investment](#) ~~Global Reporting Initiative~~. These measurements and reporting mechanisms could help companies identify ways to be more efficient and identify problems that might result in liability for the company. More companies are sharing their work with a variety of stakeholders for input before publishing such reports.

~~Social criteria investment screens None currently apply to this paper.~~

~~Issue-~~

ISSUE-SPECIFIC RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA⁷

1. We support public disclosure of information on corporate sustainability based on the format established by the Global Reporting Initiative, [the World Benchmarking Alliance](#), or other [current benchmarks](#).⁸
2. We support the preparation of sustainability reports [conducted by independent parties](#).
3. We support requests for policies reflecting the triple bottom line of environment, social and economic factors.
4. We support requests for sustainability policies and performance, including multiple, objective statistical indicators.
5. We support preparation of reports on a company's sustainable ~~-paper-~~ purchasing policies, including the costs and benefits of incorporating these policies into the supply chain.

⁷ These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation. ~~_~~

⁸ For example, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) standards <https://www.sasb.org/>, or the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations: <https://assets.bbhub.io/company/sites/60/2021/10/FINAL-2017-TCFD-Report.pdf>

6. We support reports on sustainable management of water including potential environmental and community impacts of all company and affiliate ventures that extract water from water-scarce areas and regulatory, environmental and reputational risks associated with water as it relates to a company's operations and investments.
7. We support reports describing the company's present policies, performance, and improvement targets related to key environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities, ~~including greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.~~
8. We support ~~request~~requests by the ~~Board's Compensation Committee, when setting senior executive board's~~ compensation, committee to include sustainability as one of the performance measures for senior ~~executives~~executive compensation under the ~~company's~~company's annual and long-term incentive plans.
9. We support reports on sustainable agriculture and forest policy.
-
-
10. We support requests for annual sustainability reporting that specifies full report on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions management strategies and quantitative metrics.
11. We support reports on climate change mitigation strategies, assessing the feasibility of adopting quantitative, company-wide goals for increasing the company's use of renewable energy, energy efficiency and any other measures deemed feasible by company management to substantially reduce the company's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change risks associated with the use of fossil-fuel-based energy.
12. We support annually updated sustainability reports describing the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) management state.
13. We support analyses of existing and future environmental risks from an ESG perspective.
14. We support independent board oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities.
15. We support public disclosure of the professional experience of board members as relates to climate change.
16. We support resolutions calling for board members with expertise in sustainability, human rights and the environment.
-

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA ~~—general—~~ GENERAL

~~7~~

We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- A company having an independent chair or independent lead director;~~;~~
- ~~—~~Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures
 - (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds;~~;~~
 - Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political;~~;~~
 - Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures; ~~and.~~
 - Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.⁹

⁹

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820_
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

AREA: Sustainability
DOCUMENT TYPE: Issue Paper

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

MARKER DATES:

RECOMMENDED by Advisory Committee, Sept. 6, 2003
ENDORSED by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003
APPROVED by Church Council, November 2003
UPDATED by Advisory Committee, Jan. 11, 2008
APPROVED by Church Council, April 2008 [CC08.04.XXa]
APPROVED by Church Council, Nov. 11, 2012 [CC12.11.44w]
APPROVED by Church Council, November 2016 [CC16.11.46n]
UPDATED by Advisory Committee, July 7, 2021
APPROVAL PENDING by Church Council, November 2022 [anticipated]

Sustainability

BACKGROUND

Since the mid-1980s, the concept of [sustainable development](#) - “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” - has been a driving force in the way development is understood. The ELCA social statements [Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice](#) (1993), [Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All](#) (1999) and [Genetics, Faith and Responsibility](#) (2011) provide benchmarks for our role as Christians in economic and social life on questions of sustainability. Because of sin, we have fallen short of our responsibilities to one another in this world, but we live in light of God’s promised future that ultimately there will be no hunger, injustice or climate degradation. This promise makes us restless with a world that is less than what God intends. In economic matters, this draws attention to:

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“The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains. Humans, called to be stewards of God’s creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the earth and its resources” (*Livelihood*, p. 15). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices concerning sustainability. The multitudes around God’s global table are recognized as neighbors rather than competitors or strangers (p. 17).

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For example, in 2015, after two years of consultation, the United Nations revised its Millennium

31 Development Goals and laid out a 15-year series of [goals](#) and targets in the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable](#)
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51 economic performances. This holistic approach is also referred to as a corporation’s sustainability
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53 54 55 ELCA SOCIAL TEACHING

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83 RESPONSE

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99 ISSUE-SPECIFIC RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA¹

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110 including the costs and benefits of incorporating these policies into the supply chain.
- 111 6. We support reports on sustainable management of water including potential environmental
112 and community impacts of all company and affiliate ventures that extract water from water-
113 scarce areas and regulatory, environmental and reputational risks associated with water as it
114 relates to a company's operations and investments.
- 115 7. We support reports describing the company's present policies, performance and improvement
116 targets related to key environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities.
- 117 8. We support requests by the board's compensation committee to include sustainability as one
118 of the performance measures for senior executive compensation under the company's annual
119 and long-term incentive plans.
- 120 9. We support reports on sustainable agriculture and forest policy.

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136
137

138 RESOLUTION GUIDELINES FOR ELCA - GENERAL

139
140 We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- 141 • A company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
- 142 • Reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and
143 indirect) made with corporate funds.
- 144 • Reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that
145 is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
- 146 • Guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures.
- 147 • Reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.³
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3

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper_2020.pdf?_ga=2.233911134.1591617596.1657212248-1480364168.1651691194

Working Document

Publishing House of the ELCA (1517 Media) Report

Submitted by Tim Blevins, President and CEO

The publishing activities of 1517 Media complement the goals of the ELCA churchwide organization. We join in seeking a common purpose: to activate each of us to invite more people into the way of Jesus and discover together community, justice, and love.

This summary highlights recent initiatives in our two publishing areas, Congregational Resources and Books, and in the ministry as a whole, toward the pursuit of this vision.

Congregational Resources

After more than two years of disruption and adaptation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our research shows that congregational ministries are moving into yet another phase as new patterns of attendance at on-site worship and faith formation offerings have begun to emerge this fall. A recent online survey of children's ministries leaders revealed that Sunday school and other in-person faith formation programming has largely resumed, though average attendance is lagging pre-pandemic levels. Through our Augsburg Fortress and Sparkhouse resources, we remain focused on and dedicated to helping congregations thrive.

Worship: After offering online opportunities in 2020 and 2021, our popular Summer Music Clinics returned to in-person formats this year in four locations around the US. Engaging and inspiring clinicians Jan Kraybill and Tom Trenney introduced attendees to our latest choral and instrumental releases and led a hymn festival featuring selections from *All Creation Sings*. The publication of *Indexes to Evangelical Lutheran Worship and All Creation Sings* provides additional planning support to church musicians.

As the three-year lectionary cycle begins again this Advent, the Sundays and Seasons family of worship planning resources features new cover and interior art by Lutheran pastor and artist Mary Button (marybutton.com), who serves ELCA congregations in both the Metropolitan New York and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods. Worship planning, preaching, and devotional content for this resource family is refreshed and contributed annually by more than 150 diverse pastors, deacons, musicians, artists, and seminary professors from across the US and beyond, representing various geographic and cultural contexts. To support the Spanish language resources in *All Creation Sings*, new Spanish content continues to be added to sundaysandseasons.com, including the prayers of the day for the coming church year.

Faith Formation: We have recently completed comprehensive research into the rapidly evolving Christian education landscape, especially for youth preparing for Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) in the Lutheran church, as well as for children's faith formation, which will inform product development in these critical areas moving forward. Recent publications include a series of *All Creation Sings* booklets for kids, *A Time to Say Goodbye: A Booklet for Kids about Funerals*, and *Operation Restoration: Mending God's World*, a comprehensive week-long VBS program inspired and informed by Daniel Erlander's *Manna and Mercy*.

Books

We continue to expand the output of our several book imprints. Fortress Press, long a vital part of this church's publishing efforts, seeks to advance scholarship and resource church leaders both in the ELCA and beyond. Our consumer book imprints, Beaming Books (children) and Broadleaf Books (youth and adult) offer avenues by which we extend our mission beyond the church and higher education to the broader society. As we plan for new titles to be released in the coming years, we consistently seek to expand contributions by authors who are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. This sampling of published titles from the last six months illustrates the range of subjects and authors in these categories:

FORTRESS PRESS (fortresspress.com)

Language for God: A Lutheran Perspective. Mary J. Streufert
The Prophetic Lens: The Camera and Black Moral Agency from MLK to Darnella Frazier. Phil Allen Jr.
The Holy and the Hybrid: Navigating the Church's Digital Revolution. Ryan M. Panzar
Blessing and Beseeching: Seventy Prayers Inspired by the Scriptures. Gail Ramshaw
The Assembly: A Spirituality. Gordon W. Lathrop

BEAMING BOOKS (beamingbooks.com)

God's Holy Darkness. Sharei Green, Beckah Selnick, and Nikki Faison
The Story of Us. Mitali Perkins, Kevin and Kristen Howdeshell
Hattie Hates Hugs. Sarah Hovorka and Heather Brockman Lee
The Tree of Hope: The Miraculous Rescue of Puerto Rico's Beloved Banyan. Anna Orenstein-Cardona and Juan Manuel Moreno
A Beginner's Guide to Being Human. Matt Forrest Esenwine and André Ceolin

BROADLEAF BOOKS (broadleafbooks.com)

Ordinary Blessings for Parents: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Family Life. Meta Herrick Carlson
I Wish My Dad: The Power of Vulnerable Conversations between Fathers and Sons. Romal Tune with Jordan Tune
Red State Christians: A Journey into White Christian Nationalism and the Wreckage It Leaves Behind (expanded edition). Angela Denker
The First Advent in Palestine: Reversals, Resistance, and the Ongoing Complexity of Hope. Kelley Nikondeha

1517 Media Organizational Matters

More than a year after moving into our new hybrid office space in Minneapolis's North Loop, we are settling into a predictable rhythm and pattern of in-office and from-home work. All publishing teams have hired new staff over the past six months and in September we welcomed nearly every remote employee to the office for a week of on-site collaboration and relationship building.

Mark Brokering and the Rev. Pamela Smith concluded their service on our Board of Trustees, and we welcomed newly elected members Cheryl Williams, Luther Snow, and Michael Chan at our November 2022 meeting.

A cross-functional Intercultural Competency Team continues its work to ensure all our colleagues at 1517 Media are equipped and supported in their ongoing development. We regularly monitor publishing activities toward this end, and our efforts to seek out diverse contributors and partners in our work are showing positive results.

We strive to work with partners in ministry across the ELCA as we work together toward the future into which God is calling us. Thank you for your continuing interest and support! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact blevinst@1517.media.

1517 Media Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Tim Blevins, President and CEO

Date of Board Meeting: Virtual vote on 3/25/2022 not associated with a meeting

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

Voted that the Board of Trustees suspends the Acquisitions Committee. (PH.22.03.01)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

1517 Media Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Tim Blevins, President and CEO

Date of Board Meeting: June 17, 2022

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

Voted to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting in open session. (PH.22.06.02)

Voted that the Board of Trustees of 1517 Media, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, elect the following persons to serve as officers and members of the Executive Committee for a three-year term:

1. Chair: Fred Halvin
2. Vice Chair: Joy Moore
3. Secretary: Lilly Kimmelshue
4. Chair, Audit & Finance Committee: Linda Brown
5. Chair, Board Development Committee: Mike Miller (PH.22.06.03)

Voted that the Board of Trustees of 1517 Media, express appreciation and extend thanks to Mark Brokering and Pam Smith for their service as members of this board. (PH.22.06.04)

Executive Session actions

Voted to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting in executive session. (PH/ES.22.06.01)

Voted that the 1517 Media 2023 operating budget be approved as presented. (PH/ES.22.06.02)

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

ELCA Foundation Report

Submitted by Annette C. Shoemaker, Interim President and CEO

The first three quarters of 2022 have proven that this will be a challenging year in many respects. The markets persisted their downward trend hitting what was hopefully the year's lowest point at the end of September. Many external factors, e.g., inflation, the war in Ukraine, global warming, etc., have contributed to these turbulent market results. Despite those events, gift planners continued to post positive results in all areas—outpacing results for the same period in 2021.

The absolute performance results for the Ministry Growth Fund during the first nine months were disappointing, but not surprising, declining by -18.93%. However, on a relative basis the fund held up well. The addition of alternative investments is proving to be a buffer against the declining markets. Further, the education and emphasis of the fund's dual investment objectives—a short-term stable quarterly distribution rate combined with the long-term capital appreciation of the underlying assets—proved to investors the value of the combination when managing budgets.

Development results for gifts and managed assets surpassed the same time period in 2021 and totaled over \$87 million. Planned gifts outpaced last year as gift planners were able to host more in-person meetings. Additions to the Ministry Growth Fund are also ahead of last year.

As of this writing, third quarter results for distributions were not available but total distributions to ministry during the first half of the year increased about 8% to \$25.9 million, compared to the first two quarters of 2021, \$24.0 million. Estate gifts continue to lag the high levels seen in 2020 and the dollar amount of new Charitable Gift Annuities processed in the first half was significantly below the level set in 2021. Realized gifts distributed to the churchwide organization were up significantly compared to the first half of 2021 with results totaling \$4.5 million versus \$2.4 million, respectively.

Throughout 2022, the Foundation's staff, outside consultants, and trustees have undertaken many projects to continue the work of building a stronger, updated infrastructure; determine staff and board roles and responsibilities; analyze how the work of the Foundation functions should be handled; and, prepare for the implementation of the strategic plan.

In addition, the staff is also keeping up with projects that affect the day-to-day work. Donor files are in the final stages of being scanned and digitized; development of the new workflow system is nearing completion and is expected to be implemented in the coming months; the work around both the EFPT (ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust) and the Foundation's audits has been completed and we have received a clean opinion on both; and efforts are on-going to implement the BKD auditor recommendations and other organizational changes. None of this would have been possible without a dedicated staff, knowledgeable outside consultants, and strong support from our trustees.

ELCA Foundation Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Annette Shoemaker, Interim President and CEO

Date of Written Action: January 26, 2021

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.01.01: To approve the engagement of BKD, LLC as the ELCA Foundation's internal auditor.

Date of Board Meeting: March 18, 2021

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.04 To rescind approval of the use of MS Gift to support the ELCA Foundation's DAF program.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.05 To approve changing the name of Endowment Fund A to ELCA Ministry Growth Fund.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.06 To approve revisions to two sections of the Investment Policy Statement for the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust: (1) to use the Modified Target benchmark for reporting to external participants, and (2) to replace the Portico custom investment grade fixed income benchmark with the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Aggregate Bond index effective April 1, 2021.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.07 To approve a distribution rate of 4% for the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust for 2022.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.08 To approve the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees Role Description as amended.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.10 To approve the bylaws as amended.

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.11 To approve the resolution to establish a Governance Committee.

VOTED AND APPROVED:

FO.21.03.12 To approve the resolution to establish a Strategy Task Force.

Mission Investment Fund (MIF) Report

Submitted by Eva M. Roby, President and CEO

New Board of Trustees Members

At the Churchwide Assembly in August, five new Trustees were elected to the MIF Board. MIF is pleased to welcome Warren Hanson, Krista Kapp, Joe Nolte, Julie Swanson, and the Rt. Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley to the Board of Trustees. We are very much looking forward to working with them and know that their gifts and expertise will enrich our board and the entire organization.

Transitions

Our long-time Vice President of Lending, Amelia Dawkins, will retire in the next few months after 33 years with MIF. We are grateful for her unwavering leadership, and we wish her all the best in retirement.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

MIF has developed and adopted a new strategic plan for 2023-2026. Under the banner of “The way forward – partnering to expand our impact in the church and the world,” the plan will serve as a vital guidepost and essential roadmap for our organization over the next four years.

There are several new elements of our strategic plan that we are especially excited about. We have a new purpose statement, which more accurately encapsulates the reason we exist:

Our purpose is to build capacity for future growth and financial well-being of the church in all its lived expressions.

In addition, we have added a statement on “The Impact We Make Possible.” It reads as follows:

In the years ahead, MIF, in alliance with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, will become a full-service financial institution contributing to shaping the future church – for the ELCA and its ecumenical partners.

Through MIF, individuals and ministries have multiple pathways to invest in the life and work of the church. MIF puts these investments to work by collaborating with individuals and ministries across the church in support of their goals and mission. Through these partnerships, opportunities are realized.

Finally, the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan lays out the following five strategic goals for MIF:

1. MIF is a modern financial ministry with state-of-the-art banking services.
2. The alliance between MIF and the ELCA Federal Credit Union is realized and significantly expands services to individuals and ministries.
3. Growth in MIF loans and investments is sustained and provides the path for ELCA ministries and other partners to achieve their goals.
4. Financial strength and stability continue as a foundation for MIF growth and our primary enabler of ministry and service.
5. Organizational capabilities align with strategy and are future fit.

MIF Modernization

We have launched a multi-faceted effort to modernize MIF within three spheres: people, processes, and technology. As it relates to technology, modernization involves upgrading and improving our core banking and other ancillary systems. We recently completed a significant due diligence milestone for MIF modernization in which we finalized our technology selections, engaged a system implementation partner, and performed an initial workforce gap assessment.

Mission Investment Fund (MIF) Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Eva Roby, President and CEO

Date of Board Meeting: March 24, 2022

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

- Elected Board of Trustees officers, committee chairs, and committee members
- Approved:
 - Audited financial statements for fiscal year ended December 31, 2021
 - New capital budget
 - Revisions to 2022 Annual Plan
 - Revisions to a 2019-2022 Strategic Plan key result related to loans
 - Revisions to the Executive Committee Charter

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

None

Portico Benefit Services Update

Submitted by *The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO, twitter.com/RevJeffThiemann*



November 2022 — We're all working to shape new versions of normal in the ELCA and that can mean navigating emotionally charged discussions. In support of constructive conversation, I've included insights on two challenging topics likely coming up in the ELCA — benefit affordability and abortion coverage.

Benefit Affordability

Because benefit costs are challenging for many congregations, Portico embraced a strategy five years ago to deliver ELCA benefits to a wider group of ELCA organizations. This growth strategy is designed to help keep ELCA benefits effective and affordable.

- When Portico expands its reach to include ELCA social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities, our membership grows and average member age comes down.
- Serving more members strengthens our buying power, enabling us to secure lower rates and create greater long-term price stability. It also gives us access to innovative, quality benefits and resources typically not available to smaller groups.
- A lower average age helps ensure a more sustainable membership over time.

In 2017, we had 11,240 sponsored members with an average member age of 52.2.

In 2022, we have 11,445 sponsored members with an average age of 50.8.

Despite an ongoing decline in ELCA congregations, Portico's membership is growing. You can help keep ELCA benefits more affordable. Talk with those you know leading ELCA social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities. Explain that we strive to maintain price stability and offer them my contact information.

Abortion and the ELCA Health Plan

Following the Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* in June 2022, access to abortions is now in the control of state laws and legislatures, leading to a patchwork of accessibility with different rules applicable in each state. I'm grateful for the direction offered by the [ELCA social statement on abortion](#) as Portico provides benefits consistent with the social statement and applicable laws.

- "Prevention of unintended pregnancies is crucial in lessening the number of abortions."¹
The ELCA Health Plan covers FDA-approved contraceptive methods, including oral contraceptives, emergency contraceptives, intrauterine devices (IUD), sterilization, and contraceptive counseling.
- "The Church recognizes that there can be sound reasons for ending a pregnancy through induced abortion."²
The ELCA Health Plan covers procedures that include miscarriage and abortion. "Late-term" abortions are not covered except when the life of the mother is threatened or when the fetus has lethal abnormalities indicating death is imminent. This Portico flyer is designed and updated to support ELCA conversations: [Abortion and the ELCA Health Plan](#).
- During a recent health plan review, Portico identified a coverage gap—drugs used to terminate pregnancy. In August 2022, Portico trustees approved coverage for FDA-approved drugs prescribed for medication abortions effective Sept. 1, 2022, a change consistent with the ELCA social statement.

¹ ELCA – A Social Statement on: Abortion, p. 8

² ELCA – A Social Statement on: Abortion, p. 6

Changes for 2023

We strive to balance cost-containment strategies with carefully planned increases in order to minimize budget disruption for both sponsoring organizations and members. As a result, this year should feel much like last year—which means organizations and their leaders can focus on more pressing issues.

- The ELCA-Primary health baseline contribution rate is increasing 3%, like last year (which was our lowest in eight years). ELCA Medicare-Primary coverage for eligible sponsored members is also increasing 3%.
- The ELCA Medicare-Primary rate increase for retired and non-sponsored members is only increasing 5% due to our negotiated group rate and claims experience with Humana.
- The combined contribution rate for disability and survivor benefits is dropping from 2.2% to 1.7% of defined compensation.

By comparison, 2023 individual health coverage in the open market may see a 10% - 20% increase, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation analysis published in July.

Source: [Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker](#)

Market Volatility and the Annuity

After significant market declines in the first half of the year, both stocks and bonds continued to have negative performance in Q3 due to a variety of concerns including inflation, company earnings, gas and oil price volatility, climate change risk, geopolitical risk tied to Russia and China, and COVID-19 variants.

The ELCA Participating Annuity is a “variable” annuity and payments will vary based on investment performance and mortality experience of the investment fund. This means that, when periodic annuity payment adjustments are calculated (usually in September for the next calendar year), monthly annuity payment amounts can be adjusted up or down. While payment adjustments have ranged from 1.1% to 7.3% over the past 10 years, they can hold steady or decrease. Our goal is to keep payments as predictable as possible via a diversified portfolio to help reduce volatility, and a smoothing process that levels annual increases to reduce potential future decreases.

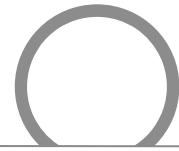
Know someone who might qualify?
The [ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund](#) delivered \$418,000 in 2022 benefit payments to eligible retired church servants in need as of July 31, 2022.

Each year, based on Portico’s Sept. 30 Funded Ratio calculation and recommendations, our board of trustees approves payment adjustments for the coming year at its November meeting. Portico notifies annuitants in late November.

2022 Churchwide Assembly

B12: Disability Status calls for “examination of the ELCA disability plan related to mental illness and a review of the timing of employment/roster status process that may affect eligibility for members applying for disability benefits.” At the November 2022 Conference of Bishops meeting, Portico is presenting a primer on the disability claim process, especially as it relates to disability stemming from mental illness. We will also include a review of mental health-related disability claims in Portico’s next regular review of disability benefits, and report findings to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council in the fall of 2023.

CA22.02.22 Salary Equity in the ELCA calls Portico and the churchwide organization “to make appropriate changes to their bylaws and data privacy policies to facilitate a deeper understanding of compensation patterns for rostered ministers.” This November, Portico is requesting that its board of trustees approve an amendment to its bylaws regarding our privacy policies. Portico is also amending its privacy policy in two phases. First, we’ll amend the privacy disclosure language on our website, then, in coordination with the churchwide organization, modify our privacy disclosure and any impacted privacy policies to provide appropriate detail on what data will be shared.



Portico Benefit Services Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO

Date of Board Meetings: June 1, 2022, and August 4-5, 2022

Category 1: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.)*

None

Category 2: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

June 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the resolution for approval of expenses for replacement of core systems.

August 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the resolution for the Augustana Annuity Trust Resolution to replace a trustee.

PLAN AMENDMENTS

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – effective January 1, 2023

Approved amendments to:

- Section 3.01, 17.20 – Removal for special provisions for ELCA Seminary.

Approved amendments to:

- Sections 12.07, 12.08, 15.04 – Changes in abortion coverage.

Approved amendment to:

- Section 12.15 – Addition of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as a stand-alone benefit.

Approved amendment to:

- Section 17.01 – Addition of disclosures and claims-based reimbursement option.

Approved amendments to:

- Sections 20.02, 20.04, 20.05, 20.06, 20.07, 20.09, 20.10, 20.11, 20.12, 20.13 – Addition of a forfeiture provision for the Personal Wellness Accounts.

Received amendments approved by the President – effective January 1, 2023

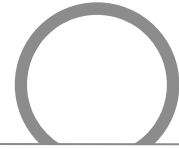
ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan

Sections 3.06, 8.23, 8.25 – Administrative clarifications.

ELCA Retirement Plan

Sections 2.29, 2.40, Appendix – Administrative clarifications.

Sections 7.03, 7.04 – Amendments permit former members to rollover funds.



ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan

Sections 3.01, 4.01, 4.04 – Administrative clarifications.

Sections 5.03, 5.04 – Amendments permit former members to rollover funds.

ELCA 457 Deferred Compensation Plan

Sections 2.07, 2.18, 2.24, 3.01, 5.06 – Administrative clarifications.

Sections 5.01, 5.03, 9.01, 9.02, 9.06, 9.07 – Amendments reflect Internal Revenue Code updates.

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan

Sections 3.03, 4.01, 5.01, 6.05, 6.06, 7.01, 9.04, 9.07, 9.08, 9.09, 10.02, 10.03, 10.12, 12.06, 3.02, 15.02, 15.03, 15.07, 17.02, 17.03, 17.04, 17.06, 17.07, 17.10, 17.19, 18.30, 18.34, 21.06 – Administrative clarifications

Sections 12.07, 14.01 – Amendments due to a change in vendors' support programs.

Sections 16.02 – Amendment reflects changes implemented by governing authorities.

Approved the resolution approving the 2023 Contribution Rates for the Survivor, Disability and Medical and Dental Benefits Plans, and Retiree Support.

Approved the ELCA Health Plan Claims-Based Pricing Model.

Officer Election(s) and Appeals Committee Chair Approval

Elected the following Board of Trustees Officers for 2022-2023:

Lori A. Lewis, Chairperson

Vincent P. Brown, Vice Chairperson

Angela M. Dejene, Secretary

Elected the following At-Large Member for 2022-2023: The Rev. Dr. Thomas P. Schlotterback

Elected Committee Chair and Vice Chair for 2022-2023:

The Rev. Elizabeth-Ann (Becky) Swanson, Appeals Committee

Frank A. Roth, Appeals Committee Vice Chair

Category 3: (Other procedures and board actions.)

June 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the resolution concerning the retention of RSM as Independent Auditor for the year ending December 31, 2022.

Approved the Audit Committee Charter and Changes

August 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Received the 2Q2022 Portico Benefit Services Management Report and all Committee Reports, *en bloc*.

2022 DIGEST OF BOARD ACTIONS

Submitted by: Portico Benefit Services
 The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO
Date: November 9, 2022
Meeting Dates: November 3-4, 2022

Category I: Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.

November 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Approved resolution to amend its bylaws (i) to facilitate the memorial “Salary Equity in the ELCA” by revising Portico Benefit Services’ privacy policies and (ii) to expand its Board of Trustees to permit the election of up to three additional advisors, with voice but no vote.

Category II: Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.

November 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Adopted the 2023 Budget.

Adopted the 2023 Replacement of Core Systems Budget.

Approved resolution establishing the annuity adjustment (-1.3%), no dividend (0%) and bridge account interest-crediting rate (3.1%) for 2023 for the ELCA Participating Annuity Investment Fund.

Approved resolution designating a portion of 2023 remuneration as rental/housing allowance for the following Portico Benefit Services employees:

The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann
 The Rev. Catherine Schibler-Keegan
 The Rev. Shelley Cunningham
 The Rev. Timothy J. Schroeder

Approved resolution designating retirement and disability payments as rental/housing allowance for 2023.

PLAN AMENDMENTS

Received plan amendments approved by the President.

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Effective January 1, 2023

Approved amendments to:

- Section 10.09 – Reflective of changes implemented under the No Surprises Act.
- Section 12.07 and 20.10 – Amendments are administrative clarifications.

Category III. Other procedures and board actions.

November 2022 Resolutions/Actions

Approved the appointment of Todd Maloy as Vice Chair of the Investment Corporate Social Responsibility Committee.

Received the report on 2022 Employee Conflict or Duality of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Received the 3Q2022 Portico Benefit Services Management Report.

Approved minor revisions to the Committee Charter and Calendars for Board Development Committee and Executive Committee.

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Report

Submitted by Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

The work of the churchwide staff of Women of the ELCA is to support the organization's participants as they live out the mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Here are some highlights of activities of the churchwide women's organization:

Online events created and hosted by the churchwide organization

- Three conversations in Women's History Month. Video recordings are available: [Emmy Carlsson Ewald](#) (1857-1946), the founder of the Women's Missionary Society of the Augustana Synod; [Sister Emma Francis](#) (1875-1945), the first woman of color to serve as a Lutheran deaconess in North America; and [the Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder and Dr. Marion Ann Taylor](#), introducing their new book, *Voices Long Silenced: Women Biblical Interpreters through the Centuries*.
- Friendship Tea for the nearly 200 [Faithful Friends](#) who participate in the monthly giving program by that name. We focused on thanking these women for their sustaining gifts to the organization.
- [Jesus loves you: VBS for grownups](#), an online do-it-yourself experience for one person or a group, involving music, devotional articles, a prayer bead resource, and, of course, snacks.
- Six online [leadership training sessions](#) growing out of the 2022 Leadership Event.
- [Back-to-school with WELCA](#), an online event continuing the emphasis on leadership training with a focus on program planning for the coming year.
- [Boldcafe dinners](#), a monthly opportunity to meet and talk with Café writers on wide-ranging subjects in which Christian women are interested.

Publications

- [Gather](#) magazine's Bible study continues in print, on video, and even online via Facebook, Zoom, and other social media channels. The current study, "Jesus and Nature: Teachers of Faith," was written by the Rev. Sara Olson-Smith. The January–April 2023 study will focus on the Ten Commandments and has been written by the Rev. Christa von Zychlin. Both Olson-Smith and von Zychlin have become popular Bible study writers well appreciated for their insights.
- [Daily Grace](#) devotionals (a smartphone app and also available via email) and Women of the ELCA's websites continue to help us connect and serve in a variety of ways.
- [Café](#), WELCA's e-magazine for younger women, [launched a monthly B.Y.O.D. virtual series](#) (bring your own dinner) in October 2020 that's proven very popular. Recent articles in this monthly online publication have focused on spiritual abuse (October), the power of coffee hour (August), and learning to live again after resurrection (May), among others.
- The Associated Church Press (ACP) and the Religion Communicators Council (RCC) recognized the communication ministry of Women of the ELCA for its excellence at a joint convention held in May. The ACP and the RCC are professional organizations for those engaged in communication work within faith communities. [Learn more](#).

Upcoming online programming

- Boldcafe dinners, the first Thursday of each month. The Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne hosts the November dinner on the topic of boundaries and expectations. [Advance registration is required](#). November 3, 7 p.m. CDT.

- Thankoffering Service, using the service prepared by the Rev. Dr. Yolanda Denson-Byers. Denson-Byers will preach. Thankofferings, a long tradition with Lutheran women, are responses to God's grace experienced every day. [Advance registration is required](#). November 5, 3 p.m. CDT. Spanish translation provided.
- An introduction to Advent 2022, with the Rev. Dr. Becca Ehrlich based on the Advent devotions she's written for the November/December issue of *Gather* magazine. [Advance registration is required](#). November 27, 3 p.m. CST. Spanish translation provided.
- The organization will host its third digital **Blue Christmas** service on the evening of the Winter Solstice. It is a service of grieving, praying, and healing. [Advance registration is required](#). December 21, 7 p.m. CST. Spanish translation provided.

\$1 million campaign for Katie's Fund

2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years launched on June 11, 2022. ([View the launch party](#).) It is a campaign to raise \$1 million for the Katharina von Bora Luther Endowment Fund, fondly known as Katie's Fund. When the campaign launched on June 11, 2022, \$122,540 had been pledged by 26 women. The early months of the campaign have been devoted to in-person or Zoom visits with potential donors.

The primary communication hub for the campaign is welca.org/katiesfund. There visitors find all kinds of information about the campaign, including a [six-minute promotional video](#), blog stories about the campaign, and stories of how Katie's Fund has enabled leadership development, global partnerships, and living theology over the past 25 years.

As part of the kickoff to the campaign, the Women of the ELCA churchwide organization announced a \$1,000 gift from Katie's Fund for each of the organization's 64 synod organizations, to be used for one of the three purposes of Katie's Fund: leadership development, global partnership, and living theology.

Women of the ELCA Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director

Date of Board Meeting: April 23, 2022 (via Zoom)

Category 1: *(policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval)*

None

Category 2: *(policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit)*

- The board adopted proposed changes to its policy, “Executive board member participation in synodical and unit expressions of Women of the ELCA.”
- The board denied a request that first time voting members at the digital triennial convention in August 2021 be allowed to serve as first time voting members at the in-person convention in September 2023.
- The board approved moving Bold Women’s Sunday from the last Sunday in February to the first Sunday of March in conjunction with the organization’s current anti-racism foci to further walk with and accompany BIPOC women.
- The board extended another four-year term to the current executive director.
- The president was directed to convene a task force to develop concrete ways to effectively communicate the organization’s commitment to inclusion and welcome of LGBTQIA+ participants.
- The president was directed to convene a task force to review all the board’s policies and to make recommendations of any changes or updates needed.

Category 3: *(other procedures and board actions)*

- The board affirmed use of the Just Love theme for the 2023 gathering.
- The board moved the annual observance of Bold Women’s Day from the last Sunday of February to the first Sunday in March.

Women of the ELCA Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by: Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director

Date of Board Meeting: October 22, 2022 (via Zoom)

Category 1: *(policies with an impact beyond the unit, which require Church Council approval)*

None

Category 2: *(policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit)*

- The board set a calendar for the 2023-2026 triennium.
- Regarding the Twelfth Triennial Convention (2023), the board approved proposed Rules of Procedure and a proposed agenda.
- The board approved several proposed constitutional changes that will be sent to the Twelfth Triennial Convention, most of which provide for more inclusive language. Certain proposals were sent back to committee for further review.

Category 3: *(other procedures and board actions)*

None

2022-2025

Church Council Member Synod Contacts

| # | Synod Name | Representative |
|----------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1A | Alaska | Pr. Joanne Engquist |
| 1B | Northwest Washington | Pr. Joanne Engquist |
| 1C | Southwestern Washington | Ms. Jennifer Trom |
| 1D | Northwest Intermountain | Ms. Loni Taylor |
| 1E | Oregon | Ms. Jennifer Trom |
| 1F | Montana | Ms. Loni Taylor |
| 2A | Sierra Pacific | |
| 2B | Southwest California | Ms. Valerie Shaw |
| 2C | Pacifica | Ms. Valerie Shaw |
| 2D | Grand Canyon | Pr. Karn Carroll |
| 2E | Rocky Mountain | Mr. Rindra Josoa |
| 3A | Western North Dakota | Pr. Lisa Ahlness |
| 3B | Eastern North Dakota | Pr. Lisa Ahlness |
| 3C | South Dakota | Divine |
| 3D | Northwestern Minnesota | |
| 3E | Northeastern Minnesota | Mr. Loren Solberg |
| 3F | Southwestern Minnesota | Ms. Kristy Henriksen |
| 3G | Minneapolis Area | Deacon Kari Olsen |
| 3H | Saint Paul Area | Deacon Kari Olsen |
| 3I | Southeastern Minnesota | Ms. Cherrish Holland |
| 4A | Nebraska | Divine |
| 4B | Central States | Ms. Susan Boxberger |
| 4C | Arkansas-Oklahoma | Ms. Susan Boxberger |
| 4D | N. Texas-N. Louisiana | Pr. Nick Billardello |
| 4E | Southwestern Texas | Pr. Marcus Bigott |
| 4F | Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast | Pr. Marcus Bigott |

| # | Synod Name | Representative |
|----------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 5A | Metropolitan Chicago | Mr. Iván Perez |
| 5B | Northern Illinois | Pr. Bill Callister |
| 5C | Central/Southern Illinois | Pr. Bill Callister |
| 5D | Southeastern Iowa | |
| 5E | Western Iowa | Mr. Mitch McCartney |
| 5F | Northeastern Iowa | Mr. Joel Miller |
| 5G | Northern Great Lakes | Pr. Heather Brown |
| 5H | Northwest Synod of Wisconsin | Pr. Heather Brown |
| 5I | East-Central Synod of Wisconsin | Ms. Kerry Fehrman |
| 5J | Greater Milwaukee | Mr. Keoni Newman |
| 5K | South-Central Synod of Wisconsin | Mr. Keoni Newman |
| 5L | La Crosse Area | Mr. Joel Miller |
| 6A | Southeast Michigan | Pr. Kjersten Sullivan |
| 6B | North/West Lower Michigan | Pr. Kjersten Sullivan |
| 6C | Indiana-Kentucky | |
| 6D | Northwestern Ohio | Mr. Hans Giller |
| 6E | Northeastern Ohio | Mr. David Lenz |
| 6F | Southern Ohio | Mr. David Lenz |
| 7A | New Jersey | Ms. Jamie Bruesehoff |
| 7B | New England | Pr. Pamela Hoh |
| 7C | Metropolitan New York | Ms. Jamie Bruesehoff |
| 7D | Upstate New York | Pr. Pamela Hoh |
| 7E | Northeastern Pennsylvania | Ms. Tracey Beasley |
| 7F | Southeastern Pennsylvania | Pr. Gwen King |
| 7G | Slovak Zion | |
| 8A | Northwestern Pennsylvania | Ms. Olivia Martin-Call |
| 8B | Southwestern Pennsylvania | Pr. Tara Lynn |
| 8C | Allegheny | Ms. Olivia Martin-Call |
| 8D | Lower Susquehanna | Mr. Noah Roux |
| 8E | Upper Susquehanna | Mr. Noah Roux |
| 8F | Delaware-Maryland | Ms. Sheena Foster |

| # | Synod Name | Representative |
|----------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8G | Metropolitan Washington, D.C. | Ms. Sheena Foster |
| 8H | West Virginia-Western Maryland | Pr. Tara Lynn |
| 9A | Virginia | Mr. Kevin Anderson |
| 9B | North Carolina | Pr. Emily Hartner |
| 9C | South Carolina | Pr. Leroy Cannon |
| 9D | Southeastern | Pr. Leroy Cannon |
| 9E | Florida-Bahamas | Ms. Linda Rivera |
| 9F | Caribbean | Ms. Linda Rivera |

Church Council Member Synod Visit Report

Name: Loren Solberg

Synod Visited: Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Visit Date: April 30, 2022

Purpose of Visit: Greetings from the ELCA and a brief report to the synod assembly on Church Council activities

What are the joys and opportunities happening within the Synod?

It was an opportunity to greet the attendees of the synod assembly. I gave a brief report on the major activities of the Church Council, which included the reorganization of the budget, the changes in the committee structure, and the changes in the staffing assignments.

I also was given the opportunity to hold a “Listening Session” with assembly attendees that wish to give their views on the proposed social statement on Church, Government and Civic Engagement.

How did the visit deepen the relationship between the Synod and the Churchwide Organization? What, if anything, should be shared with the Church Council and/or Churchwide Organization?

After my report, I had several people express appreciation for the opportunity to have a report from the churchwide organization. They asked some additional questions on the goals of the change in the budget priorities. Participants that attended the “Listening Session” were very engaged in expressing their views on the subject of civic engagement. There were several suggestions on what a social statement should contain. Bishop Odgren will help in scheduling additional listening sessions in different areas of the synod.

Name: Bill Callister
Synod Visited: Northern Illinois Synod
Visit Date: June 2022
Purpose of Visit: Northern Illinois Synod Assembly

The main business of the 2022 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly was the election of a new bishop. Bishop Jeffery Clements, who had served his first six-year term, chose to retire and not stand for re-election. To give time for background checks and to give voting members time for discernment, the synod decided on having two online plenary sessions prior to its regular in-person meeting.

The first plenary session was held online on June 12 when the nominating ballot was cast. Bishop Clements chaired the assembly. Representative of the ELCA the Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla chaired the election. On the first ballot, 72 names were placed in nomination. The second plenary session was held online on June 19 when the second ballot was cast. Of the 72 names nominated only 7 candidates accepted the nomination. Victoria Flood chaired the election on behalf of Pastor Malpica-Padilla. She also gave the report of the ELCA. Because the top seven candidates would proceed to the third ballot, all candidates proceeded to the third ballot.

The third and fourth plenary sessions were held in-person on the campus of Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois on June 17 and 18. It was the synod's first in-person assembly since 2019. Neither Pr. Malpica-Padilla nor Victoria Flood were available to attend, so the election was chaired by synod vice president Minnette Willard. After the fourth ballot, the top three candidates had an opportunity to address the assembly and answer questions prepared by the synod's transition committee. The Rev. Stacie Fidler, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church of Rock Island, Illinois, was elected on the fifth ballot.

In the budget that was approved for 2023, for the first time in its history, moved the Northern Illinois Synod from its 55% mission support to churchwide to 52.5%. The last synod to drop below the 55% mission support set for all synods in 1987. Along with the other business and reports, the synod approved four resolutions. One setting up the third Sunday of May as a Campus Ministry Sunday in support of the Campus Ministry at Northern Illinois University in the synod's territory. Another resolution that the synod repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery and engage with Native American communities with historic ties to the territory of the Northern Illinois Synod, and two memorials to 1) To memorialize the Churchwide Assembly and Conference of Bishops to suspend the removal of rostered leaders on-leave-from-call after three years and study how the process might be improved, and, 2) To memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to re-commit its call for a just transition to 50% reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Name: Susan Boxberger

Synod Visited: Central States Synod

Visit Date: October 7-8, 2022

Purpose of Visit: Member of Synod Council in my home synod

What are the joys and opportunities happening within the Synod?

As congregations continue to recover from the pandemic, many (including my own) are in a time of discernment about the transition underway and how they can live into this “new normal.” Our synod currently has 40 congregations in the process of discernment, either seeking a pastor, being served by TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) candidate or interim pastor, or some other long-term process. This is down from 44 at our last Central States Synod Council meeting. A few congregations have disaffiliated; some of those situations have been fraught and particularly stressful for Bishop Susan Canda. There are 90 congregations, many in smaller, rural areas, who are unable to afford a full-time pastor.

We talked at great length about the closing of a congregation in the St. Louis area, one which has been particularly troublesome with difficult decisions to be made. We were able to reach consensus and to communicate the synod council’s support for the bishop.

We reviewed reports from the bishop and officers of our synod, plus reports from various other ministries and agencies of the Central States Synod.

We spent over an hour reviewing and discussing the Intercultural Diversity Index, which most of the synod council members and synod staff completed and which pointed to attitudes and areas ripe for growth. This goes right along with the Future Church initiative of the churchwide organization.

How did the visit deepen the relationship between the Synod and the Churchwide Organization? What, if anything, should be shared with the Church Council and/or Churchwide Organization?

Bishop Canda often points out in meetings that I sit on the ELCA Church Council, so there is recognition of the interconnectedness of the various expressions of the church.

The Intercultural Diversity Index is directly tied to the churchwide initiative of Future Church. We have also been opening meetings with the Land Acknowledgment statement, which ties us not only to our cultural roots in our local context, but to the wider church.

We discuss at every meeting our treasurer’s report and trends in giving. We are (painfully) aware that deficits in anticipated donations lead to lowered giving to the churchwide organization since we pass on a percentage of what we receive.

Church Council Member Ecumenical Visit Reports

Name: Kjersten Sullivan

Meeting: Reformed Church in America (RCA) Zoom Meeting

Date: August 30, 2022

The purpose for this special meeting was to appoint a new member to the RF 21-1 Restructuring Team (RT), after one member of the team was unable to continue serving, and to appoint two representatives from GSC (General Synod Council) to serve on Board of Benefits Services (BOBS). [The General Synod Council (GSC) is a board that serves as the executive committee of General Synod in the Reformed Church in America.] The need for this appointment came out of a change to BOBS' bylaws approved at the 2022 General Synod. Previously the General Synod president, General Synod vice president, and GSC moderator all served on BOBS by virtue of their office. With the change in bylaws, one GSC representative is to be chosen from among the current GSC moderator, GS president, and GS vice president. The other is to be chosen from the entire membership of GSC, based on interest and relevant gifts and experience.

On the first agenda item, after some conversation, the GSC decided, as the RT had already been about its work for six months, and a lot of work and relationship building had already been accomplished, to leave the restructuring team at thirteen members rather than replace the member who is unable to continue, given the timetable and the work that has already been done by the team.

On the second agenda item, Phil Assink was appointed as the GSC designee with interest and experience in the work of BOBS, coterminous with his term on GSC and Judy Nelson was appointed, also coterminous with her term on GSC as the vice president of the General Synod and, if elected, as the president of General Synod and the moderator of GSC.

Name: Kjersten Sullivan

Meeting: Reformed Church in America (RCA) General Synod Council meeting

Place: Dewitt Ministry Center, Grand Rapids, MI

Date: October 21-22, 2022

The RCA General Synod Council (GSC) met in person at the Dewitt Ministry Center in late October 2022. Much of the discussion in one way or another circulated around the restructuring process the RCA is engaged in as they move forward from the Vision 2020 process and the departure of congregations and members of the denomination that followed some of those decisions. The two main issues being wrestled with seemed to be grief over the shrinking denomination and grappling with greatly reduced finances and the increased burden on staff, burdens caused by both the decrease of staff due to decrease in funds and in the need to manage emotions of the wider denomination membership.

The meeting began with a devotional exercise "Laying on the Altar," where GSC members were invited to bring an item that represented where they are in their life and/or spiritual journey and lay that on the altar.

The first order of business (after approving the agenda and minutes) was a report of the Investment Committee. The report included a conversation about what screens the RCA has in guiding what industries they are able to be invested in. There had been a proposal that "firearms and military weapons" be included as a screen. After broad-ranging discussion, the GSC voted to remove "and military weapons" from the screen. Interestingly for me, one of the points of conversation involved the response from the wider assembly at their General Assembly.

Report of the Audit Committee followed.

Then a request from a congregation to be relieved of their assessment responsibilities for the year due to fire. It was interesting to me in the polity difference, that RCA congregations are required to pay an assessment, unlike the ELCA where giving to the wider church is optional.

Next up was a discussion on Ends Policy E:2: Transformed and Transforming.

An RCA staff member reported on the formation of a new center, the Center for Church Ministry Multiplication, which is planned as the equipping arm of the RCA. Its purpose will be multiplication (starting churches) and ministry (strengthening churches). Supporting/challenging these purposes is a focus on Future Church—a focus on “seeing around corners”, looking at innovation and the next generation, and advocacy—race relations, women, and disability concerns being three areas of emphasis.

Executive Limitations—General Secretary Report

The GSC polity includes a series of Executive Limitations that provide a framework within which the General Secretary performs his work. The General Secretary reports on how (or if) he is in compliance with those limitations.

During his reports, there was a long conversation about the struggles of being church staff in a changing time. An HR study was done of GSA (General Synod Assembly) staff, uncovering quite a bit of burnout. The realization was staff was being asked to take on additional work and responsibilities without additional support and in fact with a shrinking staff. GSC considered what role it could take in reigning in the GSA, so that the staff workload remained manageable. This conversation, too, reminded me very much of the struggles we face coming out of the enthusiasm of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and balancing the requests of the assembly vs. the capacity of staff.

There was also conversation about what financial obligations needed to be reevaluated in light of the reduction in churches and thus reduction in funding.

Last order of business on the day was a report from the reconstruction team. They are at the beginning of their work and are currently focused on discerning who God is calling them to be, so that the structure flows from purpose. They just finished reading together, “Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups” by Ruth Haley Barton.

Saturday morning was spent in a training on board governance. The GSC uses a policy governance structure, also known as Carver Governance.

Saturday afternoon started with an opportunity for people to report on updates from their various classes. A Classis, I think, is like an ELCA synod, though they tend to be quite a bit smaller. Most of the reports included grief over the congregations who have left or are in the process of leaving. This was followed by a report from each of the GSC officers.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the ELCA in this important role.

A Fresh Perspective: ELCA Church Council Young Adults

Out of a love for the ELCA and our duty to steward its future, the undersigned submitted this report to be received by the ELCA Church Council as a working document.

Where do Young Adults find Belonging?

We believe that Young Adults find belonging in communities. Members of Gen Z who are old enough to attend church of their own volition fall between the ages of 16-24 and younger Millennials 24-28 are in the midst of some of the most tumultuous times in their lives. From graduating high school and looking for colleges, to college graduations and job searches, to establishing careers and settling roots; this age group is rocked by wave after wave of change.

A sense of community that provides support, is in our view, the most common place where we find belonging. This is because we can both seek help and find support. We can also support those who are going through the same things as us. These communities can come in many forms: clubs, sports teams, classmates, friends, among many others. Our goal is to make similar communities exist across the church.

In the Church?

- A critical point in finding belonging in the church stems from programming that targets young adults. Some places where young people feel like they belong in the church are; Lutheran Summer Camps, National Youth Gatherings, and Youth Group Outings. A sense of community is built from sharing experiences and spending time with those who are at the same stage in life as you.
- In the Word. There is a sense of belonging that can only be found when the Holy Spirit works within us. There is nothing that can compare to the sense of belonging that is found once one comes to the realization they are a child of God.

The Church as an institution, what parts are important, and what needs to survive?

- Message of Jesus is vital for the whole world. The institution helps to keep that going.
- The ELCA's financial future is paramount to continuing the spread of the Gospel.
- The Churchwide Organization's willingness to be bold and embrace change.

What does the ELCA have that the secular culture lacks for young adults?

- We believe our culture is very focused on individualism, and entertainment. The Church provides a Faith that surpasses worldly things. The church can be a refuge from the chaos of everyday life, a place of community around the Grace and Salvation provided to us through Jesus, who creates all things and makes them new.
- Depression among young adults has skyrocketed over the last decade, the constant comparison of oneself to others is rampant, the gospel highlights our uniqueness and celebrates that we are all made in God's image. We are loved by our creator, and he gave his only Son that whoever

believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. This is a message of profound hope that our secular culture cannot provide without Jesus.

- We need to find new ways to convince people that going to worship on Sunday creates community, encourages friendship and family, and gives them a space to have vital and important human interaction.
- True Gospel Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less. Thinking more about how you can draw others to Christ and not yourself. Young people, we believe, want opportunities to show their empathy to the stranger, to love their neighbor. We can help provide those opportunities as a church.

What do large and Successful non-denominational churches have that the ELCA does not that draws young adults to it?

- We see many young people attending these types of churches, what they have is programming and a community for them.
- We appreciate and value the theological and liturgical traditions of the Lutheran tradition. Maintaining these things is quintessential to who we are as Lutherans, it does not need to be an obstacle to growth. Young people want to feel valued, encouraging their participation in these traditional activities can provide the spiritual fulfillment that God provides and feel like they are a part of that tradition rather than just an observer.
- This goes beyond asking one young adult, but fostering an environment of intergenerational community and worship.

The ELCA exists anonymously to young non-lutherans, what can we do to change this?

- We believe that creating opportunities for young people is one of the first steps towards growing the church's younger population.
- Many churches do not have opportunities for young people to gather, proactively creating these spaces with the help of the already existing young adults and youth will encourage growth.

How does a congregation with few young adults and youth grow a community?

- We believe that the synodical level is the perfect medium for fostering growth amongst young people. Churches and congregations can collaborate to hire youth directors, develop programs for young adults and create this community across local areas, regions, and towns.
- Synods can begin or continue the practice of hiring synodical youth and young adult directors to help facilitate this growth.
- Many towns have several small churches that have worked together to form parishes and share pastors, sharing youth activities with anchor churches can provide a central location for youth and young adults to go and form the communities they may otherwise be lacking.

What obstacles does the ELCA Face?

- We believe one of the main problems is the lack of public understanding of what we stand for, who we are, or even what we do. The amount of social justice work, outreach, and other amazing ministries we have aren't well known to the average young adult
- We believe that often the work of the church is released in an "ELCA Echo Chamber" where it is only seen by ELCA members, and not even all of them
 - Social media posts often are low in terms of engagement, and engagement outside of the church is often non-existent
 - The ELCA Church Finder contains outdated information on congregations, and often does not even include complete information on listed congregations
- The ELCA lacks the needed rostered ministers to fill pastoral roles as is, thus making it difficult to dedicate additional to Youth/Young Adult Centered rostered leaders.
- While the Churchwide Organization welcomes change, and embraces it, the same can not be said on a synod and church level.
- While some congregations have young adults to help foster this growth, a significant number simply do not, which makes change in this direction much more difficult.

What works?

- We have seen as a council the success that models such as the Abide program provide which are targeted to, led by, and attended by young adults. With the mission of reaching young people in mind, the ELCA can provide outreach in the same manner. The Lutheran movement cannot move in a more young and diverse direction without the guidance and outreach done by new, young, and diverse people.
- Many current Lutherans including members of ELCA Church Council came to know the Lutheran tradition through the work of Lutheran Campus Ministries. "University-aged" adults are able to establish their own routines, social groups, work environments, and educational paths for the first time in their lives. This independence provides an opportunity for the ELCA to access young adults in these spaces in ways that may not be expected.
 - The ELCA should be a church that not only welcomes, but invites people that may have been harmed by previous encounters with religion, those that have never known religion, and those that may be planning on creating distance from the Church. This will require us to transcend antiquated stages of career advancement. This is often easier replicated in environments that are naturally homogenous in age, but should be extended to spaces that have been excluded from the traditional experience such as community colleges and non-higher education centered spaces.
 - The ELCA should be showing up in the places that young adults and college students already are. This can include supporting student-led initiatives, *especially* those with no connection to existing ELCA ministries (ie. kids mentorship clubs, environmental care groups, and racial justice oriented organizations).
- Church Camps give young adults the opportunity to grow in their faith, while sharing it with youth, and children. It provides community and support while they witness the gospel. Renewing

and improving the ELCA's relationship with LOM and coordinating with them to grow the church.

- Synod level support for youth programs can be an extremely useful tool for congregations who have few young adults/youth in attendance. Combining programming between congregations in this situation can result in the retention of these critical young adults rather than seeing them migrate to other churches that do have the programming to support them.
- **Thinking Boldy.**

What doesn't work?

- Only thinking of maintaining what we have without thinking about how we can grow.
- Complacency, we shouldn't be content with the state of the church, God's Gospel is for everyone, now.
-

What could work?

- Grants from Churchwide to allow synods and congregations to allocate more resources to young adult and youth programming
- Increased presence on social media.
 - Much of social media that is accessed by youth and young adults is quite literally in one day and out the next. To increase the spread and relevance of content, ELCA content targeted at young people should be created by youth and young adult ambassadors.
 - If our entire target demographic exists in one place, which is social media (Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook) this is where we should be outreaching. Growing a social media presence can grow the knowledge of who the ELCA is, why we exist, and what we do.
- Meeting people where they are by improving our presence on College Campuses, advertising specifically to young people. Being fishers of people doesn't mean leaving your boat parked in the dry dock.

Conclusion:

We hope that this document serves as a framework and foundation for future discussions on this important goal. The above thoughts are a collection of ideas from 6 youth and young adult members of the ELCA Church Council. We want to continue to have substantive discussion on all of the topics we have discussed here. We also think it is important to include a diverse range of voices as we continue this important work. We thank you for your prayerful consideration.

Blessings,

Noah Roux

Keoni Newman

Divine

Merritt Zesinger

Ismael Danforth

Alyssa Cobb

The AD Team ELCA Constitution 15.11.02

Administrative Team. The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration, along with the executive directors of the churchwide units, shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop may appoint up to two additional members to the administrative team for terms of one year with the possibility of reappointment. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in providing leadership, planning, oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.

Highlights from:

(other members include Secretary Sue Rothmeyer, Treasurer Lori Fedyk, and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton)

Louise Johnson: Administration

People Solutions (HR): Rhondean Johnson

Christian Community and Leadership: Phil Hirsch

Innovation: Iain Chester

Development: Rachel Wind

Service and Justice: Rafael Malpica

Future Church

Future Church means understanding the needs of our *current* and *future* members

vision

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

purpose

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

goal

*Share the story of Jesus and the ELCA
by engaging with 1 million new people
as we grow the church together.*

*"We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward
it. The process is not yet finished, but it is going on. This is not
the end, but it is the road." –Martin Luther*



Developing a Roadmap

Thanks to a generous donor, the ELCA is embarking on a project with the Barna Group and Fuller Leadership Formation to conduct research, guide leaders, and develop a roadmap to reaching the goal of 1 million new, young, and diverse people. We're currently in the listening phase of the 3-year partnership.

70-20-10: Becoming an Innovative Organization, but first...

Shifting the way we operate to reflect our vision, purpose, and goal by allocating our time and budget to:

70% committed to our CORE to supporting the ongoing work of the church

20% committed to ADJACENT work, which is existing ministries reshaped to reach new, young, and/or diverse people

10% committed to NEW work, which are new ministries developed to reach new, young, and/or diverse people



Discovering that there are too many operating priorities. We will be working to identify them (including some sense of the time and resources they take) and design a process for making a recommendation to you to prioritize our work.

Evaluation of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

ELCA Office of the Secretary
November 2022

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CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
August 8-12, 2022
Columbus, Ohio

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Evaluation of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

Executive Summary

Findings from the 2022 survey of voting members at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, conducted by ELCA Office of the Secretary

Key Findings

1. Most voting members reported being well-prepared for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
2. The leading determinant of voting members' feelings of preparedness was having served at a previous Churchwide Assembly.
3. Efforts by synods to support their voting members substantially impacted voting members' feelings of preparedness.
4. Some voting members reported that more information about the agenda items on which they should focus most attention would have helped their preparation.
5. Most voting members reported that much was accomplished at the Churchwide Assembly and that they were an integral part of the work.
6. One of the most important determinants of voting members' connection and engagement with the work of the Churchwide Assembly was their sense of preparation in advance of the Assembly.
7. Although most voting members reported that CWA Guide functioned well, a substantial proportion wanted more time and instruction to navigate documents effectively.
8. Through their participation in the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, voting members overwhelmingly felt connected to the mission and ministry of the church.

Introduction

Overview of the Section

- Purpose of the study
- Desired outcomes of the study (research questions)
- How the study was conducted

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly convened in Columbus, Ohio, August 8-12. Gathering under the theme, Embody the Word, voting members participated in plenary sessions and worship while acting on key legislative business and hearing reports on the work of the church.

The ELCA churchwide organization, specifically the Churchwide Assembly Planning Team, sought to know more about voting members' feelings of preparation, their connection and engagement in the work of the Assembly, and their connection to the mission and ministry of the wider church.

The Churchwide Assembly Planning Team will use the results of this survey to identify where their efforts and those of others were most successful and where there are opportunities for improvement. The team will use and share these results as they and others plan for the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly Planning Team sought to learn about the experiences of voting members at the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The Team will use and share this information in its effort and the efforts of others to improve the experiences of voting members at future Assemblies.

Introduction

Desired Outcomes of the Study

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly Planning Team authored the CWA Evaluation questionnaire in partnership with the ELCA Congregation Statistics Analyst (Office of the Secretary).

The questionnaire sought to find answers to the research questions included at right. The answers to these questions provide information about the experience of voting members before, during and after the Churchwide Assembly.

Research Questions:

1. How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?
2. How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?
3. How connected to the mission and ministry of the wider church did voting members feel? What do they intend to share about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly with their home congregations?

Introduction

How the Study Was Conducted

The ELCA Congregation Statistics Analyst constructed an online version of the CWA Evaluation questionnaire. It was distributed via email to all voting members of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, upon returning the iPad issued to them for use during the Assembly.

Of the 826 voting members present at the Assembly, 399 completed the entire questionnaire, for a response rate of 48%.

- 65% of respondents were lay members; 32% were Ministers of Word and Sacrament; and 2% were Ministers of Word and Service.
- 58% identified as women; 40% identified as men.
- 83% identified as white; 15% identified as persons of color.
- 54% were 55 years old or older; 7% were 24 years old or younger

Voting members of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly were invited to complete the CWA Evaluation questionnaire. 399 of 826 voting members present (48%) completed the entire questionnaire.

Key Findings

Overview of the Section

Highlights key findings from the evaluation of the Churchwide Assembly

Key Findings

Most voting members reported being well-prepared for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

72% of voting members indicated they were well-prepared to participate in the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

The verbatim comments at right represent the voices of voting members.

“I really appreciated the pre-assembly events and information that I received ahead of the assembly via e-mail.”

“It's amazing how much info was available to us electronically. The churchwide staff did a remarkable job in this area and more.”

“I'm so glad to have had all of those reports! Although I was not able to read all of them, I read about 70% and they helped tremendously.”

Key Findings

The leading determinant of voting members' feelings of preparedness was having served at a previous Churchwide Assembly.

Eighty-nine percent of voting members who served at a previous Churchwide Assembly indicated they felt well-prepared for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, compared to 63% of first-time voting members who said the same.

The verbatim comments at right illustrate the feelings of both those who had previously served and those for whom the 2022 Churchwide Assembly was their first.

*“The experience of **four previous Churchwide Assemblies**, plus thoroughly reviewing the pre-assembly packet, helped me feel prepared.”*

*“As someone for whom this was their **first assembly** the amount of information was overwhelming.”*

*“Perhaps an email directed specifically at **new voters**, saying in big, bold text with flashing lights ‘YOU NEED TO WATCH THESE VIDEOS!!!’ would be appropriate.”*

Key Findings

Efforts by synods to support their voting members substantially impacted voting members' feelings of preparedness.

Although previous participation provided the best preparation, feeling supported by one's synod added incremental value.

Nearly 80% of voting members who felt that they met the right number of times with people from their synod said they felt well-prepared for the Churchwide Assembly. Only 60% of those who wanted to meet more with others from their synod said they felt well-prepared.

The verbatim comments at right show the importance of synods' efforts to prepare and support their voting members.

“All the info I got pre-assembly came from my synod VP, and it was extremely helpful. I felt more prepared than others I spoke to from other synods.”

“Outstanding! I felt my questions were heard and the response was always professional as well as immediate. Having that connection from a valued point person in our synod, as well as the connection with our bishop made me feel less anxious as well as more prepared.”

Key Findings

Some voting members reported that more information about the agenda items on which they should focus most attention would have helped their preparation.

Among voting members who reported that the emails about the agenda were not effective, less than half reported feeling well-prepared overall for their preparation in the Churchwide Assembly.

The verbatim comments at right reflect some of difficulties experienced by voting members in their efforts to prepare for the items on the agenda.

“For a first-time member, everything regarding voting and materials was confusing and hard to digest.”

“More on the types of legislation we would consider and how to focus my time in preparation.”

“The voting process, and how to focus/prioritize the materials.”

“I found that the app could have been updated earlier with materials, particularly around what was in the plenary sessions so that those of us with less experience could ask appropriately-timed questions to our Bishops.”

Key Findings

Most voting members reported that much was accomplished at the Churchwide Assembly and that they were an integral part of the work.

Eighty-six percent of voting members reported feeling that the Churchwide Assembly accomplished a lot during its time together.

Nearly the same proportion (85%) indicated that they felt integral to the work of the Assembly.

The verbatim comments at right reflect the degree of connection and engagement voting members felt to the work of the Assembly.

“I appreciated the roles I was able to fill and the opportunities and experiences I encountered at the Churchwide Assembly.”

“The assembly was really well done. Bishop Eaton was remarkably poised, gracious and capable in her non-anxious leadership. The Memorials Committee was responsive to the interests of the voting members. My apprehension at arrival was turned to confident peace almost immediately. These things affected my engagement in a very positive way.”

Key Findings

One of the most important determinants of voting members' connection and engagement with the work of the Churchwide Assembly was their sense of preparation in advance of the Assembly.

Ninety percent of the voting members who reported feeling well-prepared for the Churchwide Assembly said they were an integral part of the work of the Assembly.

Among voting members who were not well-prepared, only 66% said they felt integral to the work of the Assembly.

The verbatim comments at right reflect some of the ways that preparation impacted engagement and connection in the work of the Assembly.

“I felt our synod staff and their attitude and their willingness to make us feel like a team was crucial to my ability to fully participate at the Churchwide Assembly.”

“The biographical information on possible Vice Presidents was very helpful as well as constitutional amendments and memorials.”

“I appreciated the electronic materials so I could read or use accessibility on my devices to hear audio of the materials when reading was difficult.”

Key Findings

Although most voting members reported that CWA Guide functioned well, a substantial proportion wanted more time and instruction to navigate documents effectively.

Most voting members found it easy to read and navigate through the pages of a document in CWA Guide (81% and 72%, respectively).

However, finding documents was more challenging. Sixty-three percent of voting members reported receiving adequate instructions on finding documents in CWA Guide; sixty-two percent said that information was easy to find in CWA Guide; and less than half (45%) said they were given sufficient time to find documents.

The verbatim comments at right reflect some of this ambivalence about the CWA Guide.

“The guide was very robust and great info - but there was so much, the chair or leader on dais needs to give section, title, page info BEFORE jumping into substantive discussion. Half the time folks were lost on the ‘where’ - not the ‘what’.”

“The guide itself was about as good as it could be. However, during the assembly it would have been nice if they had shared what section and page number we were to view (maybe even posting on the screens?).”

Key Findings

Through their participation in the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, voting members overwhelmingly felt connected to the mission and ministry of the church.

Nearly all voting members (98%) indicated that important work is being carried out across the ELCA.

Additionally, most voting members reported their knowledge of the breadth of the work of the ELCA was deepened through their participation in the Churchwide Assembly (91%), and that they have a better knowledge of the interconnectedness of the three expressions of the ELCA (congregation, synod, and churchwide) (82%).

The verbatim comment at right includes sentiments shared by many voting members.

“The voting members deliberated over significant issues such as relations with tribal organizations, pastoral salary equity, privacy (abortion), election of officers, constitutional amendments, and higher education. I was proud to be a member of the ELCA as voters respectfully debated potentially contentious issues...I was pleased to be a part of a denomination that seeks to broaden its outreach through practices of inclusion, equity, and diversity. I was exhilarated by a body that initiates partnerships with other faith communities. The Assembly leaders gave voice respectfully to a diversity of opinions; presented strong leaders for election to guide future development of the church; and incorporated powerful moments of worship and song.”

Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Overview of the Section

Provides frequencies and analysis of responses focusing on preparation for the Assembly

Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

To answer these research questions, voting members were asked a global question about how well-prepared they felt for the Churchwide Assembly.

Voting members were also asked about the effectiveness of a variety of methods employed by the ELCA churchwide organization and their synod to prepare them for the Assembly. On a set of statements about each method, voting members provided ratings of:



Effectiveness/Ineffectiveness – The proportion of respondents who agreed that an effort was effective (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), and the proportion of respondents who did not agree that an effort was effective (1 or 2 on a 5-point scale).



Preparedness – The proportion of voting members who felt well-prepared (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) when an effort was effective, and the proportion of voting members who felt well-prepared (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) when an effort was not effective.

Finally, voting members provided more information about their experiences through several open-ended questions.

The methods used to prepare voting members of the Churchwide Assembly included:

- *Emails about registration and logistics*
- *Emails about the agenda*
- *Videos from Bishop Eaton, Secretary Rothmeyer and Interim Vice President Carlos Peña*
- *Virtual Bible studies*
- *Virtual training on CWA Guide*
- *Virtual hearings on budget and legislation*
- *Efforts at the synod level*

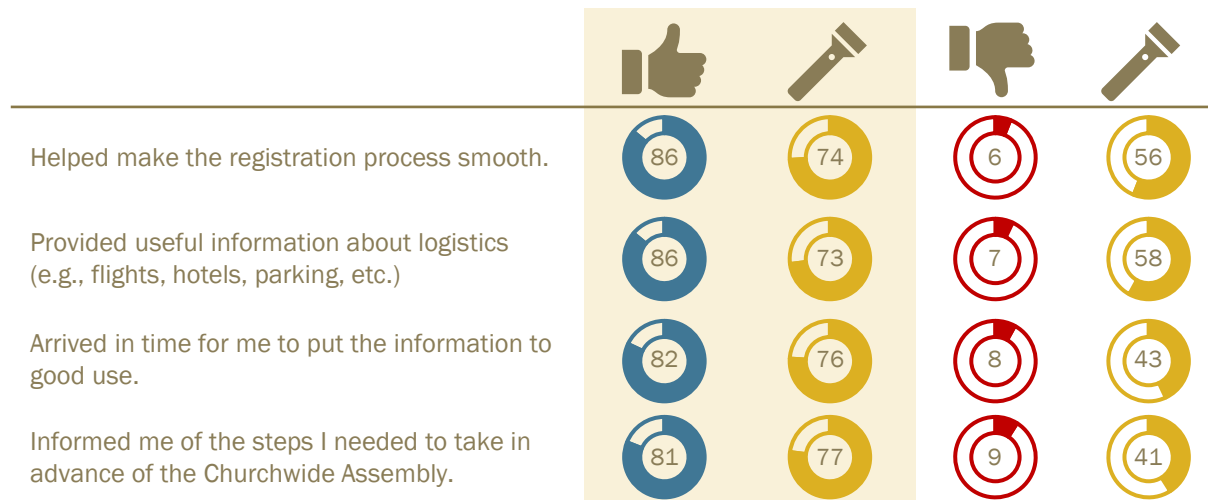
Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Emails about registration and logistics

Most (more than 80%) voting members indicated the emails they received from the ELCA churchwide organization about logistics achieved their goals.

Voting members who said the emails were effective were more likely to say they were well-prepared for the Churchwide Assembly.



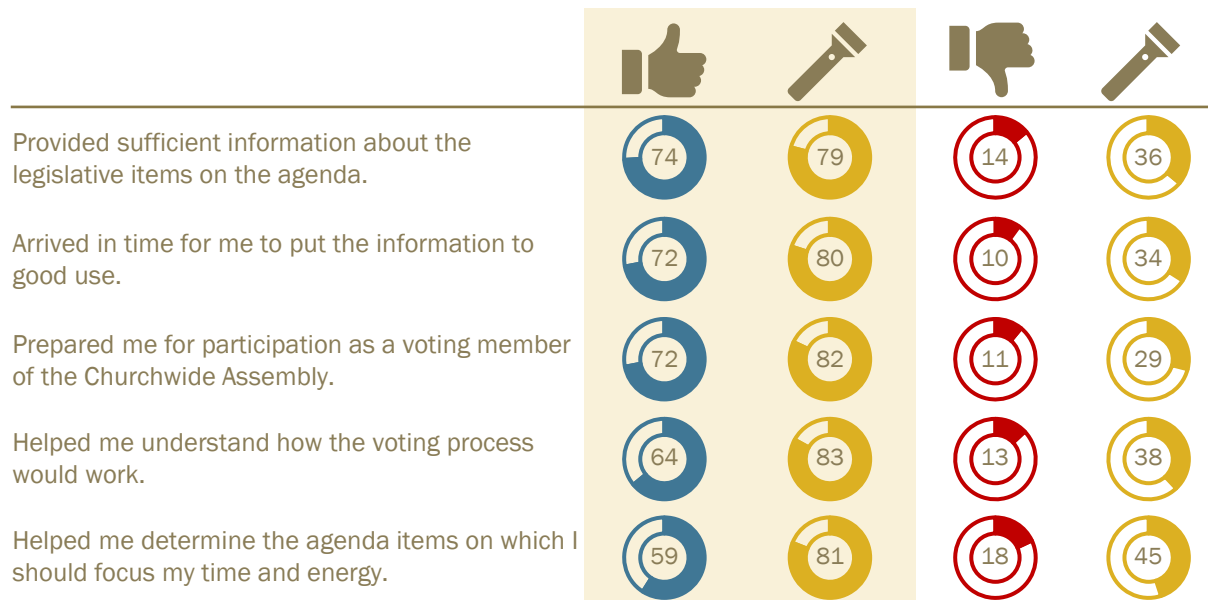
Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Emails about the agenda

Voting members generally found the emails about the agenda provided sufficient information and arrived in time to use the information. However, they were not likely to say that the emails helped them understand the voting process or where to focus their energy.

When these emails were effective, voting members indicated they were well-prepared. Among respondents who said the emails were not effective, less than half felt well-prepared overall.



Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Emails – Communications and materials

Seventy-three percent of voting members said they received the right amount of communications and materials via email.

Twenty-five percent said they would have preferred more communication or materials. Of these, voting members most commonly sought more information about voting and parliamentary procedures, greater clarity overall, more information about the agenda and reports, earlier arrival of materials, and more information for first-time voting members.

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Voting/ Parliamentary procedure (17% of comments) | “An orientation/intro session for those of us inexperienced with Churchwide Assembly and the parliamentary process in general. Perhaps even the opportunity to have a ‘mock session’ for half an hour to practice making amendments, speaking, and such.” |
| Greater clarity (15%) | “I would have preferred a streamlined communication system for churchwide. As it was, I received many different emails from many different places with many different steps to take. It was unnecessarily chaotic and unclear... I didn't necessarily want more emails, but clearer and more streamlined communication in general.” |
| Agenda and reports (14%) | “A full agenda with times so that I could know when specific items were likely to come up.” |
| Earlier arrival of materials (12%) | “It would have been helpful to have the info about booking flights earlier. By the time I received info about flights, they were very expensive and cost the church more than it would have a month or two earlier.” |
| More information for first-time voting members (12%) | “A much more detailed orientation IN ADVANCE of the process and about necessary materials to prepare would have been helpful, especially a glossary of terms. Newcomers and many laypersons need to understand some of the jargon, such as the term “memorials.” I searched for action papers and resolutions but did not know that's what the memorials are.” |

Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

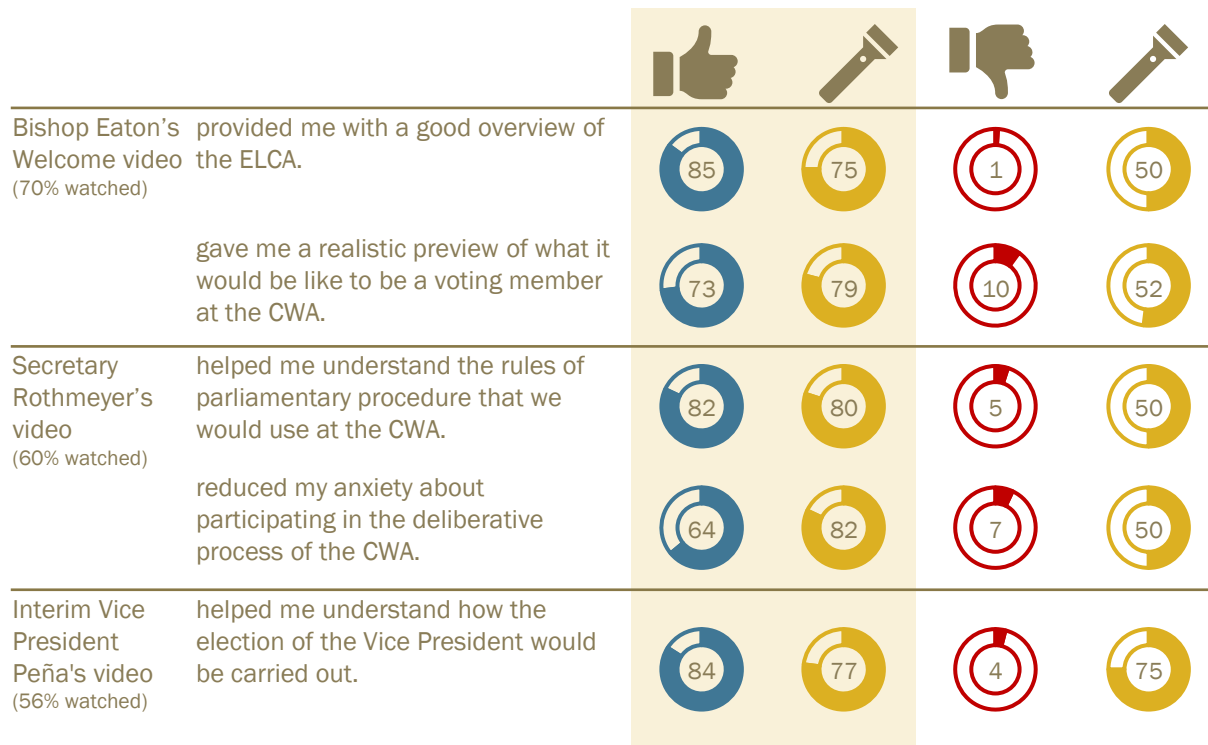
Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Pre-Assembly videos

Pre-Assembly videos were watched by a majority of voting members. Generally, voting members reported that these videos achieved their goals.

Among voting members who reported that the videos did not achieve their goals, ratings of preparation were considerably lower than among voting members who reported that the videos were effective.

Additionally, 75% of voting members said they would likely watch a video about the registration process, if they served again as a voting member.



Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

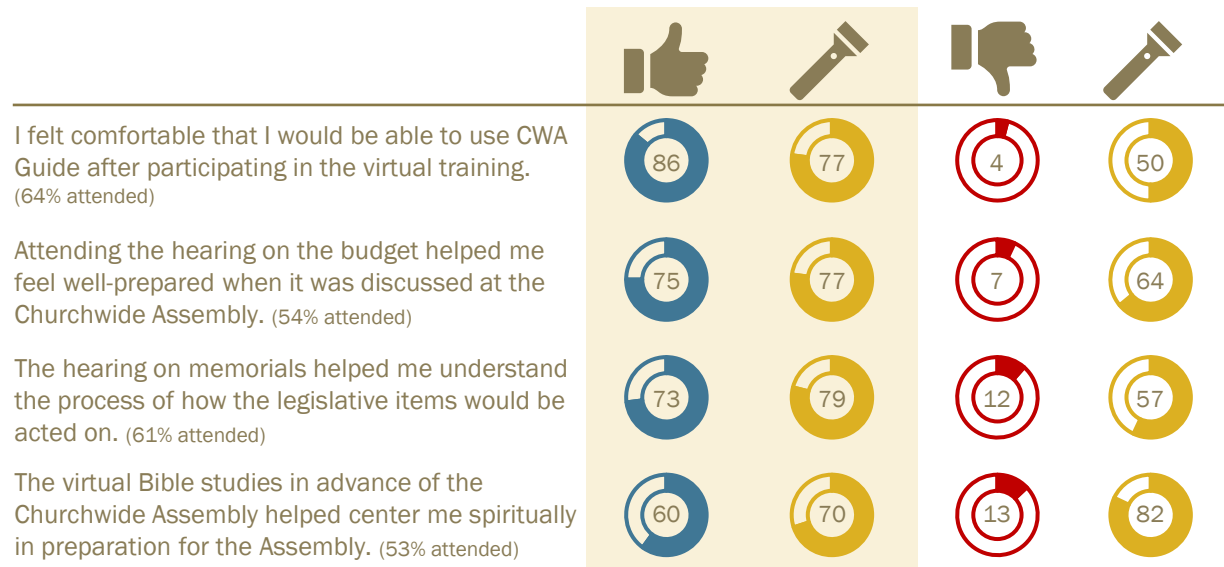
Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Pre-Assembly virtual events

Between 1/2 and 2/3 of voting members participated in at least one pre-Assembly virtual event.

The CWA Guide training was rated most effective by voting members, and the Bible studies were seen as least effective.

The largest gap in overall preparedness was seen among those who felt comfortable after the CWA Guide training and those who did not.



Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Pre-Assembly videos and events

Thirty-four percent of voting members provided additional feedback about the pre-Assembly events and videos.

Thirteen percent of these comments were general positive remarks and thanks.

The remaining comments largely fell into five categories:

- Lack of information about the videos and events
- Need for longer lead time
- Schedule conflicts
- Issues with presentation format
- Requests for additional training

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Did not receive complete information about videos/events (16% of comments) | <p>“I either did not see—or did not receive—emails about the pre-Assembly hearings about the budget and memorials. I did not hear about them until I arrived at the Assembly. If possible, it may be helpful if separate reminder emails are sent out for these hearings in the future.”</p> <p>“I did not know about the videos from the Bishop, Secretary, or Vice President, so I did not watch them.”</p> |
| Longer lead time (11%) | “Having [the events] a bit earlier would have helped ease the time crunch of preparation.” |
| Schedule conflicts (8%) | “The timing of the hearings made it difficult for me to attend or listen to the recordings, due to work commitments/travel. One week further in advance would have helped me considerably.” |
| Presentation format (8%) | “Virtual hearings are a poor substitute for in-person hearings. They are fine as ‘webinars’ or information sessions, but they don’t permit voting members to meaningfully engage.” |
| Request for additional pre-Assembly training (7%) | “I think one of the pre-Assembly hearings should have been a mock meeting to demonstrate and practice parliamentary procedure with our additional rules and guidelines. For example, someone could make an amendment and then walk through filling out the form, have some debate, and then demonstrate a point of privilege or calling the question.” |

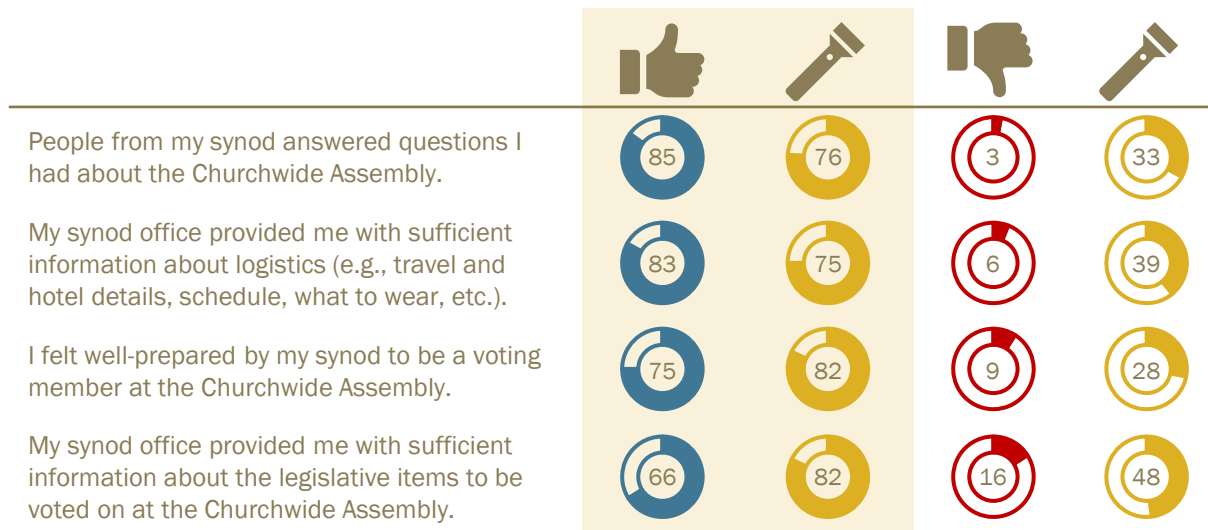
Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Synod support

Voting members generally reported that people in their synod helped them feel prepared for the Churchwide Assembly. However, a substantial minority would have liked to have more information about the legislative items to be voted on at the Assembly.

Preparation from one's synod was a key determinant in overall feelings of preparation. Those who reported being well-prepared by their synod were considerably more likely to report feeling well-prepared overall.



Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

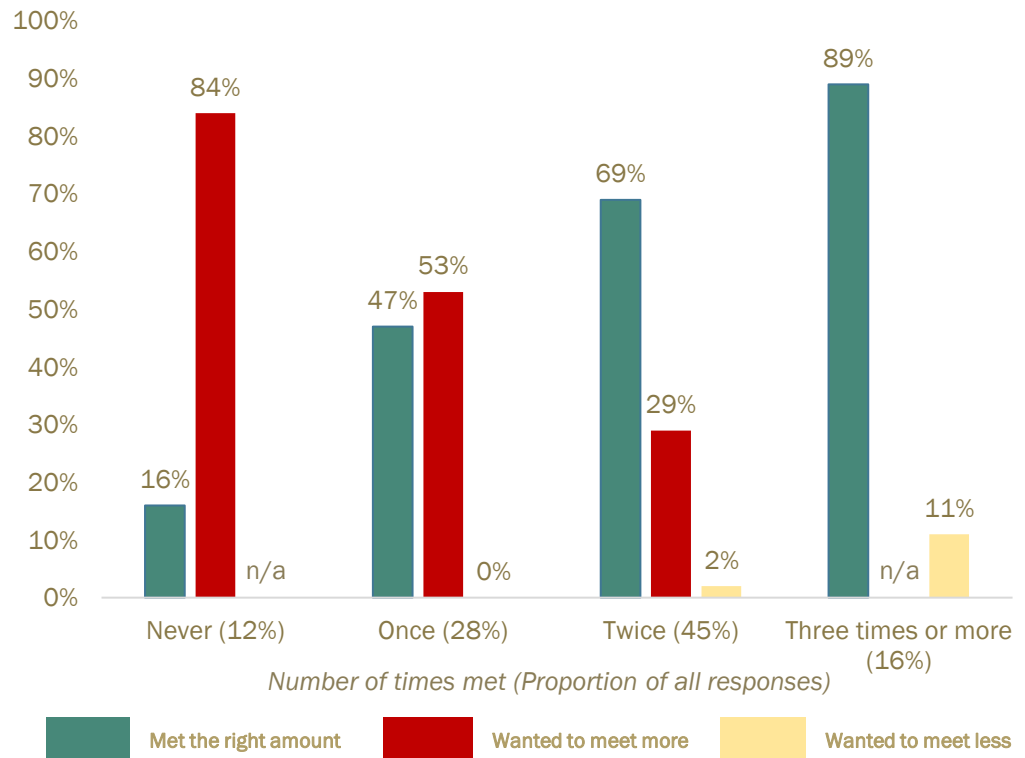
Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Synod support

To prepare for the Churchwide Assembly, most voting members (61%) reported meeting at least twice with others from their synod.

Overall, most voting members (60%) felt they met the right number of times with others from their synod, but 38% wanted to meet more often than they did.

As the number of meetings increased, so did the likelihood that voting members reported meeting the right number of times. Of those who met three times or more, 89% said this was the right amount. Of those who met only once, less than half (47%) believed this was the right number.



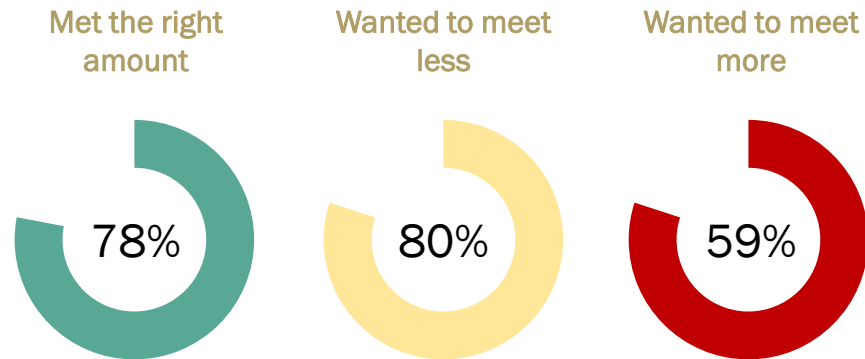
Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Synod support

Voting members who said they met the right number of times with others from their synod, as well as those who wanted to meet less often were equally, and highly, likely to report feeling well-prepared for the Churchwide Assembly.

Voting members who felt they did not meet enough were considerably less likely to report feeling well-prepared.



Survey Results and Analysis: Preparation for the Assembly

Research Question #1: How well-prepared did voting members feel in advance of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly? What contributed to their feelings of preparedness?

Synod support

Twenty-four percent of voting members indicated they would have liked to receive more information from people in their synod to prepare for the Churchwide Assembly.

Of these, the responses overwhelmingly fell into two categories: more preparation for legislative content (32%) and more time to get to know each other (24%).

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| More preparation for legislative content (32% of comments) | <p>“It would have been helpful to discuss legislative items with my synod before attending Churchwide. Our synod Zoom call would have allowed me to ask questions in a more intimate environment.”</p> <p>“I would have liked the opportunity to dive into the memorials and potential amendments so we could strategize in advance and prepare for potential actions to take during plenary.”</p> <p>“A review/discussion about the memorials would have been nice. Even if just a focus on what memorials would most likely be pulled from en bloc for discussion. That would have helped me know what to research and prepare ahead of time.”</p> |
| More time to get to know each other (24%) | <p>“More time to get to know each other ahead of assembly - it was awkward to start assembly with a group of people who didn't know each other much at all.”</p> <p>“We met via Zoom which was convenient, but we should have met in person because most of us had never spoken to each other or directly until we arrived at churchwide.”</p> |

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Overview of the Section

Provides frequencies and analysis of responses focusing on connection and engagement with the work of the Assembly

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

To answer these research questions, voting members responded to two questions about their perceptions of the work accomplished at the Churchwide Assembly, and how integral they felt to that work.

Voting members were asked about a variety of factors around the Churchwide Assembly, which may have impacted their level of connection with the work. On a set of statements about each factor, voting members provided ratings of:



Positivity/Negativity – The proportion of respondents who had a positive rating of an attribute of the Churchwide Assembly experience (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), and the proportion of respondents who had a negative rating of that attribute (1 or 2 on a 5-point scale).



Connection – The proportion of voting members who indicated they were integral to the work of the Churchwide Assembly (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) when their rating of an attribute was positive or when their rating of an attribute was negative.

Finally, voting members provided more information about their experiences through several open-ended questions.

A variety of factors were measured to determine what enhanced or detracted from voting members' connection with and engagement in the work of the Churchwide Assembly. These included:

- *Registration and accommodations*
- *Nominations and elections*
- *Technology*
- *Plenary sessions*
- *Worship*
- *Inclusivity*
- *Pre-Assembly Preparation*

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Registration and accommodations

Voting members provided very positive ratings about the hotel, the registration process, and the directions around the convention center. Meals received considerably lower ratings.

Although few voting members provided negative ratings of their hotels, when they did, they were much less likely to report feeling connected with the work of the Assembly.



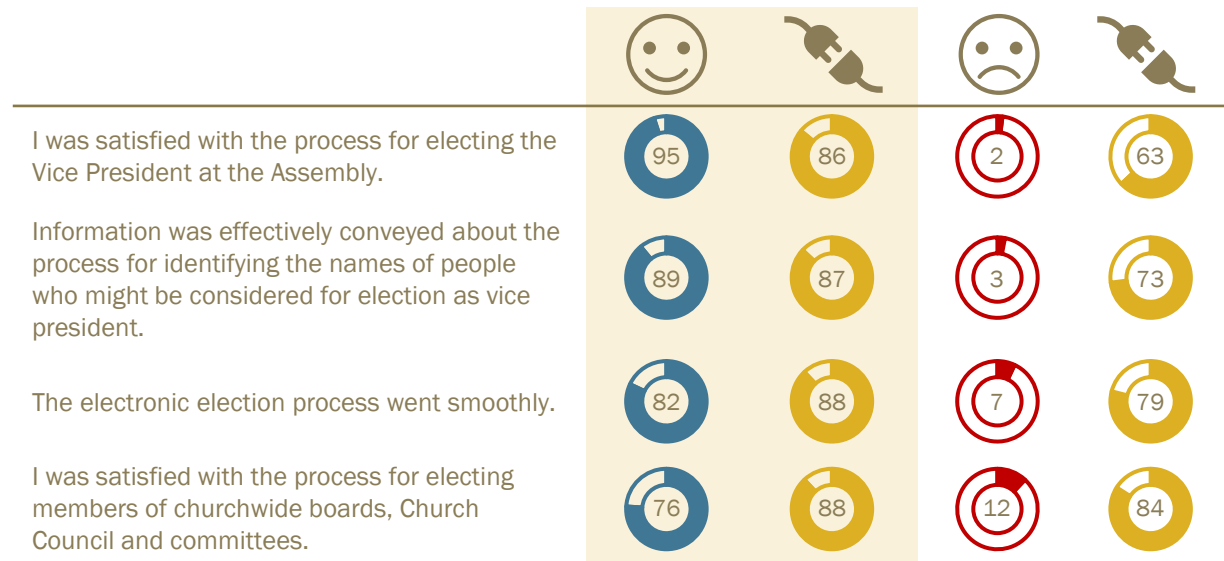
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Nominations and elections

Voting members were generally very satisfied with the election processes.

Although very few voting members were not satisfied with the process for electing the Vice President, when this was the case, these voting members were considerably less likely to feel that they were integral in the work of the Assembly.



Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Nominations and elections

Twenty-one percent of voting members provided comments about the elections process.

Of these comments, 27% complimented how the process was carried out.

Eighteen percent of voting members indicated they would have liked to hear more from the candidates, specifically the final two.

Fifteen percent of voting members indicated they needed more time to submit their votes. Frequently, this was the result of issues with technology (specifically, lag time with the voting machines) (9%).

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Election process went well (27% of comments) | <p>“The instructions, information and material were very well done. It was very obvious that a lot of preparation was done, and the processes were smooth.”</p> <p>“It was a joy to be able to participate in this process. Candidates were exceptionally qualified and any one of the final three would have been amazing.”</p> |
| Wanted to hear more from the candidates (18%) | <p>“I believe giving them the chance to speak more, and on more topics, would have been good.”</p> <p>“I would have liked for the final two candidates to have addressed the assembly for a few minutes each prior to the final ballot.”</p> |
| Needed more time to submit votes (15%) | <p>“More time needed to vote on the common ballot- after lunch I submitted my ballot with only a few mins to spare.”</p> <p>“The voting machines were slow to wake up, and often it felt like we would run out of time to vote.”</p> <p>“The voting machines had a huge lag which made it difficult to vote in time.”</p> |

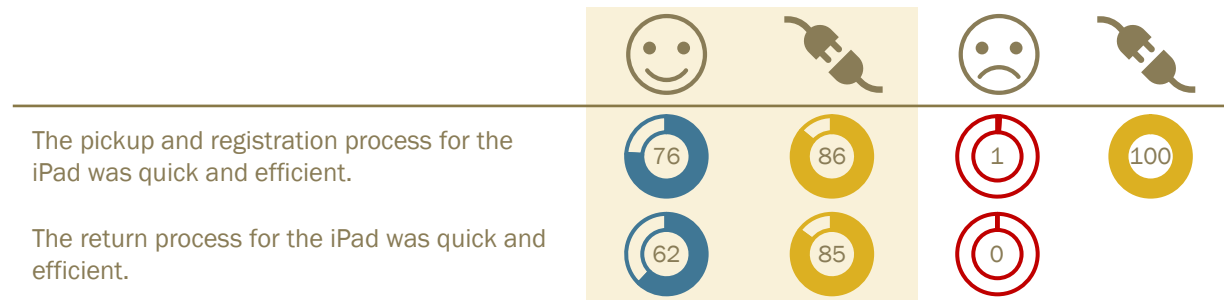
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Technology – Registering and returning iPads

Voting members either provided positive or neutral ratings about the registration and return processes for the iPads.

Voting members' feelings about these processes did not impact how connected they felt to the work of the Assembly.



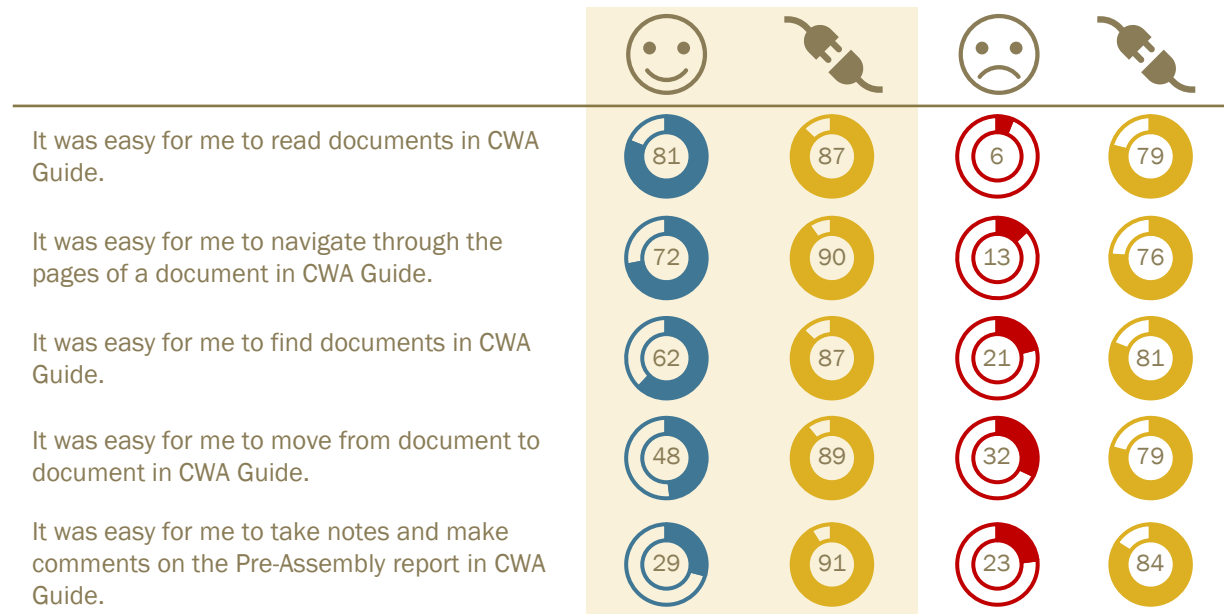
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Technology – CWA Guide – Software

Most voting members reported being able to easily read documents in CWA Guide. They found it harder to navigate from document to document and to take notes on documents.

Those who provided lower ratings of the CWA Guide also tended to provide somewhat lower feelings of connectedness with the work of the Assembly.



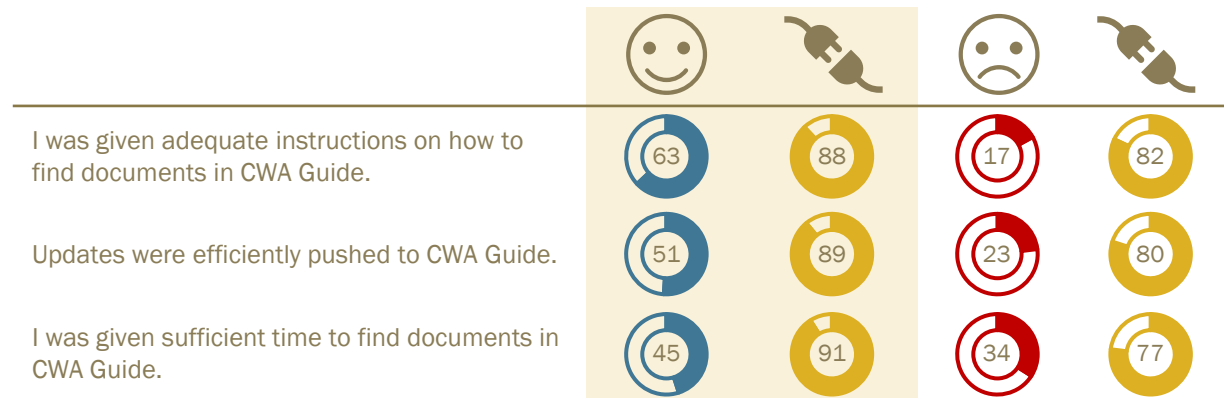
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Technology – CWA Guide – Process

Compared to other aspects of the Churchwide Assembly experience, the processes around the CWA Guide received the lowest positivity ratings.

These lower positivity ratings did not impact how connected voting members felt to the work of the Assembly. There was little difference in how connected voting members felt between those who provided positive and negative ratings.



Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Technology – CWA Guide – Improvements

Overall, 77% of voting members said they did not have any issues with CWA Guide. An additional 18% said they had issues which were resolved within an hour. Two percent said they had issues which were never resolved.

Thirty-nine percent of voting members provided suggestions for improving CWA Guide. Comments generally fell into four categories:

- More instruction on locating documents
- Ability to open or easily navigate between multiple documents
- Additional time for navigation
- Clearer file organization

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| More instruction on locating documents (29% of comments) | <p>“The speakers should have given explicit instructions on where to locate each document we were reviewing for voting.”</p> <p>“More instructions and directions were needed to find the information, especially dealing with memorials and amendments. Give the section and page number where information could be found.”</p> |
| Ability to open or easily navigate between multiple documents (23%) | <p>“It would be nice to have ability to open more than 1 window at a time as some memorials and updates were used simultaneously but I could only open 1 document at a time.”</p> <p>“It was cumbersome not to be able to have multiple documents open simultaneously and have to navigate various parts of the guide to find pertinent information.”</p> |
| Additional time for navigation (12%) | <p>“More time was needed to explain exactly where to find the material being discussed.”</p> |
| Clearer file organization (12%) | <p>“Please make the reports more accessible. It is so difficult to find items buried in reports from committees and you must really know the system to find anything.”</p> |

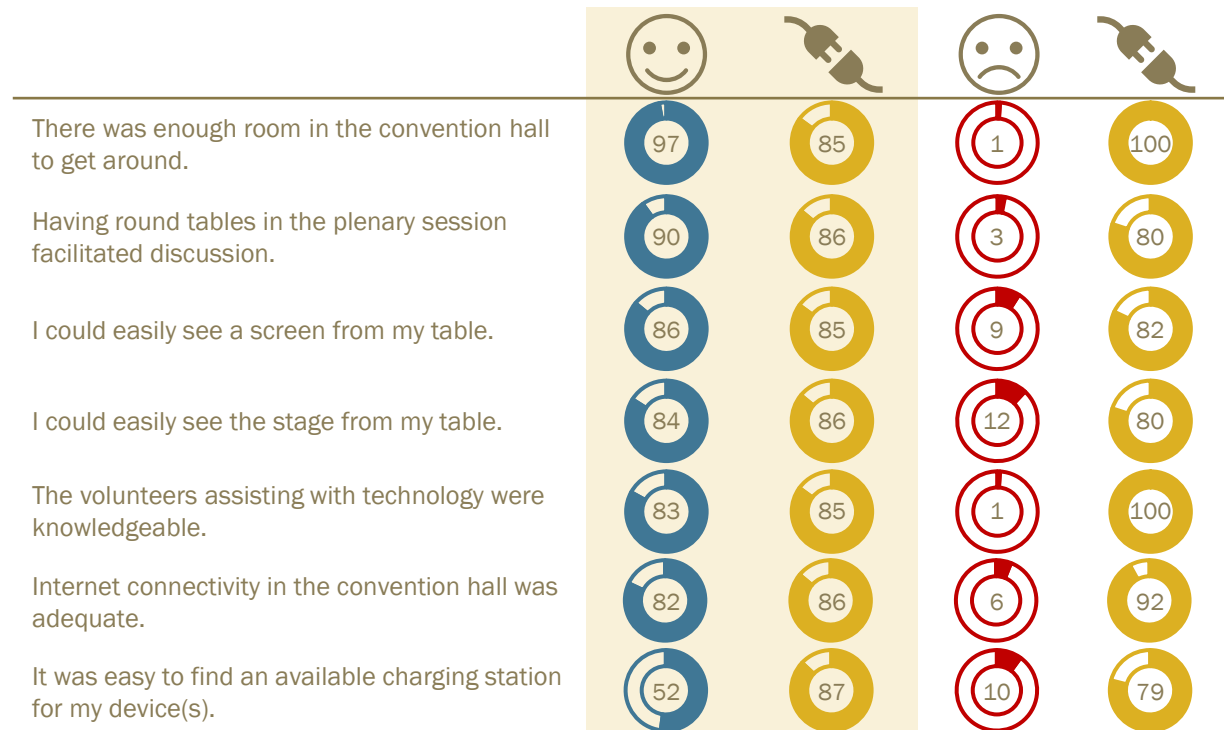
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Plenary sessions

Voting members generally provided positive ratings about the plenary sessions. The aspect where ratings were the lowest was the ease of availability in finding a charging station.

There were no substantial differences in how connected voting members felt to the work of the Assembly related to these aspects of the plenary sessions.



Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

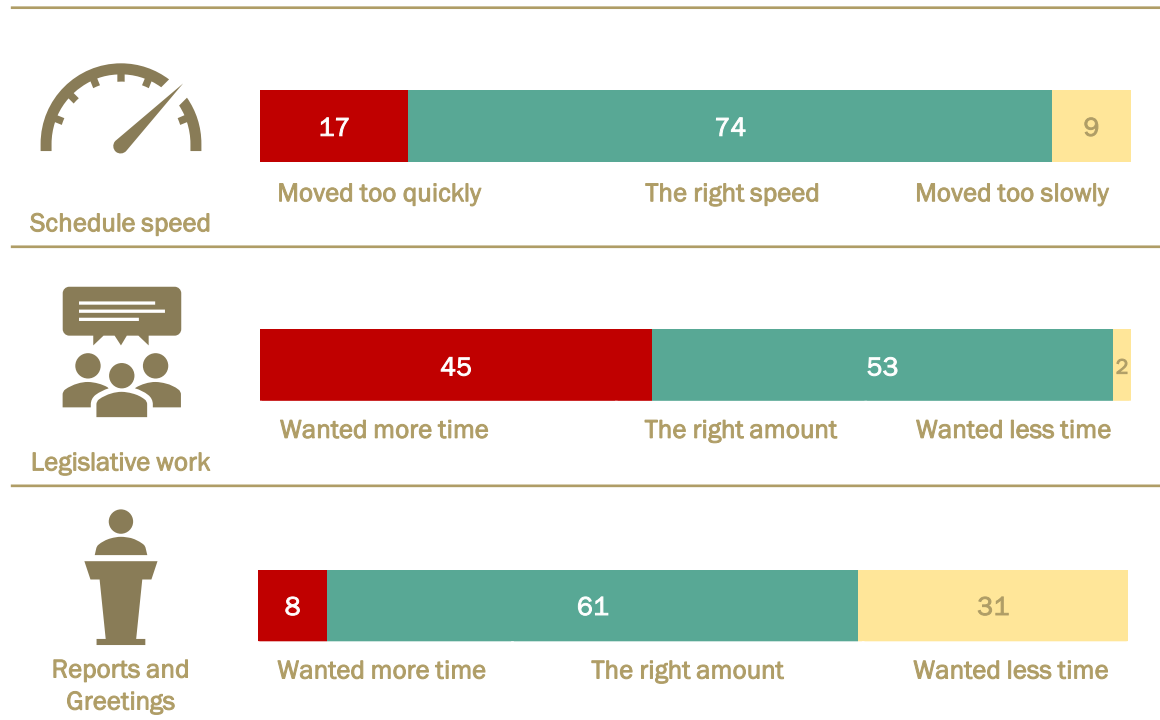
Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Schedule

Seventy-four percent of voting members found that the daily schedule moved at about the right speed. Seventeen percent said it moved too quickly. Nine percent said it moved too slowly.

The majority of voting members reported that the right amount of time was dedicated to legislative work (53%) and to reports and greetings (61%).

However, a substantial minority of voting members would have preferred more focus on legislation (45%) and less attention paid to reports and greetings (31%).



Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Worship

Ninety-three percent of voting members reported that they valued the variety of worship experiences at the Churchwide Assembly.

However, comments from individual voting members about worship were somewhat more mixed.

Even though Holy Communion was held less often than it had been at previous Assemblies, only 16% of voting members said they would have preferred it more often.

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Positive comments about worship | <p>“The worship services were beautifully done, inspiring and relevant to the work of the assembly and church.”</p> <p>“Hearing everybody's voice during songs made a positive impact on me. It was amazing.”</p> |
| Negative comments about worship | <p>“There was too much time allowed for worship relative to the other work of the Assembly. I think small snippets of scripture/reflection/song could have sufficed in the middle days, with a more complete opening and closing worship service.”</p> <p>“Worship during the first night (Monday) was everything that is wrong with the ELCA and what is impeding progress. Too much bland music, no rhythm, the Holy Spirit was missing (except when Guide My Feet continued extemporaneously). Where are the young pastors and worship leaders? Why were we not consulted? We will never engage one million new people because we can't change what we won't acknowledge.”</p> |
| Ambivalent comments about worship | <p>“The music was beautiful, but I was longing to hear some classic hymns that I recognize. And an order of service that I knew. Variety is amazing, but maybe a mixture of classic and new?”</p> <p>“I loved the variety of worship, but they were each far too long. An hour or less is ideal and having worship last 1.5+ hours was TOO much.”</p> |

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Inclusivity

Some voting members raised concerns about the inclusivity of the Churchwide Assembly, particularly around the treatment of languages other than English, accommodations for persons with disabilities, and the need for greater cultural diversity.

These concerns were not mentioned as frequently as others. However, this may not be surprising because they represent the perspectives of non-majority groups.

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Treatment of languages other than English | <p>“We spent a week talking about inclusiveness yet when somebody spoke the language other than English the captioning on the screen just said, ‘language other than English.’”</p> <p>“It was a little tone deaf that the worship service following the apology had several songs that listed Spanish words and were only sung in English.”</p> <p>“Seriously need to have simultaneous translation that goes both ways. Non-English speakers can speak in their primary language that can be translated to English and vice versa. At the very least English and español.”</p> |
| Persons with disabilities | <p>“For visually impaired people, getting around was tricky. Many times, information was only presented visually, both during plenary and worship. This excluded the people who cannot rely on visuals cues or information. Also, for hard of hearing people I didn't see any ASL interpreters. The captions aren't always quick enough or accurate.”</p> <p>“It did not feel like disabled people were thought of in terms of inclusion especially in the language surrounding worship, which was disappointing.”</p> |
| Cultural diversity | <p>“More BIPOC representation on the team that prepares AND stands in front leading the songs. Songs rooted/originating in cultural traditions.”</p> <p>“More variety of music - more music from <i>This Far By Faith</i> would have been better, reflected more cultural equity.”</p> |

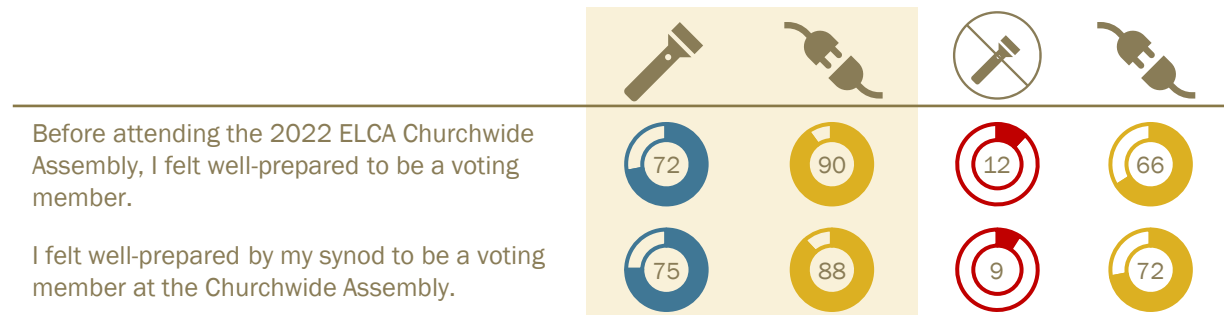
Survey Results and Analysis: Connection and Engagement

Research Question #2: How well did voting members connect with and engage in the work of the Churchwide Assembly? What enhanced their experience? What detracted from it?

Pre-Assembly preparation

Voting members who felt prepared overall were considerably more likely to report being connected with and engaged in the work of the Churchwide Assembly (90%, compared to 66%).

Feeling well-prepared by one's synod also contributed to connection and engagement at the Assembly.



Survey Results and Analysis: Connection to Mission and Ministry

Overview of the Section

Provides frequencies of responses from the CWA Evaluation questionnaire

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection to Mission and Ministry

Research Question #3: How connected to the mission and ministry of the wider church did voting members feel? What do they intend to share about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly with their home congregations?

To answer these research questions, voting members were asked to answer a set of questions about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly and their connection to the wider church. Additionally, voting members were asked what they planned to share with their congregations or communities about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly.

There is important work being carried out across the ELCA.



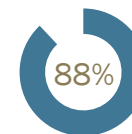
I valued being in fellowship with other Lutherans from around the country.



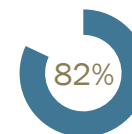
Through my participation in the Churchwide Assembly, my knowledge of the breadth of the work of the ELCA was deepened.



I was inspired by the Churchwide Assembly.



I have a better knowledge of the interconnectedness of the three expressions of the ELCA (congregation, synod, churchwide).



*Percent responding "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" on a 5-point scale.

Survey Results and Analysis: Connection to Mission and Ministry

Research Question #3: How connected to the mission and ministry of the wider church did voting members feel? What do they intend to share about their experience at the Churchwide Assembly with their home congregations?

Forty-nine percent of voting members provided a response regarding what they intended to share with their home congregations.

Comments fell in five primary categories:

- the legislative actions and commitments of the Assembly;
- the positive worship experiences;
- summary of the daily activities;
- sense of the connectedness among congregations;
- information about the breadth of the ELCA

| Comment category | Verbatim comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Legislative actions and commitments (30% of comments) | <p>“I hope to discuss the most complex and contested memorials with my church community, perhaps in a series of one-hour discussions in the next month or two.”</p> <p>“I plan to share the memorials that were passed and have discussions about how we can live into the commitments made during Churchwide Assembly.”</p> |
| Positive worship experiences (23%) | <p>“Super inspiring experience overall and amazing worship experiences.”</p> <p>“I enjoyed the hymnal that was used and the way it was implemented by the worship team. I hope to be able to do the same in my congregation.”</p> |
| Summary of daily activities (12%) | <p>“I will be writing a report of some of what I considered to be highlights.”</p> <p>“I took notes (brief ones) throughout. I will assemble and edit them into a 5-minute presentation for a Sunday soon.”</p> |
| Connectedness among congregations (10%) | <p>“How eye opening it is to see God's work in all the different ways. How we can come together to one body. To love, care and accept one and other.”</p> |
| Breadth of the ELCA (10%) | <p>“We are church together. We are more than a local congregation. We minister to many people in many contexts through the work of the ELCA. Our common work together is important.”</p> |

Christian Community and Leadership



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Information Items

- Spent time getting to know one another.
- Received an introductory presentation from Rev. Philip Hirsch detailing the work of the Christian Community and Leadership home area.
- Received an introductory presentation from Rev. Cherlyne Beck on current Candidacy procedure.
- Received an introductory presentation from Rev. Sara Cutter on the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.

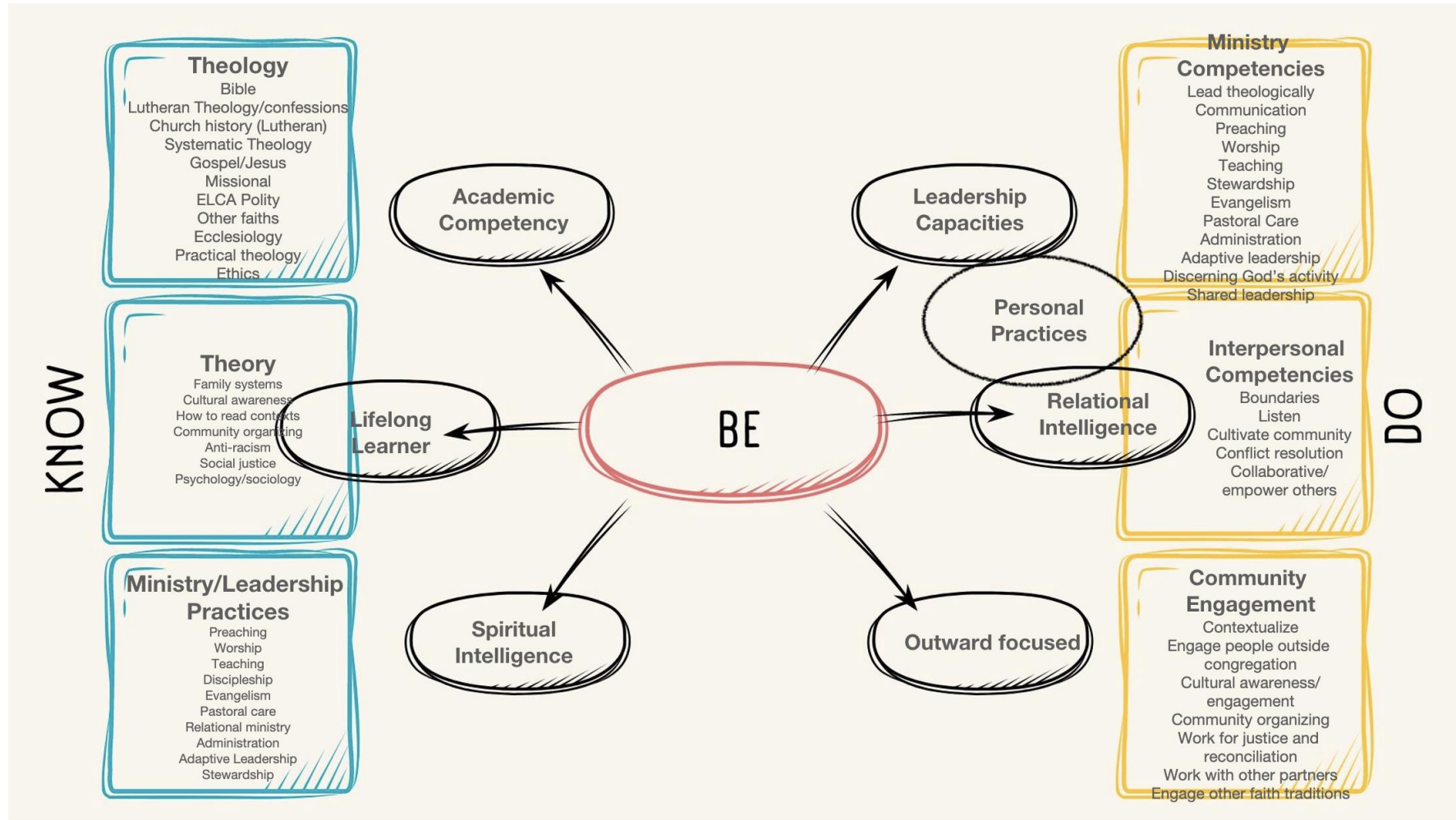
Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group

- Website was established www.elca.org/formation
- Group received over 800 responses to survey and they were able to compile some very interesting data.
- Have a snapshot of the “Best Possible Leader.”

Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group



Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group



More Information Items

- Will also need to create a snapshot of a baseline for a first call leader.
- Received an introductory presentation from Rev. Sandra Chrostowski and Rev. Reuben Duran on Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities.
 - Voted to repeal “Policy on Criteria for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities.”
 - En Bloc item on this will be acted upon this afternoon.

Other En Bloc Items

- Responses to Previous Church Council Actions:
 - To receive the report from the Christian Community and Leadership home area regarding the research work related to discriminatory treatment within the call process and the inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color; To acknowledge and commend the research work that is underway to address inequities in the call process and compensation patterns; and To direct further reports on the related topics be provided to the Christian Community and Leadership Committee through the work occurring on the "Salary Equity in the ELCA" memorial and from the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.

These recommendations are *en bloc* actions for Church Council approval.

Action will come during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Other En Bloc Items

- Responses to Churchwide Assembly

- To receive the response on “Fortifying Urban Ministries in the Underserved Urban Areas” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area; To request a progress report on the work by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.
- To receive the progress report on “Equity and Clarity in the Mission Development Process” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area; To request a progress report on the work by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; and To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.

These recommendations are *en bloc* actions for Church Council approval.

Action will come during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Other En Bloc Items

- Responses to Synod Actions

- To receive the progress report on “Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area; To request an update be provided by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.
- To receive the timeline on “LGBTQ+ Programming for Events” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area; To request a response by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting on LGBTQ-specific programming for pre-gathering events and in-gathering sessions for other communities; and To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.

These recommendations are *en bloc* actions for Church Council approval.

Action will come during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Faith, Society and Innovation Committee



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Information Items

- Introduction to social teaching documents
- Development of Civic Life and Faith Social Statement
- Development of Social Message on Climate Change
- Editorial update on Policies and Procedures Addressing Social Concerns
- Report from Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations
- Report on the Unaltered Augsburg Confession Recommendation
- IR-17 update
- Quality of Call initiative
- Strategic Planning and Innovation Update

En Bloc Items: Social Message Process

To recommend the Church Council approve the following en bloc action:

To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. national gun policy or on child abuse and protection and of considering the authorization of a revision of the “Message on Homelessness” (1990) until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting to allow for a careful and thorough assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances; and To request that the secretary of this church notify the synods of this action.

These recommendations from Faith, Society and Innovation Committee are *en bloc* actions for Church Council approval.

Action will come during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Reconsideration of Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust (2009)

CC Action

To recommend the Church Council approve the following action:

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to manage the initiation of work on the reconsideration of Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust (2009), per authorization of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, by delaying task force initiation to 2024 due to timing, budgetary, and leadership capacity demands.



Service & Justice



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Service and Justice

- Accompany Peoples, Communities and Networks
- Building Resilient Communities
- Witness in Society



MERGE

- Migration justice
- Economic justice
- Racial justice
- Gender justice
- Environmental justice

Becoming Conference



En Bloc Items

Recommended:

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

- Sustainability Issue Paper
- Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper
- Genetics Issue Paper;

To approve the "Privatized Immigration Detention Social Criteria Investment Screen;
and

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

These recommendations from Service and Justice Committee are en bloc actions for Church Council approval.

Action will come during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Report of Treasurer to Church Council

Financial Results as of September 30, 2022

November 13, 2022



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Unrestricted Fund Results

Unrestricted Fund Results thru 9/30/2022

(in Thousands)

| | Actual | Fav (Unfav) Variance From | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| | | Budget | Prior Year |
| Revenue | | | |
| Mission Support | \$24,476 | \$(585) | \$(772) |
| Other | <u>12,677</u> | <u>(1,463)</u> | <u>(1,318)</u> |
| Total Revenue | 37,153 | (2,048) | (2,090) |
| Des/Res Funds Released | 438 | (1,429) | (184) |
| Expenses | <u>(39,356)</u> | <u>5,228</u> | <u>(8,695)</u> |
| Rev in Excess of Exp | \$(1,765) | \$1,751 | \$(10,969) |



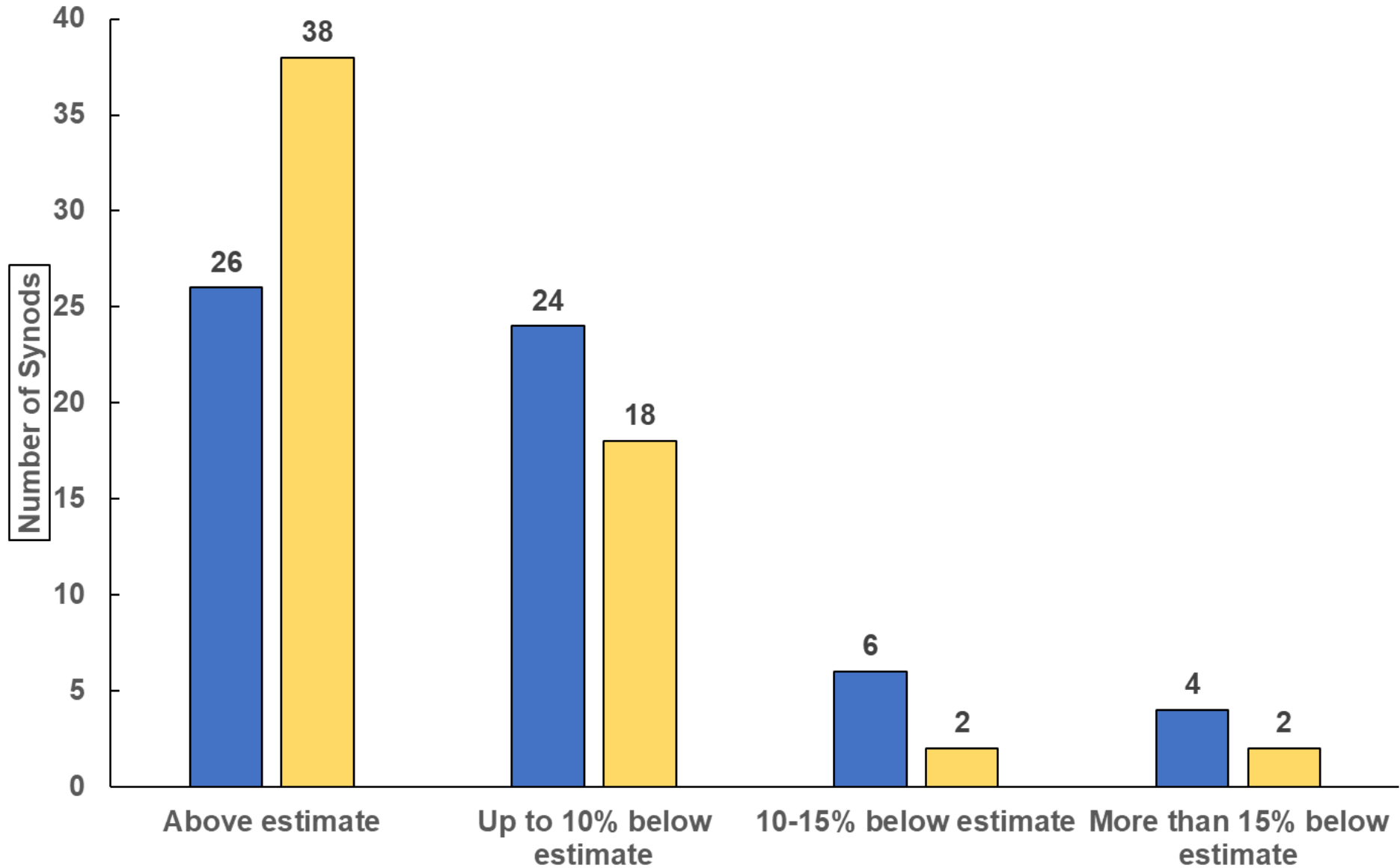
Unrestricted Fund Sources of Revenue (in 000s) 9/30/22

| | Actual | Fav (Unfav) Variance From | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | | Budget | Prior Year |
| Mission Support | \$24,476 | \$(585) | \$(772) |
| Direct Gifts | 5,108 | 310 | 1,577 |
| Investment Income | (1,205) | (2,733) | (3,385) |
| Beq/Trust/Endow Distr | 5,194 | 808 | 495 |
| Rent | 1,161 | (34) | (70) |
| Service Agreements/Other | 1,419 | 186 | 65 |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,000 | --- | --- |
| Release from Rest/Des Fund | 438 | (1,429) | (184) |
| Total | \$37,591 | \$(3,477) | \$(2,274) |

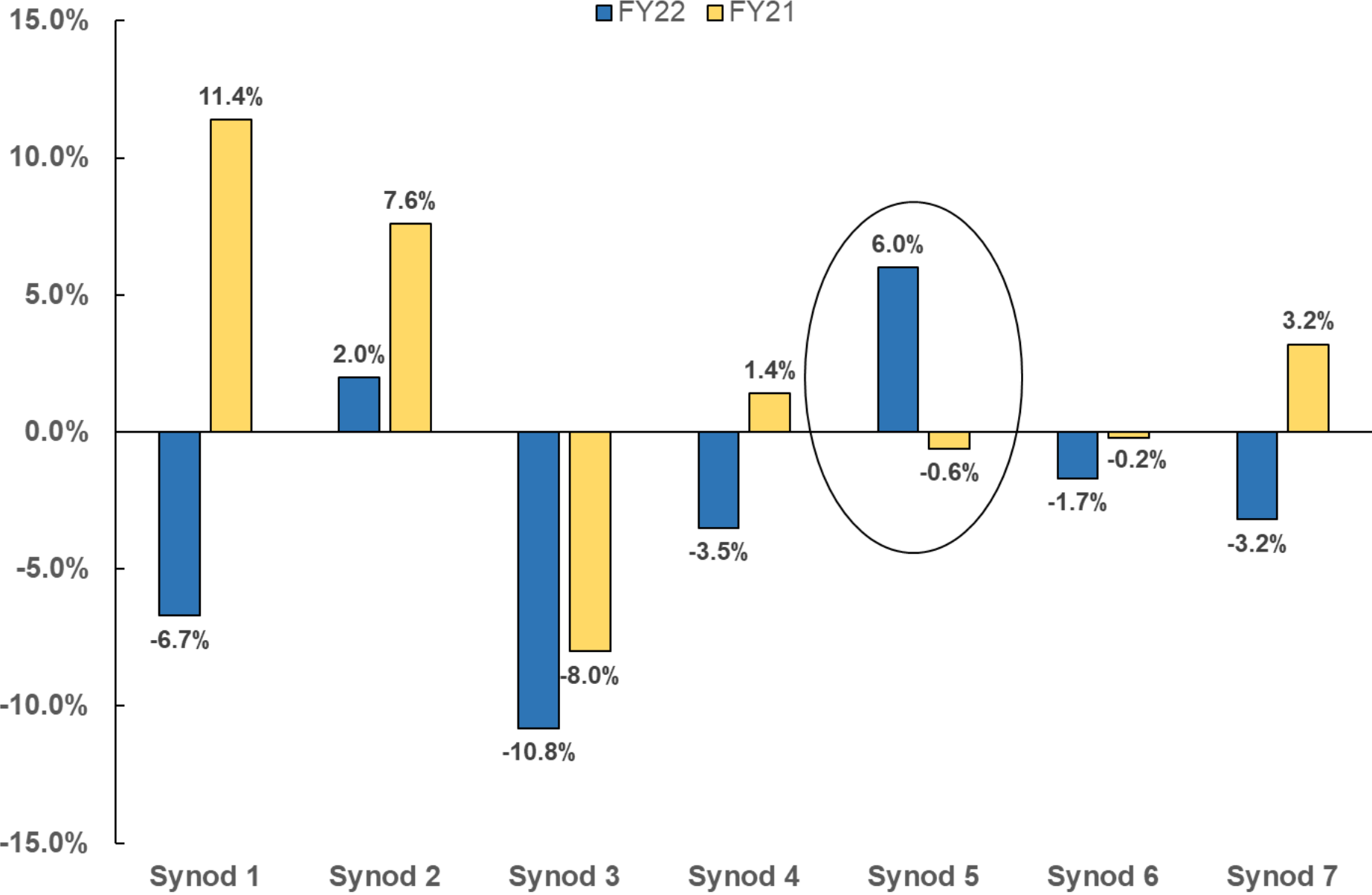
Synod MS Sharing Compared to Budget Estimates - September YTD

(60 of 65 Synods)

FY22 FY21



Synods with MS Intents over \$1 million Comparison through September



Unrestricted Fund Sources of Revenue (in 000s) 9/30/22

| | Actual | Fav (Unfav) Variance From | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | | Budget | Prior Year |
| Mission Support | \$24,476 | \$(585) | \$(772) |
| Direct Gifts | 5,108 | 310 | 1,577 |
| Investment Income | (1,205) | (2,733) | (3,385) |
| Beq/Trust/Endow Distr | 5,194 | 808 | 495 |
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| Service Agreements/Other | 1,419 | 186 | 65 |
| Mission Investment Fund | 1,000 | --- | --- |
| Release from Rest/Des Fund | 438 | (1,429) | (184) |
| Total | \$37,591 | \$(3,477) | \$(2,274) |

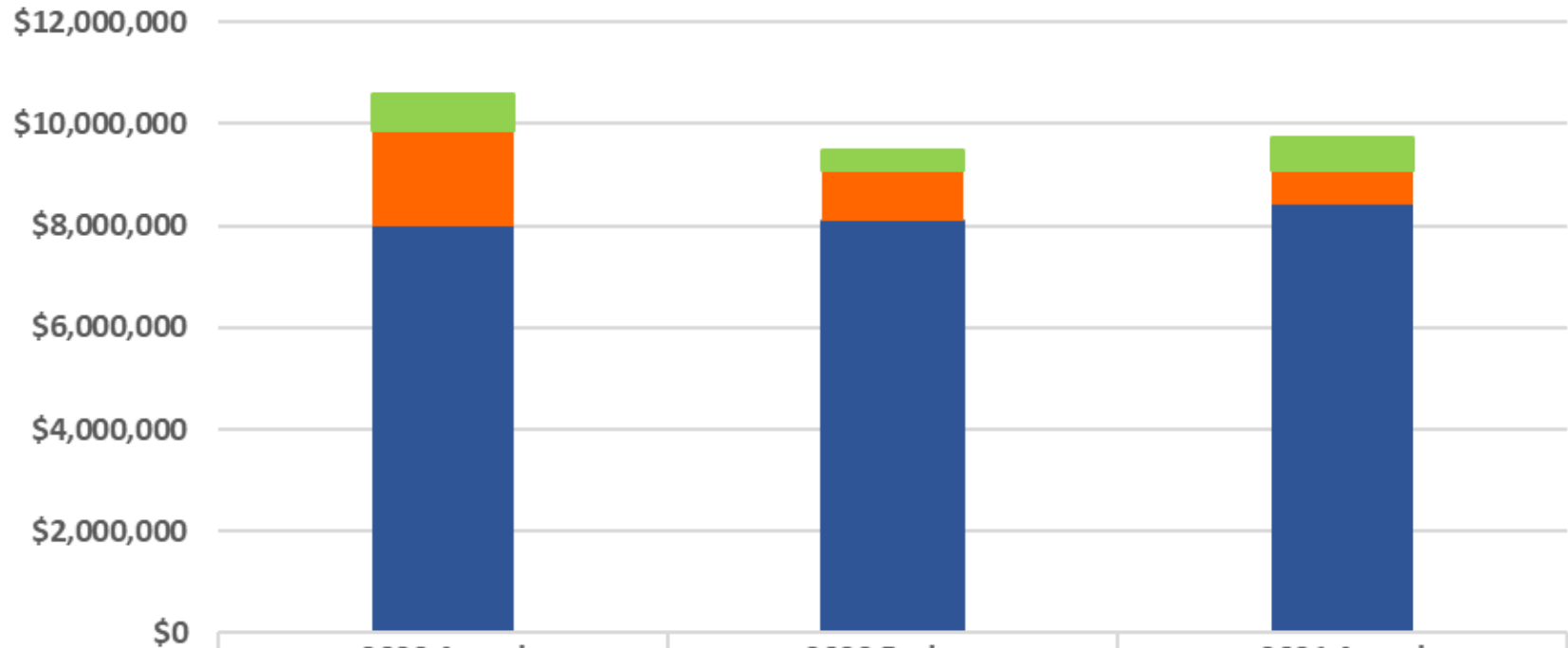
ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION

For the Period Ending September 30, 2022

| | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Spending</u> | <u>Variance</u> | <u>Percent of</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | <u>Expenses</u> | <u>Authorization</u> | <u>Fav (Unfav)</u> | <u>YTD Budget</u> |
| Home Areas | | | | |
| Christian Community & Leadership | 12,393,672 | 15,278,091 | 2,884,420 | 81.1% |
| Service and Justice | 7,369,546 | 8,698,013 | 1,328,467 | 84.7% |
| Innovation | 334,071 | 1,325,928 | 991,857 | 25.2% |
| Operations | | | | |
| Presiding Bishop | 7,701,882 | 7,591,658 | (110,224) | 101.5% |
| Treasurer | 6,103,921 | 6,204,149 | 100,228 | 98.4% |
| Secretary | 3,481,265 | 3,522,285 | 41,021 | 98.8% |
| Gen'l Treasury/Depreciation | 1,971,166 | 1,963,331 | (7,835) | 100.4% |
| TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES | \$ 39,355,522 | \$ 44,583,455 | \$ 5,227,933 | 88.3% |

ELCA World Hunger Income Through September

■ Giving from Individuals, Congregations, & Synods
 ■ Bequest & Trust Income
 ■ Endowment Distributions



| | 2022 Actual | 2022 Budget | 2021 Actual |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| ■ Endowment Distributions | \$709,997 | \$375,000 | \$639,321 |
| ■ Bequest & Trust Income | \$1,878,538 | \$1,000,000 | \$661,205 |
| ■ Giving from Individuals, Congregations, & Synods | \$7,995,012 | \$8,094,861 | \$8,424,268 |

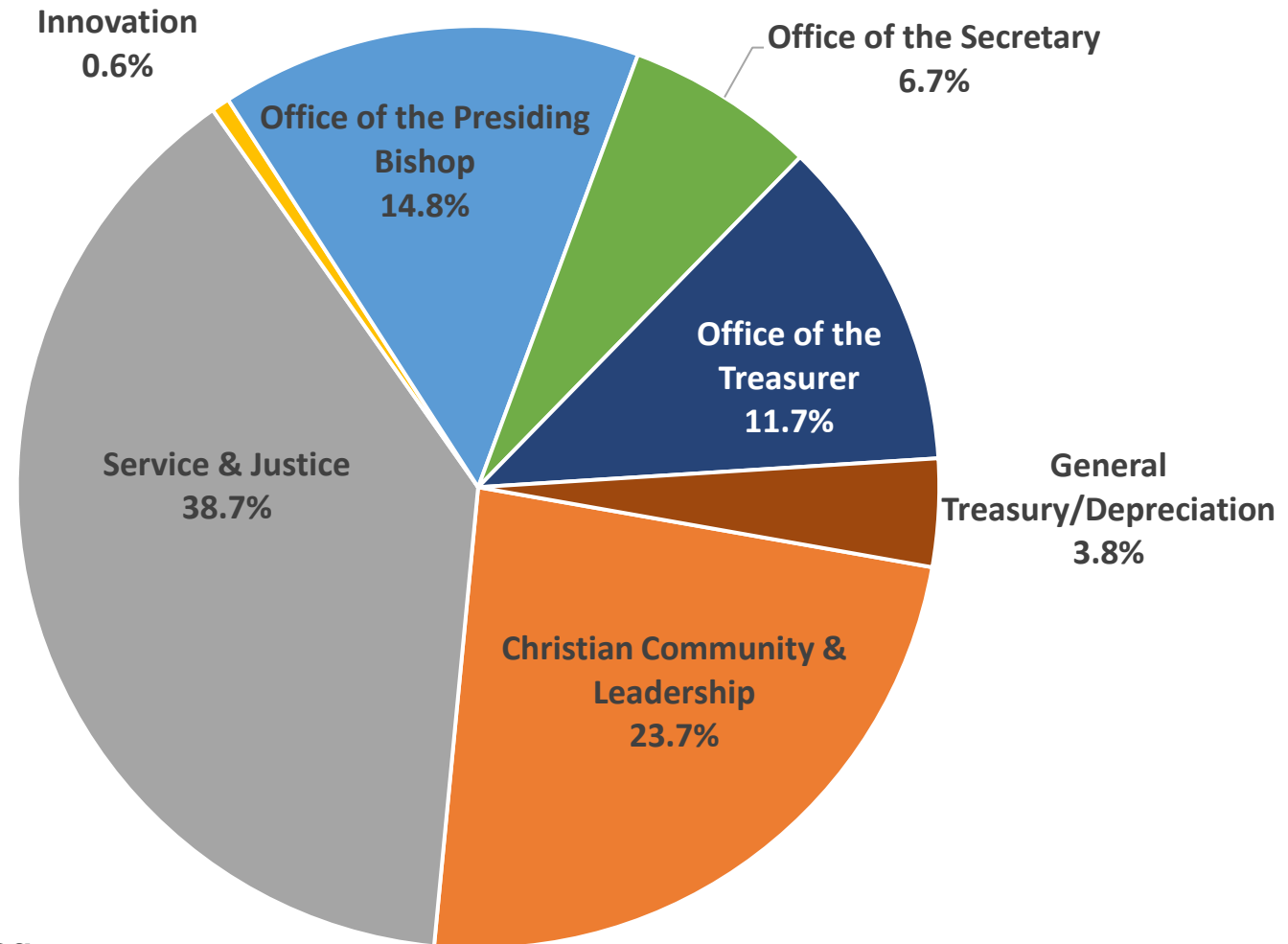
2022 ELCA World Hunger (cont)

ELCA World Hunger

- Spending through September is at 80% of the YTD budget, although the team is hopeful to spend the entire budget in 2022.
- Proposed 2023 spending is higher than the income in order to decrease the fund balance based on accumulated bequest income.



Expenditures by Home Area/Office, incl World Hunger through Sept 30, 2022



Statement of Financial Position (SOFP)

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

| | 9/30/2022 | 1/31/2022 | Change |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| ASSETS | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 64,905,925 | \$ 66,552,968 | \$ (1,647,043) |
| Accounts receivable | 5,607,402 | 8,303,215 | (2,695,813) |
| Interest receivable | 185,240 | 135,074 | 50,166 |
| Due from related organizations | 10,911,601 | 9,034,441 | 1,877,160 |
| Investments | 475,116,066 | 550,905,665 | (75,789,599) |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | 7,625,744 | 7,700,919 | (75,175) |
| Mortgages, notes, and contracts for deed, net | 265,110 | 265,110 | (0) |
| Overseas church construction loans, net | 332,302 | 392,692 | (60,390) |
| Property, furniture, and equipment, net | 18,113,523 | 18,933,114 | (819,591) |
| Beneficial interest - Split-Interest Agreements | 18,671,091 | 18,671,091 | (0) |
| Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts | 21,700,986 | 21,700,986 | (0) |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 623,434,989 | \$ 702,595,275 | \$ (79,160,286) |



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Statement of Financial Position

Liabilities and Net Assets

LIABILITIES

9/30/2022

1/31/2022

Change

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Accounts payable | \$ 1,348,793 | \$ 2,190,688 | \$ (841,895) |
| Deferred revenue | 3,599,141 | 3,599,141 | 0 |
| Due to related organizations | 6,965,939 | 2,239,563 | 4,726,376 |
| Accrued liabilities | 6,453,201 | 7,540,402 | (1,087,201) |
| Annuities payable | 419,609 | 3,189,371 | (2,769,762) |
| Funds held for others | 5,698,751 | 6,320,083 | (621,332) |
| Funds held for others in perpetuity | 91,596,463 | 107,977,035 | (16,380,572) |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 116,081,896 | 133,056,282 | (16,974,388) |

NET ASSETS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Without donor restrictions | 110,209,016 | 123,053,360 | (12,844,344) |
| With donor restrictions | 397,144,079 | 446,485,634 | (49,341,556) |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | 507,353,094 | 569,538,993 | (62,185,900) |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | \$ 623,434,989 | \$ 702,595,275 | \$ (79,160,288) |



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Questions?

**Thank you for the
opportunity to serve and for
your support.**



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Budget and Finance Committee

November 2022



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Information Items

- Welcomed New Members – Pastor Heather Brown, Rindra Josoa, and Deacon Kari Olsen and Liaison Bishop Brenda Bos. Pastor Lisa Ahlness was unable to be with us.
- Learned about one another and the hidden talents that we bring to the committee
- Received orientation to the work of the committee and key financial terms and topics
- Reviewed financial performance through September 30, 2022
- Approved the capital budget and alternative funding allowance for fiscal year 2023

Information Items

- Received a report on Mission Support
- Received an update on the Office of the Treasurer's response to the Preferred Vendor and Privacy Memorial from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly (not an action of BFC but was voted on *en bloc*)
- Received a report on the work of the Audit Committee and the Resource Development Committee
- Received a report from our investment advisors, Columbia Threadneedle

En Bloc Items

- These were already voted on.
- Post-Retirement Medical Reserve – To transfer \$622,977.90 which represents the excess accrual for Post-Retirement Medical Benefits to the Designated Fund for Budgeted Operations Support.
- To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing their review of the audited financial statements for the churchwide organization's fiscal year ended January 31, 2022.

These recommendations from *Budget and Finance Committee* were *en bloc* actions for Church Council approval.

Action occurred during Plenary Session 6 on Nov. 12.

Budget Adjustments

- Total Revenue decrease from Churchwide Assembly budget to Proposed FY23:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Mission Support | \$(650K) |
| Invest Income | (500K) |
| Fundraising Income | (207K) |
| Bequests & Trusts | 200K |
| Endowment Distrib | (100K) |
| Use of Unrestricted Endow | <u>400K</u> |
| Net Revenue | \$(857K) |

Impact on Spending Authorization

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| • Total Revenue reduction | \$857K |
| Identified expense savings: | |
| Benefit pool reduction | (473K) |
| Spending reduction required by by CWO Home Areas/Offices | <u>(384K)</u> |
| | \$ --- |

After adjusting for a 2% increase in compensation and a 4% increase in health benefits, all other costs must be reduced by \$450K to achieve the revised spending authorization.

World Hunger Budget changes

- Direct Gifts revenue has been increased by \$381,000 based on trends and input from Development Team.
- \$2 million to be used from Fund Balance

Resulting increase in World Hunger Spending Authorization is \$2,381,000.

2023 Budget Revision

CC Action

- To approve the revised 2023 fiscal year current spending authorization from \$68,814,000 to \$68,429,562; and
To approve the revised 2023 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization from \$22,869,000 to \$25,250,000.



Engagement of External Auditors

CC Action

- To approve the engagement of Crowe LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organization's year ending January 31, 2023.



Update on Shift to 70-20-10

- Commitment to investment in New, Young, and Diverse as described in Future Church continues
- Need to spend time in 2023 focusing on bringing clarity to our priorities
- Will continue with strategic experiments that are already planned or in process; however, need to spend some time and resources on the infrastructure to support innovation work.



ELCA

Update on Shift to 70-20-10

- Process:
 - 1) Inventory and assign timelines, budget, and resources to complete open memorials/resolutions from prior assembly actions
 - 2) Review current constitutional mandates and priorities and the related resource needs, both human and budget
 - 3) Work with Church Council to identify a process for determining our priorities, which will influence what CWO will no longer do
 - 4) Align resources (staffing and budget) to reflect our priorities
- Timeline – goal would be to complete this work by early summer 2023



ELCA



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Nov. 15, 2022

To: Bishops of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Vice presidents of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Secretaries of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Administrative Team of the churchwide organization
 Chief executive officers of separately incorporated ministries
 Seminary leaders

From: Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary

Subject: Report of Actions of the Church Council (Nov. 10–13, 2022)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Ill., Nov. 10–13, 2022. The following is a summary of Church Council actions along with background information.

| | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | APPOINTMENTS TO CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEES FOR THE 2022–2025 TRIENNIUM | 1 |
| 2. | SYNOD VISITS BY CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS | 2 |
| 3. | ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS | 2 |
| 4. | APPROVAL OF AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT | 2 |
| 5. | MISSION DEVELOPMENT FUND POLICY | 3 |
| 6. | POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS | 3 |
| 7. | COMPLETION OF COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND | 4 |
| 8. | REVISIONS TO THE ELCA GOVERNANCE POLICY MANUAL | 4 |
| 9. | BYLAW AMENDMENTS FOR PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES | 4 |
| 10. | BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY | 4 |
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| 12. | BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY | 5 |
| 13. | ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY OF SOCIAL MESSAGE PROCESSES | 5 |
| 14. | CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DOCUMENTS | 5 |
| 15. | POLICIES FOR SYNOD-AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES | 5 |
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| 17. | ISSUANCE OF CHURCH COUNCIL LETTERS OF CALL | 6 |
| 18. | CHURCH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS | 6 |
| 19. | REVISIONS TO THE FY23 SPENDING AUTHORIZATION | 7 |
| 20. | AUDIT OF THE 2022 FISCAL YEAR | 7 |
| 21. | REVISION OF CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHARTERS | 7 |

1. APPOINTMENTS TO CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEES FOR THE 2022–2025 TRIENNIUM

Background:

At its August 2022 meeting, the Church Council ratified provisional membership for the five standing committees of the Church Council: Budget and Finance; Christian Community and Leadership; Faith, Society, and Innovation; Legal and Constitutional Review; and Service and Justice [CC22.04.02].

Following the elections at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, newly elected Church Council members indicated their committee preferences. At its September 2022 meeting, the Executive Committee completed its review of the requests and recommended ratification by the Church Council during the first plenary session of its November 2022 meeting [EC22.09.24].

The appointments are as follows:

- **Budget and Finance Committee:** The Rev. Lisa Ahlness, the Rev. Heather Brown, Mr. Rindra Josoa, and Deacon Kari Olsen.
- **Legal and Constitutional Review Committee:** The Rev. Leroy Cannon, Mr. Mitch McCartney, and Ms. Jennifer Trom.

- **Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee:** Ms. Jamie Brueschoff, the Rev. Gwendolyn King, Ms. Olivia Martin-Call, and Mr. Ethan Miller-Perez.
- **Christian Community and Leadership Committee:** Ms. Sheena Foster, Mr. Hans Giller, Mr. Joel Miller, and Ms. Linda Rivera.
- **Service and Justice Committee:** Ms. Kristy Henriksen, Mr. Iván Perez, and Ms. Andraine Sinaga.

New members of the Board Development Committee for the 2022–2025 triennium were approved by the Executive Committee [EC22.10.27b]. The persons appointed were: The Rev. Heather Brown, Mr. Hans Giller, and Ms. Linda Rivera.

Resource Development Committee appointments will come to a future Executive Committee meeting. Appointments for the Audit Committee will come through the Budget and Finance Committee.

Church Council action:

To ratify the appointments to the Church Council standing committees for the 2022–2025 triennium.

2. SYNOD VISITS BY CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Background:

Since its November 2005 meeting, the Church Council has committed itself to building relationships with the churchwide organization and synods, congregations, and institutions and agencies.

At its November 2007 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC07.11.65]:

To recall that, concerning changes in governance of this church, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA05.06.21]: “To encourage greater interaction of members of the Church Council with synodical councils and synodical assemblies in their respective areas”;

To urge members of the Church Council to accept this responsibility and interact with their own synods and their partner synods in various ways, including attending at least one Synod Council meeting per year and participating in Synod Assemblies, especially in years when a synod is considering nominations to the Church Council; and

To note that expenses for attending Synod Council meetings and Synod Assemblies will be reimbursed by the churchwide organization in accordance with the ELCA travel policy.

Members of the Church Council now make the commitment, as available, to be in contact with specific synods during the triennium. Current [suggested commitments](#) are listed in “Other Documents” of the November 2022 Church Council materials. A summary of reports of these contacts is available under “Other Documents” as well.

Members of the Church Council were invited to review the commitments during the November 2022 meeting. After the review is complete, the document will be revised and distributed.

Church Council action:

To acknowledge the commitment of the Church Council to have greater interaction of members of the Church Council with synod councils and synod assemblies in their respective areas;

To urge members of the Church Council to accept this responsibility and interact with their own synods and assigned synods in various ways, including attending at least one Synod Council meeting per year and participating in a Synod Assembly, especially in a year when a synod is considering nominations to the Church Council; and

To note that expenses for attending Synod Council meetings and Synod Assemblies will be reimbursed by the churchwide organization in accordance with the ELCA travel policy.

3. ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Background:

At the first meeting after a Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council elects new members to its Executive Committee. Three new members in the following categories needed to be elected:

- One member in the category: Lay Person of Color/Primary Language other than English
- One member in the category: Rostered Man
- One member in a category to be determined by the Executive Committee following the election of the Lay Person of Color/Primary Language other than English.

Church Council action:

To elect the Rev. Marcus Bigott, Mr. Keoni Newman, and Ms. Tracey Beasley to terms ending in 2025 on the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

4. APPROVAL OF AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Background:

The Audit Committee reported the following activity:

At the July 12, 2022, Audit Committee meeting, the external auditors, Crowe LLP presented a preliminary draft of the financial statements of the ELCA for the year ended January 31, 2022. They included an “unmodified” opinion that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the ELCA as of January 31, 2022, and the changes in its net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. The opinion also contains an Emphasis of Matter paragraph stating that this is an audit of the Churchwide Organization of the ELCA and not a reflection of the entire ELCA. At this meeting the Audit Committee voted to approve the auditors’ report on the financial statements for the year ended 1/31/21.

The committee performed all other duties and responsibilities in compliance with its Charter and Checklist. No exceptions were noted.

At the November 9, 2022, Audit Committee meeting, Management reviewed the interim financial results through September 30, 2022.

Crowe LLP, the external audit firm, presented the Audit Service Plan and fees for the year ended January 31, 2023. Crowe noted a 7% increase in fees for this year. The committee approved the audit service plan and fees and recommends the Budget and Finance Committee approve the engagement of Crowe LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organizations’ year ending January 31, 2023.

Forvis LLP, the internal audit firm, presented the internal audit report for the period ended September 30, 2022. Forvis also presented the internal audit plan for the year ending January 31, 2024. The audit committee approved the plan and internal audit report.

The committee received and approved Forvis internal audit plan for 2023. The proposed fees for the engagement were \$94,000, although their hours were reduced from 600 to 470 in order to stay in line with their original proposed fees for 2022 – 2024 of \$94,000 per year for Churchwide Administrative Offices.

The committee received a report from Jon Beyer, Executive for Information Technology, updating the committee on the ELCA information security program.

The committee met in separate executive sessions with Crowe LLP, Forvis LLP and the Treasurer.

Church Council Action:

To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing its review of the audited financial statements for the churchwide organization’s fiscal year ended January 31, 2022.

5. MISSION DEVELOPMENT FUND POLICY

Background:

In 2006, the Church Council approved the establishment of a Mission Development Fund (MDF) as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer.

VOTED:

CC06.11.38

To approve the establishment of a new temporarily restricted fund, the Mission Development Fund, to reside in the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The source of the funds will be unrestricted bequests and trusts income received in excess of the budgeted amount, after covering any shortfall in other current income categories, in any fiscal year. Additional consideration will be given to the cash balances available for the ELCA to meet its cash management policies. The transfer of such income shall be authorized by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Treasurer. The fund will be used as seed money for new and innovative ministries and in support of churchwide priorities at the request of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer and the Foundation of the ELCA and in collaboration with the Cabinet of Executives. Expenditures from the Mission Development Fund in an amount greater than \$1 million shall require action by the Church Council.

Several revisions to the MDF policy were approved by the Budget and Finance Committee at its July 2022 meeting and forwarded to Church Council for action.

Church Council Action:

To approve the revisions to the 2006 Church Council Action CC06.11.38 for the Mission Development Fund as presented in the “Mission Development Fund Policy.”

6. POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS

Church Council Action:

To transfer the excess liability in the amount of \$622,977.90 which represents the excess accrual for Post-Retirement Medical Benefits to the Designated Fund for Budgeted Operations Support.

7. COMPLETION OF COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND

Background:

At the April 2020 Church Council meeting, a special appeal in response to COVID-19 was approved as a fundraising effort of this church. [CC20.04.09]

The fundraising effort successfully raised \$2,112,429 to support this church's congregations, synods, and other affiliated ministries that had been negatively impacted by the pandemic. No new monies are coming in for the appeal and there are other urgent fundraising priorities, so the recommendation was to close the COVID-19 special appeal.

Church Council Action:

To approve the completion of the special appeal in response to COVID-19; and

To thank this church's members, congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and other institutions and agencies for their generous support.

8. REVISIONS TO THE ELCA GOVERNANCE POLICY MANUAL

Background:

At the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, a bylaw was adopted that allowed the Church Council to designate categories for advisory members to have voice but not vote at Council meetings. This necessitates amendments to the ELCA Governance Policy Manual.

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

Church Council Action:

To approve the revisions to the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual; and

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

9. BYLAW AMENDMENTS FOR PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES

Background:

The Church Council is responsible for approving Portico Benefit Services amendments that involve a significant change in policy or a significant change in cost or benefits and shall approve trust amendments initiated by Portico Benefit Services ["Portico"].

Pending Portico's Board of Trustees approval, the proposed changes are to be considered by the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Restated Bylaws of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA as listed in the "Portico Bylaws Changes Nov. 2022" document.

10. BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

Background:

In August 2022, the Lenoir-Rhyne University Board of Directors approved a bylaw amendment that was fully supported by the chair of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) Advisory Council. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02. The proposed amendment replaces the university president with the vice president of mission, engagement, and innovation as the *ex-officio* voting member on the LTSS Advisory Council (p. 15).

Church Council Action:

To approve the amended bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University.

11. AMENDMENTS TO THE METROPOLITAN CHICAGO SYNOD CONSTITUTION

Background:

Provision 10.12 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: "Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification...."

Church Council Action:

To ratify the amendments in the constitution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, with the exception of the following provisions:

- S6.04.03.

- S9.05.
- S9.06.
- S9.07.
- S10.01.02.
- S10.01.03.

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

12. BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Background:

The United Lutheran Seminary Board of Trustees reviewed several bylaw amendments. Those amendments include removing gender-specific terms (pronouns), which leads in certain cases to rephrasing; adding clarifying language; further codifying Shared Governance; and removing language related to the Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation. In the case of the latter, the board’s Governance, Infrastructure, and Policy Committee felt it appropriate to remove the entire second paragraph in Chapter 3 as unnecessarily specific.

Church Council Action:

To approve the amended bylaws of United Lutheran Seminary.

13. ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY OF SOCIAL MESSAGE PROCESSES

Background:

At this time, there are three pending requests for social messages, two of which come from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. It is the recommendation of the director for theological ethics to delay action on these requests until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting. A social message on climate care is in process which fully occupies the churchwide organization staffing and churchwide capacity until brought to Church Council for consideration in Spring 2023. Further, it has not been possible to do the groundwork or assessment necessary to bring a clear recommendation regarding all the pending requests. Such assessment and recommendation are anticipated by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

Church Council Action:

To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. national gun policy or on child abuse and protection and of considering the authorization of a revision of the “Message on Homelessness” (1990) until the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting to allow for a careful and thorough assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances; and

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

14. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DOCUMENTS

Background:

The Church Council is responsible for reviewing this church’s ongoing work in corporate social responsibility. The Service and Justice Committee reviewed three issue papers and one new social criteria investment screen.

Church Council Action:

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

- Sustainability Issue Paper
- Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper
- Genetics Issue Paper;

To approve the “Privatized Immigration Detention Social Criteria Investment Screen;” and

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

15. POLICIES FOR SYNOD-AUTHORIZED WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES

Background:

In accordance with ELCA Constitution bylaw 10.01.04, “the synod—in keeping with criteria, policies, and procedures proposed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units, and approved by the Church Council—may acknowledge certain authorized worshiping communities such as developing ministries, preaching points, or chapels as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission.”

The [2003 policy](#) is in conflict with current practice and later policy documents, so the recommendation was to repeal the policy and develop a new one.

Church Council Action:

To repeal the 2003 “Policy on Criteria for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities;” and

To direct the Christian Community and Leadership home area, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to consider a new policy to be reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and approved by the Church Council.

16. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Background:

The minutes of the Church Council meetings on Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, June 27, 2022, and Aug. 7, 2022 were provided to council members electronically on Church Council Microsoft Teams.

The minutes of the council’s Executive Committee meetings on Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, Apr. 26, 2022, June 28, 2022, Aug. 7, 2022, Sept. 13, 2022, and Oct. 13, 2022, were provided electronically to members on Church Council Teams.

Council members were invited to provide any notations or typographical errors in the distributed text of the minutes in writing to the executive for Office of the Secretary administration (Keith.Fry@elca.org). Proper corrections were entered into the protocol copies of the minutes.

Church Council Action:

To approve the minutes of the Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022, June 27, 2022, and Aug. 7, 2022 meetings of the Church Council; and

To ratify actions of the council’s Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the Mar. 31–Apr. 2, 2022; Apr. 26, 2022; June 28, 2022; Aug. 7, 2022; Sept. 13, 2022; and Oct. 13, 2022, meetings.

17. ISSUANCE OF CHURCH COUNCIL LETTERS OF CALL

Background:

In 2008, the Church Council acted to grant the secretary of this church the authority to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for those calls listed in the *Tables of Sources of Calls* for which the Church Council is described as the calling body:

VOTED: EN BLOC
CC08.04.19

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, in accordance with the Sources of Calls tables in Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To note that this action supersedes Church Council action CC87.06.03; and

To request that the secretary annually report letters of call issued under this authorization.

In order to more closely parallel the process for issuance of letters of call by synod councils and congregations, and to ensure that authority for calls is more broadly shared by the Church Council, the secretary recommended that this responsibility be given to the Executive Committee. This action rescinds the earlier authority granted to the secretary.

Church Council Action:

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to issue letters of call on behalf of the Church Council for rostered ministers in accordance with the *Tables of Sources of Calls* in Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To note that this action supersedes Church Council action CC08.04.19.

18. CHURCH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Background:

The Church Council has the responsibility for electing people to fill terms on boards of the 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 is also to elect nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

Church Council Action:

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: Mr. DeWayne A. Cook.

Church Council Action:

To re-elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a term beginning Jan. 1, 2023, and expiring Dec. 31, 2028: Ms. Elizabeth L. Jones.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the advisory board of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term beginning July 1, 2022, and expiring June 30, 2025: The Rev. Stephen D. Wachtman.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the Committee of Hearing Officers to a six-term beginning November 2022: Mr. Arundel T. Clarke.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the Mission Investment Fund Board of Trustees to a term expiring in August 2025: Mr. Randall S. Foster.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. for a renewable four-year term beginning in March 2023 and concluding March 2027: The Rev. Michael J. Vinson.

19. REVISIONS TO THE FY23 SPENDING AUTHORIZATION

Background:

The ELCA constitution includes a Churchwide Assembly (CWA) action which authorizes the Church Council to revise (or establish, as applicable) spending authorizations. This includes changes to spending authorizations that were previously approved by the Churchwide Assembly. Last April, the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) approved and forwarded to Church Council (CC), who approved, a 3-year income projection (2023 – 2025) and a one-year spending authorization (2023) for approval. This was then recommended to the CWA for approval in August. The budgets were approved as recommended by the CWA.

However, since April, events/actual results have occurred which have resulted in the recommendation from staff that the approved 2023 budgets be considered for modification.

Church Council Action:

To revise the 2023 fiscal year current fund spending authorization from \$68,814,000 to \$68,429,562; and
To revise the 2023 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization from \$22,869,000 to \$25,250,000.

20. AUDIT OF THE 2022 FISCAL YEAR

Background:

The Budget and Finance Committee recommended that the Church Council approve the engagement of Crowe LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organizations' year ending January 31, 2023.

Church Council action:

To approve the engagement of Crowe LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organization's year ending January 31, 2023.

21. REVISION OF CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHARTERS

Background:

In accordance with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual, the charters of the Church Council Committees describe the responsibilities, composition, protocols, and meeting agendas of the committees.

Church Council action [two-thirds approval]:

To approve the revised committee charters; and
To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Nov. 15, 2022

To: Bishops of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Vice presidents of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Secretaries of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Administrative Team of the churchwide organization
 Chief executive officers of separately incorporated ministries
 Seminary leaders

From: Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary

Subject: Report of Church Council Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions, Synod Resolutions, and Previous Church Council Actions (Nov. 10–13, 2022)

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I. CHURCH COUNCIL RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ACTIONS

A. ADVISORY MEMBERS TO CHURCH COUNCIL

Advisory members of the Church Council were removed from the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly approved a bylaw that allows the Church Council to designate categories of advisory members who would have voice but not vote at council meetings.

- 14.33.01. Advisory Members.** Categories of advisory members may be designated by the Church Council. These categories shall be set forth in continuing resolutions. Advisory members shall have voice but not vote.

Over the past months, the Church Council Executive Committee has been discussing the possibility of restoring categories of advisory members of the council. After much discussion, the recommendation is to restore limited categories of advisory members to include the presidents (or a designated representative) of ELCA ethnic associations and a representative of Reconciling Works, an Independent Lutheran Organization (ILO) working for full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Lutherans in this church. This continuing resolution would also allow for status of the categories of advisory membership to be reviewed each triennium.

Church Council action [two-thirds approval]:

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

- 14.33.A22. *The Church Council shall have as advisory members each president, or the designated representative of the president, of the ELCA ethnic associations, as well as a representative of Reconciling Works. Advisory membership of the Church Council shall be reviewed each triennium.***

B. CONTRACT FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY ELCA GOVERNANCE AUDIT

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.04.26]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Audit of Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA” from the Northwest Washington Synod;

To authorize the Church Council to determine the parameters and the expense budget of this process and identify the revenue source(s) to provide for this audit;

To direct the Church Council to engage an external auditor to conduct a comprehensive audit for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA and related governance documents and present a report of the findings by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting;

To direct the Church Council to release the findings of the audit to this church; and

To direct the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to use the findings of this audit to recommend changes to the governing documents to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

To approve the engagement of Fox Swibel Levin & Carroll LLP to perform a diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility audit of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*, the Roster Manual, the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual, and the *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, with the total cost not to exceed \$100,000.

C. RECONSIDERATION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY: GIFT AND TRUST

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.07]

To receive with gratitude the memorials on “Review and Revision of LGBTQIA+ References in the ELCA Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*” from the Greater Milwaukee Synod, Southeastern Synod, and Florida-Bahamas Synod;

To authorize a social statement reconsideration to revise *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) so that its wording reflects current church understanding, church policy, civil law, and public acceptance of marriage of same-gender and gender non-conforming couples in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018). While references would be reviewed throughout the whole statement, the following sections are designated for reconsideration as described here:

- “Marriage: shelter and context for trust” p.15. This would not reconsider the idea of marriage as shelter and context for trust but would consider the import that marriage legally is now a covenant between two individuals;
- “Lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships” p.18f. Revision here would not change this church’s current understanding that recognizes four identified positions of bound conscience within its life. p.19, but would review wording about “publicly accountable, lifelong monogamous same-sex relationships” in light of public acceptance of marriage of same-gender and gender-non-conforming couples;
- “Loving families: ground and source for social trust” p.21f. Review here would consider references to diversity of family configurations; and

To authorize the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Church Council to approve the parameters and expense budget of this process and identify the revenue source(s) to provide for this revision to be considered as early as the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.03.23]

To authorize a possible revision of the social statement on *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* which reconsiders the church’s current concept of the four positions of bound conscience. This revision would focus on pages 19-21 (“lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships) and any other references to the four positions of bound conscience.

Church Council action:

To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to manage the initiation of work on the reconsideration of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009), per authorization of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, by delaying task force initiation to 2024 due to timing, budgetary, and leadership capacity demands.

D. CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL POLICIES

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.03.14]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Southwest California Synod, and Northwestern Ohio Synod concerning separation agreements;

To affirm the commitment of the churchwide organization of the ELCA to limit the use of non-disclosure provisions to the small minority of cases in which they are truly necessary to protect confidential and sensitive materials related to donors, personnel, legal, information technology, and similar categories;

To urge synods, congregations, agencies, institutions, and other parts of the ELCA to limit the use of non-disclosure agreements to the small minority of cases in which they are truly necessary and not to use such agreements as a matter of course or in the termination of calls of rostered ministers; and

To direct the Church Council to update the “Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies” to appropriately limit the use to non-disclosure agreements consistent with these memorials.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b7]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Separation Agreements” to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to update the “Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies” to appropriately limit the use of non-disclosure agreements consistent with the memorials; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

The updated Personnel Policies are as follows:

10.7 Non-Disclosure Provisions

The ELCA limits the use of non-disclosure provisions to the small minority of cases in which they are truly necessary to protect confidential and sensitive materials related to donors, personnel, legal, information technology, and similar categories of information.

Church Council Action:

To approve the amended Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies; and

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

E. FORTIFYING URBAN MINISTRIES IN UNDERSERVED URBAN AREAS MEMORIAL

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.08]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Fortifying Ministries in Underserved Urban Areas” from the

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod;

To affirm the strategic direction of the ELCA Fund for Leaders ministry to enhance the capacity of people of color through its disbursement of scholarships to Theological Education for Emerging Ministries candidates;

To refer this memorial to the Congregational Vitality Training and Development Team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area to create a churchwide Urban Ministry group, in partnership with the appropriate leaders in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, to accompany ELCA synods in their urban strategies that lead to the enhancement of congregational vitality and ministry sustainability in the urban context. The group will 1) collaborate with other studies already underway, 2) resource synods by gathering best practices in urban ministry and emerging ideas in the care and creative use of church facilities, 3) identify supportive networks within this church and among ecumenical partners, and 4) encourage piloting innovative ways to address the realities and complexities of urban ministry, including enhancing urban internship opportunities. The group may consider additional topics as needed;

To request that the churchwide Urban Ministry group consult with and provide regular reports to the Church Council to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled; and

To provide a final report to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly on the results of its study, new urban initiatives, and ways for this church to fortify the witness and service among people and communities in underserved urban areas.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b3]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Fortifying Urban Ministries in Underserved Urban Areas” to the Christian Community and Leadership home area 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The responsibility for the implementation of this memorial has been assigned to the Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area. The Rev. Sandra Chrostowski, senior director, Congregational Vitality, and New Ministry Training and Development, and the Rev. Ruben Duran, senior advisor for New Ministry Development, have been appointed as conveners of a churchwide organization group to address this memorial on Urban Ministry, in partnership with leaders in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod who sent this memorial forward and who also passed a similar resolution on urban ministry for their synod.

Two initial action steps have been taken:

1. An initial consultation with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod staff has taken place. The synod has appointed the Rev. Regina Goodrich, pastor of Mediator Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, Penn. and dean of the synod’s Central Conference, and the Rev. Brian Penman, the synod’s director for evangelical mission, as *ad hoc* members of the Synod Task Force for Urban Ministry. They are identifying members for this task force and are planning to meet for the first time in early November.
2. Pastors Chrostowski and Duran have begun to develop criteria for the selection of participants for the churchwide group on Urban Ministry including representation from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod leadership. The intention is to have group membership finalized in December and to begin convening in early 2023.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on “Fortifying Urban Ministries in the Underserved Urban Areas” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request a progress report on the work by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

F. EQUITY AND CLARITY IN THE MISSION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.10]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Equity and Clarity in the Mission Development Process” from the Delaware-Maryland Synod;

To refer this memorial to the Congregational Vitality Training and Development team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area to establish a working group in partnership with the appropriate leaders in the Delaware-Maryland Synod to study and refine current ELCA guidelines and systems for appointments, calls, funds, and support mechanisms for mission developers and new ministries; and

To request that the working group consult with and provide regular reports to the Church Council beginning by Fall 2023 to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled.

Response from the Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The ELCA Christian Community and Leadership home area Congregational Vitality Training and Development Team leaders have contacted Delaware-Maryland Synod staff to create a working group in partnership with Delaware-Maryland Synod leaders who composed this memorial. The Rev. Sandra Chrostowski, senior director, Congregational Vitality, and New Ministry Training and Development, and the Rev. Ruben Duran, senior advisor for New Ministry Development, have been appointed as conveners of this working group, which will identify partners across this church for consultation and collaboration with the goal of scheduling an online meeting during the first quarter of 2023.

This working group will study and refine current ELCA guidelines and systems in place for appointment, calls, funding, and support mechanisms for mission developers and new ministries. The working group will also provide regular reports, beginning at the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, to ensure that the purposes and objectives of this memorial are being fulfilled.

Church Council Action:

To receive the progress report on “Equity and Clarity in the Mission Development Process” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request a progress report on the work by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; and

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

G. GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.04.25]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Oregon Synod, Southwest California Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Minneapolis Area Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Southwestern Texas Synod, Northern Illinois Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Synod, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, New England Synod, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Central States Synod, and Delaware-Maryland Synod concerning greenhouse gas reduction;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to engage in creation care and advocacy based on the principles of sufficiency, sustainability, participation, and solidarity;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to advocacy and action in support of 50% reduction from 2005 levels in United States economy-wide net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050;

To direct the ELCA Churchwide organization to set the goal of reducing its net greenhouse gas pollution 50% by 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050;

To urge the churchwide organization to continue its network ministry through the Creation Care Network to inform and guide this church in its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

To encourage congregants, rostered ministers, and bishops to commit themselves to education about the urgency of the climate emergency, the global opportunities of a just transition and to lift up loving our neighbor in response to the climate emergency through their preaching;

To affirm the Mission Investments Fund’s “Green Building” initiative and resources, and to encourage continued commitment to supporting ministries in caring for creation and addressing climate change;

To refer to the Service and Justice home area, Office of the Treasurer, Office of the Secretary, and Office of the Presiding Bishop, for implementation consistent with the memorials; and

To request the churchwide organization provide a report to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly assessing the progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions across all three expressions and sharing lessons learned to help meet reduction goals.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b2]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Greenhouse Gas Reduction” to the Service and Justice home area, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer, Office of the Secretary and Office of the Presiding Bishop, 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 synods of this action.

Response from the Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing all of God’s creation. Leading scientists from around the world have confirmed that global average temperatures are growing warmer due to increasing levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases in the Earth’s atmosphere. Human use of fossil fuels that release carbon dioxide and other “greenhouse” gases (GHGs) into the air is the main source of the increase in these gases. As levels of carbon dioxide and other GHGs increase, more and more of the sun’s heat is trapped by the atmosphere and less escapes back

into space. The increase in trapped heat changes the climate, causing altered weather patterns, including multi-year droughts, extreme storms, flooding, and rising sea levels.

The memorials direct the ELCA churchwide organization (CWO) to establish targets to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. This target is consistent with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2018 report that states that, in order to prevent the worst climate damages, global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) need to fall by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050. The ELCA has supported these targets in its advocacy and creation care education work.

Representatives of the Service and Justice home area, the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, and the Office of the Presiding Bishop met to discuss implementation of the memorial directive. This discussion noted that the CWO has already achieved reductions through reduced travel, more online collaboration, and hybrid work plans. The work to establish a 2005 baseline and to create emission and energy use reduction targets will require expertise beyond current churchwide staff capacity. Funding for a half-time position has been set aside in the Service and Justice home area, beginning in 2023. The CWO sees this initiative as a witness to ELCA commitments to care for creation, and an initiative that can model what synods and congregations can do. The CWO supports the reconstituting of the Creation Care Network that is currently underway.

A progress report will be made to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

- To receive the response on “Greenhouse Gas Reduction” from the Service and Justice home area;**
- To urge the churchwide organization to continue its efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and commend it for its initiatives and commitments to creation care and environmental advocacy;**
- To request a progress report be provided by the Spring 2025 Church Council meeting with a report expected for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly; and**
- To request that the secretary inform the synods of this action.**

H. VOTING RIGHTS AND D.C. STATEHOOD

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.05c]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” from the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod;

To request that the presiding bishop communicate this church’s support for statehood for the District of Columbia to the United States Congress;

To direct the ELCA Witness in Society team in the Service and Justice home area to promote opportunities for education and advocacy regarding statehood for Washington, D.C.;

To direct the ELCA Witness in Society team to listen to and support calls for self-determination for American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other U.S. territories and to act on requests related to these matters from the Caribbean Synod and the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations; and

To encourage all ELCA synods, congregations, and members to inform and educate themselves about ELCA social teaching and witness in society on voting access and voting rights.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b1]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” to the Service and Justice home area 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 Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

As a church body, the ELCA uses its voice to address important policy issues that affect the well-being of people and communities, including promotion of civic engagement and the right to vote. The ELCA has consistently expressed its support for full representation of all people in political processes and decision making as a matter of fairness and civil rights. The ELCA social statement *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991) states, “Along with all citizens, Christians have the responsibility to defend human rights and to work for freedom, justice, peace, environmental well-being, and good order in public life. They are to recognize the vital role of law in protecting life and liberty and in upholding the common good. Christians need to be concerned for the methods and the content of public deliberation. They should be critical when groups of people are inadequately represented in political processes and decisions that affect their lives.” (p. 5) The ELCA social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (1993) states, “This church will support legislation, ordinances, and resolutions that guarantee to all persons

equally: civil rights, including full protection of the law and redress under the law of discriminatory practices; and to all citizens, the right to vote.” (p. 7)

Through the Witness in Society team, the ELCA Service and Justice home area will respond to the memorial “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” with the following steps:

1. Fall 2022: Consult with the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod on the issue of statehood for the District of Columbia and collaborate with the synod on an action plan.
2. Fall 2022: Consult with the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations and with the Caribbean Synod regarding the resolve “to direct the ELCA Witness in Society team to listen to and support calls for self-determination for American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other U.S. territories and to act on requests related to these matters from the Caribbean Synod and the ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations.”
3. 2023: Determine opportunities for education and advocacy on voting rights, representation and statehood in the District of Columbia, including opportunities for timely communication from the Presiding Bishop to the United States Congress.
4. 2023: Continue to promote and encourage civic engagement in the ELCA, including through the ELCAvotes initiative.
5. Fall 2023: Report on memorial response to the ELCA Church Council.

Church Council Action:

**To receive the response on “Voting Rights and D.C. Statehood” from the Service and Justice home area;
To affirm the timeline proposed and to anticipate a report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting; and
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

I. RIGHT TO BOYCOTT

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.05e]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and the New England Synod in relation to Palestinian human rights; and

To urge Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton and ELCA members to call on the president of the United States and the U.S. Congress to oppose legislation penalizing or criminalizing support for nonviolent boycotts, divestment, and/or sanctions on behalf of Palestinian human rights.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b5]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Right to Boycott” to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area 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 synods of this action.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

The Public Messages Working Group, an internal churchwide organization working group, reviewed the request for the presiding bishop and ELCA members to call on the U.S. President and Congress to oppose legislation penalizing or criminalizing support for nonviolent boycotts, divestment, and/or sanctions on behalf of Palestinian human rights.

Given the current election cycle, staff recommend the request be postponed until the new Congress is in session. The intention would be to link an ELCA letter with ecumenical efforts or with a calendar event like a United Nations day or discussion. In preparation, a template and initial draft will be undertaken so the letter may be quickly edited and released when the timing is appropriate. Church Council can expect a report on the outcomes by the April 2024 meeting.

Church Council Action:

**To receive the timeline on “Right to Boycott” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Service and Justice home area;
To request a report be provided by the April 2024 Church Council meeting; and
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

J. UNALTERED AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.02.09q]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Allegheny and Southeastern synods concerning renewed awareness and use of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; and

To refer the proposed actions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media, Mission Advancement unit and other units, for additional analysis and planning in the churchwide organization for a report and possible recommendations to the Church Council.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a11]

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media and other appropriate churchwide organization units, provide a report or a timeline on when the Unaltered Augsburg Confession will receive further attention; and

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

Church Council action [CC19.11.47u]

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a report with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council’s Spring 2021 meeting; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

Over the past 18 months, the focus of the work of the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation has been the 2020 initiatives on Luther’s “The Freedom of a Christian.” 1517 Media generously made a .pdf of the treatise freely available to accompany a study guide and compendium of case studies developed and published at elca500.org A number of public events drew upon these resources and themes.

Consideration is currently being given to marking the 500th anniversary of the Diet of Worms this year.

Given these projects, an extension is requested for the work detailed in the November 2019 report. As this church journeys toward the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030, the Rev. Marcus Kunz (executive, discernment of contextual and theological issues) will serve as the facilitator for processes and consultations that will:

- clarify or define the purpose of any organized action by the churchwide organization in the years leading to the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession;
- assess what resources already are or will be available and what activities will likely be planned and undertaken by other organizations (for example, resources already available or planned by the ELCA publishing house; activities that may be undertaken by theological faculties and/or ecumenical groups, the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the 13th assembly in 2023);
- consider which, if any, of the actions requested in the memorials are appropriate for the churchwide organization to undertake itself or to coordinate with or among others, and considering what other actions related to the Augsburg Confession may be beneficial;
- give full attention to the letter and spirit of the ELCA’s representational principles in any and all related processes and consultations; and
- make a progress report with possible recommendations for next steps to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06u]

To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To request that a progress report with possible recommendations be provided to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2022)

Two synod memorials presented to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly proposed actions throughout the ELCA and its interdependent institutions as well as among its members that would:

- raise awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession more widely in the church;
- renew attention in seminary education; and
- develop resources for use in classrooms and congregations.

These actions would be encouraged and supported by the churchwide organization in anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030. The proposals specifically requested wider and easier availability of the English translations of both the German and Latin texts included in *The Book of Concord*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert. In follow-up conversation with the primary authors of the synod memorial from the Allegheny Synod, they said they understand this proposal to be comparable to Bishop Eaton’s invitation to study the Small Catechism in 2016-2017 in connection with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Although the memorials were referred to the churchwide staff for additional study and possible recommendations, some actions have already been initiated with others. For a full account of the actions and consultations, please refer to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession Report.

If the Church Council and/or Office of Presiding Bishop decide to proceed with the proposed actions of the memorial, some immediate next steps could include:

- a. Designating staff who will exercise responsibility for tasks and outcomes:
 - i. a point person and/or “realizer” who will have primary responsibility
 - ii. a working group of other staff with expertise, experience, and relationships needed for implementation
- b. Selecting an advisory group (beyond churchwide staff) to assist with assessment, networking, decision-making and planning
- c. Continuing consultations with individuals and at least 2-4 more small groups
- d. Making initial decisions regarding:
 - i. the purpose, goals, and scope of activities for this project
 - ii. the scope and posture of the churchwide staff’s role (assuming that other groups and individuals will take their own initiatives), hopefully with attention to the insights expressed in this initial round of consultation (above)
- e. Clarifying what resources (budget, personnel, etc.) will be available for this project
- f. Taking inventory of existing material resources and making an initial assessment of their usability, accessibility, and limitations
- g. Taking inventory of individuals and groups in the ELCA, LWF and beyond who can collaborate productively. A networking session (workshop) at next summer’s Rostered Ministers Gathering would be one opportunity.
- h. Beginning exploration and development of resources, including resource persons, other than traditional classroom-type materials and methods (assuming that the traditional materials and methods will also be available).

Church Council Action:

**To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
To support the actions identified in the memorials to raise awareness of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession more widely in the church, renew attention of the Augsburg Confession in seminary education, and develop resources for use in this church’s congregations, synods, and institutions;
To affirm the steps proposed by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to fulfill the actions; and
To request that the secretary inform the synods of this action.**

K. SALARY EQUITY IN THE ELCA

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.11]

To receive with gratitude the memorial on “Salary Equity in the ELCA” from the Delaware-Maryland Synod;

To refer the memorial to the Church Council to consider commissioning a study of pay gaps for rostered ministers in the ELCA, particularly as they relate to women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQIA+ community, and to consider using such a study not only for the purposes described in this memorial but also for the study of inequitable compensation of clergy of color previously called for by the Church Council (CC19.06.23.), for the Quality of Call Initiative for Women in Ministry, for the study of educational debt, and for such other purposes as might serve the needs of this church;

To encourage Portico Benefit Services and the Churchwide organization to make appropriate changes to their bylaws and data privacy policies in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of compensation patterns for rostered ministers;

To replace the “Current gross compensation” question from the Rostered Minister Profile with “Minimum Compensation for Next Call;”

To amend the “Current Health Benefits” question to read “Needed Health Benefits;” and

To remove the “Current Retirement Contribution” question from the Rostered Minister Profile.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.09.23b4]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on “Salary Equity in the ELCA” to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Christian Community and Leadership home area, 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 Christian Community and Leadership and the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

As the memorial from the Delaware-Maryland Synod pointed out, there is evidence that across society and in churches there exist pay gaps that affect equity for women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who are marginalized or living in poverty, and the LGBTQIA+ community. One serious difficulty the ELCA faces in determining the extent to which inequity exists in compensation for rostered ministers, however, is that data on compensation has been extremely difficult to come by. The churchwide organization holds no data on compensation for rostered ministers. While Portico Benefit Services has salary and retirement contribution data for those rostered ministers who are sponsored in its plans, there are challenges that have hindered sharing of data, including the fact that Portico is bound by federal privacy laws as a fiduciary agent, as well as the reality that it has been bound by its own bylaws and policies that protect the privacy of plan participants. There is the additional complication that, while a large majority of rostered ministers are sponsored through Portico, it is likely that a number of those who serve smaller congregations or those with fewer financial resources are not sponsored, and thus would not be included in any information that Portico might be able to share. Furthermore, Portico does not maintain ethnicity data on its members, and the data in the churchwide database of rostered ministers is often incomplete concerning ethnicity. Neither Portico nor the churchwide organization maintain information on rostered ministers' identification as LGBTQIA+, gender is recorded primarily on the binary with the possibility of a rostered minister to report gender only as "other," and no information on disabilities is tracked by the churchwide organization for ministers on the active rosters.

Conversation has begun about the study called for by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and how the churchwide organization can most efficiently and effectively gather information that will serve the needs of the various studies already underway or about to get underway (as listed in the assembly's action) that intersect with questions of compensation and equity. Adam DeHoek, ELCA congregation statistics analyst, will serve as a liaison to help ensure that there are efficiencies in data collection and reporting and that the various groups are sharing information across the studies. A timeline for the study will be reported at the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting.

Portico has asked for bylaw changes that the Church Council is being asked to approve at this meeting that would allow it to share compensation data for sponsored rostered ministers, which has been a challenge for such research in the past. The churchwide organization is working on data sharing policy revisions, and, working with Information Technology (IT), is completing a new quarterly report that will give Portico more of the information they need and that will allow for data matching to enable the churchwide organization to pull useful conclusions from compensation data provided by Portico.

The various changes to the Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) compensation questions that the assembly called for have been addressed and are currently in production for release in the very near future.

Church Council Action:

- To receive the progress report on "Salary Equity in the ELCA" from the Office of the Secretary;**
- To request a report on the consideration of a study identified in the memorial by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting; and**
- To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

L. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION PROCESS

Submitted by: The Rev. Kathy Gerking [Nebraska Synod, 4A]

RESOLVED, that the Church Council appoint a Task Force to explore and analyze nomination and election processes used by synods and the churchwide organization, including but not limited to the ecclesiastical ballot, in order to determine best practices and to make practical recommendations concerning options for the selection of all synod and churchwide officers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Task Force report to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council in sufficient time that potential governing document amendments and/or a report on best practices can be prepared in time for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Churchwide Assembly action [CA22.04.27]

To adopt Motion I as submitted.

Executive Committee action [EC22.09.23b11]

To refer the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action on "Motion I: Nominations and Elections Process" to the Office of the Secretary for a report or a timeline on when this will receive further attention.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

The Office of the Secretary plans to provide a report to the Church Council in November 2023, with a final report and recommendations to be brought to the Church Council at its November 2024 meeting.

Church Council Action:

To receive the timeline on “Motion I: Nominations and Elections Process” from the Office of the Secretary on when the resolution will receive further attention; and

To request a progress report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, with a final report and recommendations by the Fall 2024 Church Council meeting.

M. PROCESS AND TIMELINE TO ESTABLISH COMMISSION FOR A RENEWED LUTHERAN CHURCH

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA22.01.06]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Northeastern Ohio Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Allegheny Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, Delaware-Maryland Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod concerning the restructure of the ELCA’s governance; and

To direct the Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church comprised of leaders of diverse representation from all three expressions that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, shall reconsider the statements of purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism, and will present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

To establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church consisting of no more than 35 voting members, directing the Executive Committee of the Church Council to initiate the process of forming the commission, fulfilling the responsibilities of the Church Council related to nominations in accordance with 14.41.01.c., and receiving nominations to fill positions allocated in the following manner:

- **3 voting members from each region for a total of 27, two of whom will be selected from nominations received by each Synod Council or Synod Council Executive Committee and one of whom will be received through an open nomination process;**
- **Each Synod Council or Synod Council Executive Committee will be invited to submit two potential nominees;**
- **Up to 8 at-large voting members will be selected from either the synod nominations or the open nomination process;**

To populate the commission according to the representational principles of this church, requiring that at least 25% of the commission be persons of color/primary language other than English; and striving for at least 20% of members to be youth/young adults;

To request the nomination process be completed prior to the April 2023 Church Council meeting, presenting a slate of nominees to the Church Council for action; and

To invite this church to join us in prayer as this church embarks on this process of renewal.

II. CHURCH COUNCIL RESPONSES TO SYNOD RESOLUTIONS

A. ADDRESSING ANTI-SEMITISM IN LECTIONARY READINGS

Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2021]

WHEREAS, anti-Semitic words, deeds, and attitudes do real harm to our Jewish neighbors; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has repudiated anti-Semitism and expressed its desire to live in “love and respect for the Jewish people” (“Declaration to the Jewish Community,” 1994); and

WHEREAS, passages of the New Testament which can be interpreted as anti-Jewish or supersessionist (i.e. supporting the idea that God has rejected the Jews) are included in our lectionary; and

WHEREAS, in the time in which the New Testament was written, the word Ἰουδαῖοι (ee-oo-DIE-oy), was used as a marker of geographic and ethnic identity (that is, it denoted people from Judaea as distinct from Galilee, Samaria, or other parts of the world) and “Israelite” was used to identify the people who worshiped the God of Israel wherever they lived, that is the people whom we today would identify as “Jewish;” and

WHEREAS, the word “Jews” in the New Testament is usually an inaccurate translation of the Greek Ἰουδαῖοι, and

WHEREAS, the preferred translation used by Augsburg Fortress is the NRSV, which uses the inaccurate and potentially harmful translation “Jews” in almost every instance; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the preachers and teachers of the Northern Illinois Synod be encouraged to address the issues of anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish theology (such as the teaching that the Jewish people are responsible for the death of Jesus and/or the idea that God has rejected the Jews); and, be it further

RESOLVED, that preachers, teachers, and lectors of the Northern Illinois Synod be encouraged, when reading in public, to substitute a more appropriate translation of Ἰουδαῖοι where the English translation uses the word “Jews.” Examples include “Judeans,” “Religious Leaders,” and “locals;” and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church in order to address the issues of anti-Jewish language in this church’s lectionary and teaching materials.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.06.19c5]

To refer the “Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings” resolution from the Northern Illinois Synod to the Worship Team in the Christian Community and Leadership home area, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

The concern about anti-Jewish interpretations of biblical texts is not new and remains an important challenge for this church to address. Two issues are often at play. One is interpretation of translations of biblical texts (as this resolution identifies) and the other is how the readings are grouped together for public worship, for example in the Revised Common Lectionary.

Several resources are already available to help guide worship planners and preachers in navigating these important concerns. “Preaching and Teaching with Love and Respect for the Jewish People” is recently available from the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations. This resource explores challenging topics, lectionary selections, and Bible passages to inform Christian preaching and teaching so that they respect the integrity of the Jewish tradition and avoid anti-Jewish interpretations of New Testament texts. Another key resource developed by the panel is “Talking Points: Topics in Christian-Jewish Relations,” especially #5 on “Difficult Texts.”

An essay titled, “*The Jews*” in *John’s Passion*, was published in the 2020 edition of the Sundays and Seasons worship planning resource from Augsburg Fortress. This essay includes an emended translation of the passion according to John for use on Good Friday. This essay and emended text are now available both on sundaysandseasons.com and on ELCA.org.

Similar emendation principles were used in *Readings for the Assembly*, a three-year lectionary resource published in 1995–1997. An emended edition of *Readings for the Assembly* is being made available on sundaysandseasons.com for provisional use beginning this Advent. The Principles for Emendation note alignment with guidance on “Language and the Christian Assembly” in the 2002 ELCA document *Principles for Worship*, the updated edition of the NRSV (NRSVue) published in 2021, and follow the encouragement of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* (2019).

Ecumenical and full communion partners are having similar conversations regarding anti-Jewish interpretations of biblical readings. The Episcopal Church at its general convention in July 2022 adopted a resolution that calls for a task force “to address both the anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish or supercessionist impact of lectionary readings, especially for Holy Week, and to develop proposals to mitigate that impact.” The ELCA is a member of the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), which is an ecumenical consultation of liturgical scholars and denominational representatives from the United States and Canada. The CCT was instrumental in the development of the Revised Common Lectionary. Ongoing conversation with these groups, and others, will be important as the ELCA considers future recommendations. The ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations is prepared to support ELCA Worship team’s participation in these efforts.

The ELCA Worship team will continue conversation with key stakeholders, such as the Worship Resource Development Working Group (the combined worship teams of the churchwide organization and 1517 Media/Augsburg Fortress), the Consultation on Common Texts; ecumenical partners such as The Episcopal Church, the Conference of Bishops; and, in consultation with the executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment and the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations. In addition, the ELCA Worship team and the Worship Development staff at 1517 Media/Augsburg Fortress will ensure these topics are addressed when considering future resources such as preaching helps and worship formation.

Church Council Action:

To receive the progress report on “Addressing Anti-Semitism in Lectionary Readings” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request an update be provided by the Spring 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

B. LGBTQ+ PROGRAMMING FOR EVENTS

Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2022]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* in 2009, providing guidance on how to live with our LGBTQ+ neighbors; and,

WHEREAS, the ELCA adopted in 1995 a social policy resolution that “gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations” of the ELCA; and,

WHEREAS, the gatherings of the church (including, but not limited to, the National Youth Gathering) often include pre-gathering events or in-gathering sessions focused on specific communities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly direct the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Council to request the ELCA Church Council direct the appropriate churchwide offices develop LGBTQ-focused and LGBTQ-specific programming for use as pre-gathering events and in-gathering sessions whenever the gatherings of the church include such sessions for other communities.

Executive Committee Action [EC22.06.19c6]

To refer the “LGBTQ+ Programming for Events” resolution from the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in the Christian Community and Leadership home area 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 Christian Community and Leadership home area (November 2022)

Tammy Jones-West, interim program director for the ELCA Youth Gathering, has been apprised of this request for a pre-gathering of LGBTQIA2S youth. A response can be expected in first quarter 2023 for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering.

Church Council Action:

To receive the timeline on “LGBTQ+ Programming for Events” from the Christian Community and Leadership home area;

To request a response by the Spring 2023 Church Council meeting on LGBTQ-specific programming for pre-gathering events and in-gathering sessions for other communities; and

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

C. ELCA SUPPORT FOR THE ENERGY INNOVATION AND CARBON DIVIDEND ACT

Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2022] (*The Office of the Secretary reclassified this memorial as a resolution.*)

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth and everything therein and proclaimed it good (Gen 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Gen 2:15); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has adopted social statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999) that call for economic and environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and for economic justice, to consider how people’s actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with the *Caring for Creation* social statement, ELCA Lutherans realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children. Time is very short;” and

WHEREAS, carbon pricing is one policy tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion, which complements other tools like regulations on polluting industries and tax incentives encouraging investment in energy efficiency and renewable forms of energy production; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, over 3,500 of the United States’ leading economists across the political spectrum, including 28 Nobel Laureates and 4 former chairs of the Federal Reserve, issued a joint “Economists’ Statement on Carbon Dividends” that argued “A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary,” but also recommended “the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates,” and concluded “The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in ‘carbon dividends’ than they pay in increased energy prices;” and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Churchwide Assembly received with gratitude a memorial from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin regarding a Carbon Fee and Dividend, and the Church Council directed the Domestic Mission unit to develop “a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy;” and

WHEREAS, in October 2019 ELCA Advocacy published a primer on “Carbon Pricing Basics” that provides an overview to the topic and identifies several principles rooted in ELCA social statements that “can move us toward the pressing goal of reduced GHG emissions and just application of that [carbon] pricing or policy”; and

WHEREAS, bipartisan members of congress conceived the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act which has been successfully introduced in the last three sessions of Congress and which is broadly consistent with the following principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy’s “Carbon Pricing Basics” primer:

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

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently noted in its sixth assessment report that: carbon taxes are the most powerful and efficient [mitigation strategy], because they allow firms and households to find the lowest-cost ways of reducing energy use and shifting toward cleaner alternatives . and

WHEREAS, the IPCC also emphasizes that “any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all. ” and: “risks from mitigation costs could also be severe if no progressive redistribution from carbon pricing is applied...using tax revenues to issue payments back to taxpayers that are disproportionately impacted or to redistribute capital among regions may be one of the most important features of carbon tax policies.” Combined, these ideas advocate for a carbon tax with revenue distribution to citizens in legislation such as the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividends Act. and,

WHEREAS, as Christians it is our responsibility to speak for future generations and to advocate for climate justice, and

WHEREAS, ELCA Advocacy does advocate for particular pieces of legislation after careful review and moral grounding in the ELCA’s social statements; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorializes the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividends Act or similar legislation and direct its lobbying personnel to advocate for such legislation.

Executive Committee action (EC22.06.19c4a)

To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Southeastern Iowa Synod to the ELCA Witness in Society Team in the Service and Justice home area for further response related to endorsement of the legislation; and

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

Response from the Service and Justice home area (November 2022)

The urgent task of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches, which include carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards or GHG mitigation technologies. Carbon pricing is generally believed by economists as being the best tool for having the greatest impact in the near-term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, with the most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax.

The Witness in Society Team has developed a primer for ELCA members entitled “Carbon Pricing 101” with principles that provide a basis for ELCA evaluation of related legislation. The team has included carbon pricing as a topic in webinars, blog posts, and in creation of educational resources.

The resolution requests ELCA endorsement of a bill. Congressional offices may invite organizational endorsement of a bill to demonstrate support from civil society, with endorsers often listed at the introduction or during promotion of a bill. The ELCA rarely endorses legislation due to the probability that the provisions of a bill may change significantly over time and that there may be multiple bills on the same concern at once. Rather than

committing to a specific bill, the ELCA frames advocacy priorities by the principles or provisions that it seeks in legislation. When the ELCA does promote a bill, it prioritizes bills with bipartisan sponsorship. When the ELCA does support a specific bill, an action alert may be sent to invite the ELCA's advocacy network to contact Congress when a concerted push could help move a bill out of committee or to a vote.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act was introduced in the House of Representatives on April 1, 2021. It has 95 Democratic cosponsors and no Republican cosponsors. The bill has been referred to committee but has not received a hearing, indicating a lack of Congressional will to move the legislation forward. The ELCA's climate advocacy has focused instead on other climate-related legislation with greater promise to move forward. These efforts included the successful passage of the Infrastructure Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. These landmark pieces of legislation will have a transformational impact on U.S. carbon emissions and the effort to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. ELCA Witness in Society will continue to monitor legislative opportunities on carbon pricing in the next Congress.

Church Council Action:

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

To affirm the Witness in Society Team's decision to not endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation;

To direct the Witness in Society Team to continue its climate advocacy efforts on legislative opportunities that will have a transformational impact on U.S. carbon emissions and achieve net zero emissions by 2050; and

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

D. ELCA NAME CHANGE

Southwest California Synod (2B) [2022] *(The Southwest California Synod Assembly ran out of time to act on the “ELCA Name Change” as a memorial. Therefore, the Southwest California Synod Council has forwarded it to the Church Council for its action.)*

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” appears in the name of our denomination (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: ELCA) and our primary worship book (Evangelical Lutheran Worship: ELW); and

WHEREAS, the constituting members of the ELCA and the Commission for a New Lutheran Church which led into the ELCA's formation held to the historic view and value of the word “evangelical” as meaning “pertaining to the Gospel;” and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” was hoped to be maintained in its historic usage and sense at the time of the ELCA's formation; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” has become culturally synonymous in the U.S. with a religious expression and belief that is not compatible with the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” in the U.S. now culturally refers to fundamentalist Christianity including many forms of exclusion which we find to be contrary to the “evangel” (gospel) including the ordination of women and LGBTQ persons; and

WHEREAS, the word “evangelical” is now representative of a narrow swath of conservative Christian denominations and sects rather than a broad notion of being Gospel-centric and inclusive of all persons; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the word “evangelical” be discontinued in use and stricken from the name of our denomination and future books of worship; and be it further

RESOLVED that ELCA Church Council determine the nature of the transition in the use of the word “evangelical” in our denominational title leading up to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Southwest California memorialize the ELCA 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to discontinue the use the use of the word “evangelical” in our denomination name and to adopt a new name for the denomination which more faithfully reflects its identity in the U.S.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c8]

To refer the “ELCA Name Change” resolution from the Southwest California Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of certain memorials that are coming before the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

On April 6, 2018, *Living Lutheran* published an article written by the Rev. Robert C. Blezard titled, “The ‘e’ word: Why does the ELCA have the word “evangelical” in its name?” where he addressed the historical significance of using the word “evangelical” in this church's denominational name and the challenges of using a word where society and culture have shifted the word's original meaning.

In light of the pending work to be accomplished with the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary recommend that consideration of a denominational name change be given to the commission.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on “ELCA Name Change” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary;

To request the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church consider the question of whether the denomination name, “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” should be changed;

To anticipate a recommendation when the commission presents its findings for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

E. ADOPTION OF GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Southwest California Synod (2B) [2022] (*The Southwest California Synod Assembly ran out of time to act on the “Adoption of Gender-Inclusive Language” as a memorial. Therefore, the Southwest California Synod Council has forwarded it to the Church Council for its action.*)

WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly voted to accept the response to memorials about Gender Identity (Churchwide 2019 Assembly Action CA19.02.09 per Category 4: Gender Identity); and

WHEREAS, that we thank the Churchwide Assembly for accepting the Memorial from the Sierra Pacific Synod in 2019 and requesting “that the Church Council consider authorizing development of a social message on gender identity and gender expression” (pg. 48); and

WHEREAS, the Memorials and Resolutions Report of 2019 (adopted above) requested “the Office of the Presiding Bishop provide materials to facilitate education among ELCA members so as to build awareness of the broad varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation among God's people, as well as to provide pastoral care insights regarding concerns and issues of the transgender experience and gender nonconformity;” and

WHEREAS, in the ELCA Social Statement “Faith, Sexism, and Justice” (adopted in 2019) the ELCA commits to use inclusive language (all genders) for humankind and inclusive and expansive language (other than human) for God. (pg 8, paragraph 27); and

WHEREAS, some demographic requirements and data collection remains rooted in binary gender norms; and

WHEREAS, nonbinary and gender expansive lay leaders of our church deserve the use of inclusive language to determine where they are eligible to serve in synod roles; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to adopt gender-inclusive language across all governance documents, forms and reports by the end of 2022; specifically including options for “gender nonbinary” and “other” for all demographic data gathering regarding gender; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod in Assembly memorialize The ELCA Church Council to adopt a social message on gender identity and gender expression to be applied throughout ELCA official forms, documents, and resources by 2025.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c9]

To refer the “Adoption of Gender-Inclusive Language” resolution from the Southwest California Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of related actions already taken; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

Many of the amendments to the governing documents that were adopted by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly eliminated gendered references to people and provided for use of more inclusive language. The amendments were based on an extensive review of the constitutions of this church by Office of the Secretary staff.

At its Spring 2022 meeting, the Church Council directed “the churchwide organization to adhere to the ‘ELCA Style Guide’ to ensure the appropriate usage of gender-inclusive language in ELCA communications and documents.” [CC22.04.17p] In addition, the churchwide organization is updating its forms and reports to provide options for “gender nonbinary” and “other” in demographic data gathering regarding gender. The churchwide organization staff hopes to complete another review of its forms and reports by the end of 2023.

In November 2021, the Church Council considered a social message on gender identity and acted “to release the request to develop a social message on gender identity and gender expression in light of the various actions already underway to address the topic, with the understanding that the ELCA will continue its ongoing efforts to address the concerns expressed in the “Gender Identity” memorial [CA19.02.09].” [CC21.11.25m4]

Some of those efforts underway include educational resources developed through the Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment ministry, including a study guide session that explores *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action's* rejection of harmful sex and gender stereotypes and the statement's affirmation that all persons are equal members of the body of Christ. There is also education on two-spirit through the ELCA's ethnic-specific ministries and the launch of "The Naming Project" where one of the directors is a deacon in the ELCA. The program helps to "meet the needs of youth who are dealing with coming out, sexuality, gender identity, and faith." Educational resources continue to be lifted up through <https://www.elca.org/lgbtqia>.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on "Adoption of Gender-Inclusive Language" from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary;

To support the previous actions by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council related to gender-inclusive language as outlined in the response;

To commend the ongoing efforts in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to develop educational resources that build awareness of the broad varieties of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation;

To urge the churchwide organization to conduct another review and update of its forms and reports for gender-inclusive language by the end of 2023; and

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

F. GUIDANCE ON RETIRED/RETIRING MINISTERS ON THE ROSTER OF THE ELCA

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2021]

Bishop Kurt Kusserow submitted a letter to the Church Council on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council seeking guidance with retired or retiring ministers from the roster of the church whose status is in question or uncertain. Specifically, the synod council is asking about the required triennial review of the ministers on this church's retired roster and to propose that the guidance be added to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for the benefit of the whole church.

Church Council action [CC21.04.06s]

To receive the request from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council requesting guidance regarding the review of retired ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To refer the matter to the Office of the Secretary for further research and to request that a response be provided at the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and

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

Response from Office of the Secretary (November 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 Bishop 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.

Church Council action [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.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

Following the last report from the Office of the Secretary in April 2022, a working group was convened to draft revised text outlining a process for the synods' review of retired and retiring rostered ministers. The draft was presented to the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops at the committee's September 2022 meeting and was subsequently described to the Conference of Bishops in a plenary session of the Fall 2022 Conference of Bishops meeting. After discussion, because the process being proposed overlaps with similar questions concerning granting and review of On Leave from Call (OLFC) for rostered ministers, the Roster Committee recommended that this proposed revision be postponed until after other decisions are made.

Church Council Action:

To receive the report on "Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers for the Roster of the ELCA" from the Office of the Secretary;

To support the recommendation of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops to postpone the revision until other related decisions are made; and

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

G. CONCURRENT CALLING OF PASTORS BY MORE THAN ONE SYNOD

Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2022]

WHEREAS, ELCA Constitution 7.44A19 "Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament" b. "Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament" 1.2 reads:

| <i>Setting</i> | <i>Calling Body</i> |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>1.2 Multiple-congregation parish</i> | <i>Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal</i> |
| <i>1.21 Pastor</i> | <i>One of the participating congregations</i> |
| <i>1.22 Other pastoral arrangements</i> | <i>One of the participating congregations</i> |

WHEREAS, pastors more and more are being asked to serve more than one congregation; and

WHEREAS, each congregation, as a place where the Promises of Jesus are proclaimed to gathered people, has the authority to call a person to be their proclaimer of those promises of Jesus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the ELCA Church Council work up a resolution to be presented at the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly that allows more than one congregation concurrently to call the same person as pastor, and to make all necessary changes to its constitution.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c3]

To refer the "Concurrent Calling of Pastors by More than One Congregation" resolution from the Upstate New York Synod to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide organization office or home area, 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 Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

This question will need to be discerned with the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with the Leadership Committee and the Roster Committee of that body. Any change would require amendments to the governing documents and revision of the roster manual.

After discussion with the Christian Community and Leadership home area, the Office of the Secretary plans to bring a report and proposed timeline to the Church Council at its November 2023 meeting, with a final report and recommendations to be brought to the Church Council at its November 2024 meeting.

Church Council Action:

To receive the timeline on “Concurrent Calling of Pastors by More than One Congregation” from the Office of the Secretary on when the resolution will receive further attention;

To request a progress report by the Fall 2023 Church Council meeting, with a final report and recommendations by the Fall 2024 Church Council meeting; and

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

H. EXTENDING PASTORAL COUNSELING THROUGH PRIVATE PRACTICE

Northwest Intermountain Synod (1D) [2021]

WHEREAS, “Pastoral counseling, rooted in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the church, is an intrinsic part of the health and healing ministry of the church, seeking to foster spiritual wholeness and mental health as a style of ministry integrated into the total mission of the church,” as stated in the ELCA Ministries in Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education, (MPCPCE) Endorsement Standards and Procedures, Call Criteria, Program Guidelines, Revised and Adopted, Congregational & Synodical Mission, May 2012, hereafter referenced as “MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual,” (p.15); and

WHEREAS, Jesus himself encourages care of the stranger saying, “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing,” Matthew 25:35–36; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing anxiety, grief, and mental health needs worldwide, increasing opportunity for pastoral counseling ministry extending care from our church in the world; and

WHEREAS, pastoral counseling in the ELCA is part of specialized ministries which are, “missional by nature and are a part of the church’s outreach ministry to the ill, the imprisoned, the elderly, the troubled, the conflicted, and the afflicted,” (MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual, Introduction, B. Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education, B.1. Rooted in the Gospel, p.3); and

WHEREAS, pastoral counseling in private practice rather than an agency setting is not explicitly prohibited or acknowledged in the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual and has historically been extended as a valid ELCA ministry; and

WHEREAS, geographic locations may not have any Lutheran affiliated or recognized social ministry counseling organizations, but state licensure may support private practice opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual defines expectations of pastoral counselors to include active membership in an ELCA congregation, and, “They are also responsible for making themselves and their expertise available to synods, congregations, and rostered workers in the church. Such availability may include regular participating in meetings and committees of rostered leaders, being available as speakers and consultants, and being active interpreters of specialized pastoral care as an extended ministry of the church in the world,” (ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual, p.18–19); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended to include a second bullet following under p.18, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, A. Criteria, 6. Criteria F. Ministry Accountability, a. Institutional/Agency Accountability, saying:

Pastoral counselors working in a private practice setting will create an Advisory Board to meet at least annually to provide oversight, performance review, and acknowledgement of continued maintenance of ELCA requirements for rostered ministers in public ministry. Private practice pastoral counselors are required to hold general liability business insurance in addition to professional liability insurance. They must include a statement in informed consent documentation for clients seeking pastoral counseling removing liability for the ELCA or local ELCA congregations. Private practice pastoral counselors must clearly identify themselves as “Christian” therapists in public advertising and marketing. And be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA legal counsel provide the liability statement to be included in private practice counselor’s informed consent documents and clarify any other needed actions to support private practice pastoral counselors of the ELCA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.20, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, B. Procedures, 2. For Employment, paragraph 2, final sentence after “employing organization” add, “or private practice counseling opportunity.”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.20, III. Criteria and Procedures for Call, B. Procedures, 2. For Employment, paragraph 4, first sentence after the words “employing organization” add, “or the private practice pastoral counseling business has been created in accordance with state and federal laws and requirements.”; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA MPCPCE Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual be amended on p.24, IV. Program Guidelines for Church Related Organizations, D. Quality Assurance, below the existing text add, “5. For Private Practice Pastoral Counselors, a volunteer Advisory Board must be formed to provide an annual review and ongoing accountability to Ordination and Ecclesiastical Endorsement Standards as well as state licensure laws and professional

requirements. See suggested guidelines for the Advisory Board below:” then insert the following “Advisory Board Agreement” attached to this Resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Conference of Bishops be invited to hold continuity in annually renewing synod calls to specialized ministers despite geographic location or historic practice that might differ from annual review and renewal; and be it further

RESOLVED, that private practice pastoral counseling be fully acknowledged and supported as a valid extension of rostered ministry in the ELCA for our world.

Executive Committee action [EC21.06.13b]

To refer the “Extending Pastoral Counseling through Private Practice” resolution from the Northwest Intermountain Synod Council to the Office of the Secretary and the Christian Community and Leadership unit for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention;

To ask the Conference of Bishops to consider annually renewing synod calls to specialized ministers despite geographic location and historic practice that might differ from annual review and renewal; and

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

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

This question will need to be discerned with the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with the Leadership Committee and the Roster Committee of that body, as well as with the Christian Community and Leadership home area. Any change would require amendments to the governing documents and revision of the roster manual. Furthermore, this question would seem to fall under the review of Specialized Ministry called for by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and would most appropriately be part of the recommendations to be made as a result of that review.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on “Extending Pastoral Counseling through Private Practice” from the Office of the Secretary;

To direct the review team that will be initiating a review process of the roster manual and the constitutional provisions and policies and procedures as it relates to Specialized Ministry to incorporate this matter into its review; and

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

I. PAID LEAVE FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2022]

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council modifies the language of the resolution on Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers as follows: “It is recommended that congregations develop a program for parental leave which includes childbearing and childcare leave. The program should include both the birth and adoption of children and cover full salary, housing, and benefits with the understanding that the individual would return to work for a minimum of six months after taking the leave. It is recommended that any time a child is added to a household of a pastor [deacon], congregations provide at least 12 paid weeks of child-bearing leave for the birthing caregiver and at least 8 paid weeks of childcare leave for the non-birthing caregiver. This allows time to recover from the physical demands of childbirth, as well as for parents to spend time bonding with the child. A minimum of 6 weeks leave with full compensation is strongly encouraged. Congregations are also encouraged to consider the provisions of the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which allow for up to 12 weeks leave (which can be a combination of paid and unpaid leave). FMLA leave can be used for personal or family member care situations;” and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in Assembly direct the Synod Council to petition the ELCA Church Council to request that Portico explore providing child-bearing leave and childcare leave coverage for congregations in which a child is added to the rostered minister’s household.

Executive Committee action (EC22.06.19c7)

To refer the “Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers” resolution from Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to Portico Benefit Services 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 Portico Benefit Services (November 2022)

Portico Benefit Services (“Portico”) has reviewed the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod resolution related to parental and medical leave. Portico is in agreement and supportive of the value of children, the importance of their care and early nurture, and the need for parents/caregivers to be given the time to provide the early care/nurture.

Portico recommends that synods evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating Parental and Medical Leave policies for their synod.

ELCA benefits provided by Portico (and all church plans) are regulated at the national level, providing economies of scale for the ELCA. In response to this resolution, Portico has evaluated the feasibility of providing a national parental and medical leave benefit offering for congregations. The evaluation found that:

- A parental and medical leave benefit is challenging for Portico to administer; Portico lacks first-hand information so it is not aware of the member's work schedule to know when an absence begins and its associated compensation stops, limiting the ability to continue compensation seamlessly. Continuing compensation locally is far more likely to avoid compensation interruption than transferring compensation continuation to another entity and then back again after the leave ends.
- The FMLA's timely notification of leave requirement and collection of necessary documentation is often an iterative process. This process presents challenges for accurate and effective administration by Portico.
- Many states have laws that provide benefits beyond the FMLA, creating a patchwork of compliance and costs by state that prevent this church from offering and administering a single plan on a nationwide basis.
- If a new benefit were to be set up for the whole church, an initial assessment would likely be required to fund the start-up trust and retain competent expertise to administer the benefit. This will result in a program that may be more expensive to congregations than the cost of continuing payroll during a leave from the congregation's general assets. As good stewards of benefit resources, a benefit that is more costly provided across the whole church is in conflict with the expectations this church gains economies of scale by coming together to source and provide benefits.
- These many administrative challenges and expenses may result in delay, frustration, and dissatisfaction with this benefit.

Given that this potential benefit is not likely to result in a satisfying benefit offering, Portico recommends that synods evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating parental and medical leave policies and resources where appropriate for their synod.

Church Council Action:

- To receive the response on “Paid Leave for Rostered Ministers” from Portico Benefit Services;**
- To encourage synods to evaluate their compensation guidelines and consider incorporating parental and medical leave policies and resources where appropriate for their synod; and**
- To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

**J. JUSTICE FOR THE REV. NELSON RABELL-GONZALEZ
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F) [2022]**

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod commends the ELCA presiding bishop on her establishment of a Listening Panel in Sierra Pacific Synod. Based on the outcome of the listening panel, this synod requests that appropriate actions be recommended and implemented to ensure a just resolution, and we pray for a healthy and just resolution for all; and, be it further,

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod recommends that the ELCA presiding bishop and the Church Council reform the process used when a rostered minister is under investigation so that it allows the rostered minister opportunity for response, investigation, transparency, and appeal.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c2]

To refer the “Justice for the Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez” resolution from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention, particularly in light of related memorials that are coming before the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary (November 2022)

The Sierra Pacific Synod, led by interim Bishop Claire Burkat, is investigating the circumstances surrounding the removal of Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez from the roster, with a view towards achieving a healthy and just resolution, as called for in the first resolve. The churchwide organization, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary, is supporting this investigation.

Similarly, while each synod has its own process for investigating rostered ministers, the churchwide organization is addressing the second resolve in a number of ways. In Spring 2022, the Church Council authorized the creation of

the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color, which is “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.” [CC22.04.04] In addition, the 2022 Churchwide Assembly tasked the churchwide organization with reviewing the “Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” and the constitutional provisions and policies and procedures as they relate to interim, transition, bridge, specialized, non-parish-based, and innovative calls, as well as on-leave from call status, protocols for removal from the rosters, and communication protocols. [CA22.04.24] The expectation is that the groups working on these issues will address the concerns in this resolution, and this resolution will be forwarded to these groups.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on “Justice for the Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary;

To request the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color and the review team for the roster manual to address the concerns identified in this resolution as they complete their work; and

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

K. PREFERRED VENDORS AND PRIVACY

Alaska Synod (1A) [2022]

WHEREAS, recently a third party ‘preferred’ financial vendor to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shared Alaska congregational financial and benevolence records to promote their new products; and

WHEREAS, each congregation is considered its own legal entity responsible for their financial records, keeping those records up to date, secure, and private in all regards to their member’s giving patterns and amounts; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Lutheran congregations’ control and share who receives their financial records upon request, and if they wish to share their records such as, congregations sharing that information with the Alaska Synod and their own financial institutions. Even then individual congregational members names and the amount of their benevolence is not shared; and

WHEREAS, it is wrong and unethical, that the financial culture of the United States at this time is that corporations buy and sell names, financial records, and the spending habits gleaned from multiple electronic sources. In short, it is an invasion of an American individual’s privacy for corporations to exchange and deal in financial records for profit. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America should not sanction this abuse of privacy; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that outside ELCA church third party vendors are not allowed to exchange any financial information with individuals, other business, ELCA synod offices or other congregations and that if an ELCA “preferred vendor” does exchange benevolence and financial information without prior written permission, they automatically lose their ‘preferred vendor’ status; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod Assembly direct the Alaska Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Executive Committee action [EC22.06.19c1]

To refer the “Preferred Vendors and Privacy” resolution from the Alaska Synod to the Office of the Treasurer, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary, 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 Office of the Treasurer (November 2022)

The ELCA churchwide organization has been in conversation with its preferred vendors and confirmed that no individual personally identifiable information (PII) was shared from the vendors to other organizations or individuals.

Each congregation signs an individual contract with a preferred vendor. As part of the contract, the congregation acknowledges the privacy policy of the vendor. In relation to this resolution, churchwide organization staff have confirmed that each of the vendors follows its privacy policy and has not shared information with synods or the churchwide organization that is in violation of its privacy policy.

Information that may be shared within the terms of the privacy policy between the vendors and synods or the churchwide organization is not for the purpose of marketing or sales of new products, but for the purpose of improving the value that its products have for the church.

Church Council Action:

To receive the response on “Preferred Vendors and Privacy” from the Office of the Treasurer;

**To affirm that outside ELCA “preferred vendors” are not allowed to exchange any financial information with individuals, other businesses, synods, or other congregations that would be in violation of the vendor’s privacy policy and that if an ELCA “preferred vendor” does exchange individual personally identifiable information without prior written permission, the vendor would lose its “preferred vendor” status; and
To request that the secretary inform the synod of this action.**

III. CHURCH COUNCIL RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS

A. RACIAL JUSTICE OMBUDSPERSON POSITION

Background

Church Council action [CC22.06.20]

To receive the request to explore creation of the position of a Racial Justice Ombudsperson with a report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop delivered to the Church Council at its Fall 2022 meeting;

To acknowledge the previous action of the council to create “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” (CC22.04.04); and

To review the role and membership of the ELCA Response Team.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2022)

The Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color held its first Microsoft Teams meeting on Oct. 4, 2022. Judith Roberts, senior director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, facilitated the conversation with task force members. The agenda opened with a devotion, prayer, an introduction of task force members, and a review of the 2019 Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity recommendation for the creation of an ombudsperson position within the churchwide organization. The conversation was followed by examples of the impact for leaders of color and communities they served when disciplinary actions occur. The task force received a brief presentation on the current churchwide DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) portfolios, and where an ombudsperson position might be housed within the current organization. The meeting concluded with a conversation regarding expectations of work, timeline for completion, and engagement with additional churchwide staff. The task force is scheduled to meet again virtually on Dec. 1, 2022.

Church Council Action:

To receive the report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop concerning the exploration of a Racial Justice Ombudsperson position; and

To encourage the continued conversation within the Task Force Addressing Disciplinary Concerns of Leaders of Color.

B. DECLARATION OF THE ELCA TO PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Background

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

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

Church Council action [CC19.06.23]

...To direct Planning, Research and Evaluation to measure and report progress on the discriminatory treatment within the call process and to urge Portico to assist with providing information to the churchwide organization to measure and report progress on inequitable compensation of clergy of color by the November 2021 meeting of the Church Council...

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Nov. 2021)

Due to the transition of related research staff, the progress report will be delayed, and the Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area will not be ready to report by the Nov. 2021 meeting. However, this work is expected

to be included as part of the Quality of Call project, which is considering barriers faced by women, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ pastors in the ELCA.

Additionally, Portico Benefit Services has reported that 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.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Spring 2022)

The 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.

Church Council action [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.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (November 2022)

The Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area consulted with the Quality of Call Initiative, studying average worship attendance with leaders of color compared to their white companions in three synods. Unfortunately, with so few leaders of color, the data did not reveal useful information. The newly formed Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group is identifying barriers that people of color have experienced and will pilot solutions based on what is learned. That information will be reported to Church Council in a separate and ongoing report. In addition, the 2022 Churchwide Assembly adopted a memorial titled "Salary Equity in the ELCA" [CA22.02.11] that is addressing similar inequitable compensation issues.

Church Council Action:

To receive the report from the Christian Community and Leadership home area regarding the research work related to discriminatory treatment within the call process and the inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color;

To acknowledge and commend the research work that is underway to address inequities in the call process and compensation patterns; and

To direct further reports on the related topics be provided to the Christian Community and Leadership Committee through the work occurring on the "Salary Equity in the ELCA" memorial and from the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.