Exhibits List
Church Council
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 12-15, 2015

Augsburg Fortress Digest of Board Actions
Augsburg Fortress, Publishers Summary
Authority to Act on Financial Matters
Biographies [*not public*]
Campaign for the ELCA Report
Campus Ministry Report
Cash and Investments
CGA Required Reading Documents
CGA Required Reserve Guidelines
Charitable Trust Investment Policies
COB Recommendations re TEAC
Core Investment Policies
Declaration on the Way
En Bloc Items
Future Directions and Priorities of the ELCA
Letter from Leads of ELCA Seminaries re TEAC
M2SGF Working Group Report and Recommendations
Motion Regarding TEAC
New Business Commitment on Racism
Portico Benefit Services Summary
Portico Digest of Board Actions
CSR Screen and Issue Papers
Progress Report on April 2015 Church Council Actions
Proposed Amendments to NLCM, Inc. Bylaws
Proposed Amendments to NLCM, Inc. Articles of Inc
Rationale Memo for CBCR Amendments
Report and Recommendations from TEAC
Report of the Audit Committee
Report of the Conference of Bishops
Report of the Executive for Administration
Report of the Executive for Administration
Report of the Presiding Bishop
Report of the Secretary
Report of the Treasurer
Report of the Vice President
Resource Information from EIR
Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions
Responses to Synodical Resolutions
Seminary Responses to TEAC
Social Message on Gender-based Violence
Table and Font Communion Practices Report
Word and Service Task Force

Augsburg Fortress, Publishing House of the ELCA Digest of Board Actions
Submitted by: Beth A. Lewis, President and CEO
Date of Board Meetings: April 17-18, 2015 and October 16-17, 2015

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 October 17-18, 2014 and December 18, 2014 Board of Trustees meetings in open session. (PH.15.04.01)
    Voted to elect the following persons to serve as officers and members of the Executive Committee to serve a special transition term of September 1, 2015-September 2016:

1. Chair: Bob Hahn
2. Vice Chair: Mark Brokering
3. Secretary: Susan Worst
4. Chair, Audit Committee Rosemary Ohles
5. Chair, Board Development Committee Rob Flynn
6. At-Large: (only if one person is serving in two of the above roles)
7. Ex Officio: Presiding Bishop's Representative(s) Chris Boerger
8. Ex Officio: AF President and CEO Beth Lewis.

and to express appreciation for the leadership provided by the members of the current Executive Committee:

1. Chair: Linda Brown
2. Vice Chair: Timothy Maudlin
3. Secretary: Susan Worst
4. Chair, Audit Committee: Robert Hahn
5. Chair, Board Development Committee: Robert Flynn
6. Ex Officio: Presiding Bishop's Rep Chris Boerger
7. Ex Officio: AF President and CEO Beth Lewis   (PH.15.04.02)

    Voted to express appreciation and extend thanks to Timothy I. Maudlin for his six years of service as a member of this board. (PH.15.04.03)
    Voted to approve the minutes of the April 17-18, 2015 Board of Trustees meeting in open session. (PH.15.10.04)
    Voted to express appreciation and extend thanks to Linda Brown for her four years of service as Board Chair. (PH.15.10.05)
    Voted to elect the following persons to serve as members of the Audit Committee: Linda Brown and Daniel Currell. (PH.15.10.06)

Executive Session actions
    Voted to approve the minutes of the October 17-18, 2014; December 18, 2014; and February 26, 2015 Board of Trustees meetings in executive session. (PH/ES.15.04.01)
    Voted to receive the 2014 financial statements audit report as submitted. (PH/ES.15.04.02)
    Voted to approve the minutes of the April 17-18, 2015 Board of Trustees meeting in executive session. (PH/ES.15.10.03)

Category 3: (*Other procedures and board actions.*)
    None

Publishing House of the ELCA (Augsburg Fortress)
Submitted by Beth A. Lewis

Worship & Music Resources for Congregations from Augsburg Fortress

    The Augsburg Fortress and churchwide worship teams continue to work closely together to craft worship resources specifically for ELCA congregations and other ministries, especially through the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *Sundays and Seasons* resource families. Our most ambitious project this summer was a complete migration and upgrade of our most widely-used resource, sundaysandseasons.com, to a new platform. This 10-year-old worship planning resource needed to move to a more current platform in order to streamline it for ease-of-use, and to add features that had been requested by users. In addition, we added optional content including a new preaching module, a new video module, and with our enhanced integration tools, Deluxe subscribers and PreludeMusicPlanner subscribers may now edit worship plans within each program.

    In October, we published our devotional for Lent 2016, Bearing Fruit: Devotions for Lent. This annual publication has proven to be a helpful spiritual discipline resource for many synods, retirement homes and congregations, many of which purchase them in quantity for every household.

    We are hard at work on a number of resources to assist congregations with commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Our Reformation Sourcebook will be published in 2016, but a sampler was mailed to every ELCA congregation this summer.

Faith Formation Resources for Congregations from sparkhouse

    More and more ELCA, ELCIC and other mainline congregations continue to select our innovative sparkhouse faith formation resources each year! We continue to add adopters of our children's Sunday school resources *Spark, Whirl* (Revised Common Lectionary-based), *Holy Moly*, and *Connect* each year. Recently, Pr. Paul Bialie (Iglesia Luterana San Lucas, Eagle Pass, Texas) posted on Facebook that he uses our *Holy Moly* videos effectively in his predominantly Spanish-speaking congregation because they tell Bible stories without using words in any language; just clever animation, sounds and music.

    In July, we launched a brand new Lutheran confirmation resource, *CoLABorate*. With print learner and leader resources, combined with animated videos and an NRSV Bible, CoLABorate invites learners to frame the problem (co-); interact with the content in a group (-lab-); and, share their thoughts with others (-orate). In September, just as congregations were beginning to use CoLABorate with their students, Pr. Gail Rautmann (Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Lynnwood, Washington) posted this on the ELCA Clergy group on Facebook: *"Big shout-out to Augsburg for the new Colaborate curriculum. I couldn't get the kids to stop asking profound questions last night, our first night as a class. At the end, a seventh grade boy, new to the church, asked, 'Is it going to be like this all the time? That was a lot fun.'"*

Resources for Families from Sparkhouse Family

    One of the many requests we have heard from across the Church is for ways to reach families with children who may not regularly participate in church life. On August 4, we launched Sparkhouse Family to enthusiastic support from church leaders, bookstore buyers and families. The books, Bibles, storybook bibles and animated videos are adapted from our popular sparkhouse children's curricula. In the future, this team will also publish a number of original content resources for use in the home and on the go. One of the features of these resources are the online parent guides that assist caregivers by providing background information and conversation

starters to use with their children. We also offer a Sparkhouse Family blog that provides parenting insights, and several social media communities via Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

The books, Bibles and DVD's are available directly from us and through retail bookstores (both physical and online) throughout the USA. In addition, the videos are available in streaming formats both on our Sparkhouse Family website or on our Sparkhouse Family Roku channel. We have also partnered with the MOPS organization to reach families with young children.

Resources for Higher Education and Adult Readers from Fortress Press

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation is also receiving publishing attention by Fortress Press. Some of our current and forthcoming resources related to the Reformation are featured beginning on page 29 of our fall 2015 Fortress Press catalog. Our Fortress Press colleagues are having fun with their Road to the Reformation website and social media efforts via Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

A few of our many new Fortress Press publications since the April Church Council meeting include:

- *Johannes Bugenhagen: Selected Writings, Volume I and Volume II*; Kurt K. Hendel
- *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West;* Todd H Green
- *Sin Boldly!: Justifying Faith for Fragile and Broken Souls;* Ted Peters
- *Resilient Reformer: The Life and Thought of Martin Luther;* Timothy F. Lull and Derek R Nelson
- *The Creative Word, Second Edition: Canon as a Model for Biblical Education;* Walter Brueggemann
- *Reading the Bible in an Age of Crisis: Political Exegesis for a New Day;* Bruce Worthington, Editor
- *Introduction to the History of Christianity in the United States: Revised and Expanded Edition;* Nancy Koester
- *The Annotated Luther, Vol. 1: The Roots of Reform;* Timothy J. Wengert, volume editor
- *The Annotated Luther, Vol. 2: Word and Faith;* Kirsi I Stjerna, volume editor
- *Atlas of the European Reformations;* Tim Dowley, editor
- *The Student Bible Atlas: Revised Edition;* Tim Dowley, editor
- *Paul and His Recent Interpreters;* N.T. Wright
- *The Homebrewed Christianity Guide to Jesus: Lord, Liar, Lunatic . . . Or Awesome?;* Tripp Fuller, author and series editor
- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works: Readers Editions;* Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- *51% Christian: Finding Faith after Certainty;* Mark Stenberg
- *When Lightning Struck!: The Story of Martin Luther;* Danika Cooley
- *The Crucified God: 40th Anniversary Edition;* Jürgen Moltmann, author, with a new foreword by Miroslav Volf

All of the above titles are available in print & eBook formats

Summary

Thank you for your interest in and continuing support of your ministry of publishing! We welcome suggestions from our partners in ministry from across this church. Please send your thoughts or questions to Beth Lewis at ceo@augsburgfortress.org.

Financial Institutions

- To open accounts - Treasurer + 1 of Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration

- To change existing accounts - Treasurer (preference) or Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration

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Commercial Transactions -
not involving real property or borrowing

- Transactions of $250K and greater - Treasurer + 1 of Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration

- Transactions between $30K - $250K - Treasurer (preference) or Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration
  – If all above are unavailable, 2 assistant treasurers required with attestation of 1 assistant secretary

- Annual reporting to BFC

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Commercial Transactions -
real property or borrowing (other than gifts)

- Treasurer + 1 of Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration

- If Treasurer is unavailable - 1 of Bishop/Secretary/Exec for Administration + 1 assistant treasurer required, with attestation of Secretary or assistant secretary

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Assistant Officers

- Assistant vice presidents – Wyvetta Bullock, Walter May, Marcus Kunz, Jodi Slattery; replacements made by the Presiding Bishop

- Assistant treasurers – Robert Benson, Christina Jackson-Skelton, Christopher Carpenter-Majors, Annette Roman; replacements made by the Treasurer

- Assistant secretaries – Phil Harris, Laura Knitt, Sue Rothmeyer; Tom Cunniff; replacements made by the Secretary

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Act for ELCA as trustee (gift instruments)

Treasurer + Executive Director for MA (preference)

Treasurer or Executive Director for MA

If both are unavailable, 2 assistant treasurers required with attestation of secretary/assistant secretary

Together,
we can do more.

As we reflect on what we have already

accomplished together as the ELCA,
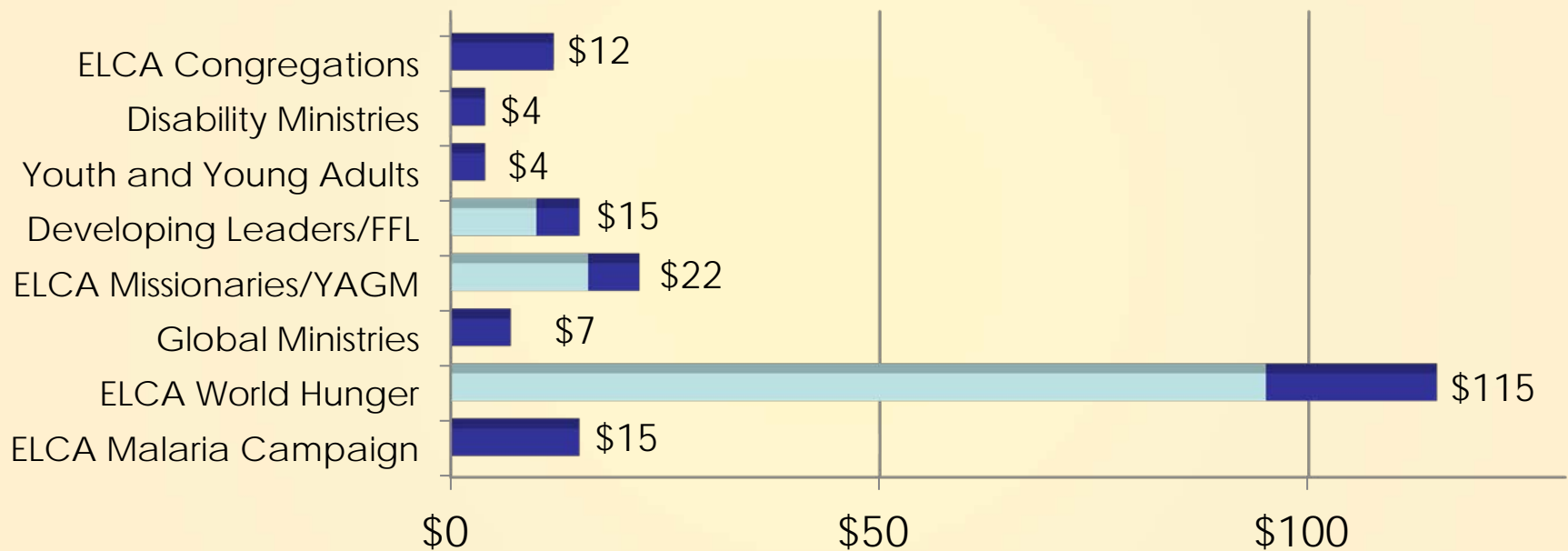
there is much to celebrate.

But now is our moment.

And *Always Being Made New:*

The Campaign for the ELCA

is our chance to do more.

The Campaign for the ELCA
Comprehensive goals – $198 million

Category	Value
ELCA Congregations	$12
Disability Ministries	$4
Youth and Young Adults	$4
Developing Leaders/FFL	$15
ELCA Missionaries/YAGM	$22
Global Ministries	$7
ELCA World Hunger	$115
ELCA Malaria Campaign	$15

$0 $50 $100

Always being made **New.**

25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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The Campaign for the ELCA
Expanded goals – $77 million

Bar chart of campaign goals:
- ELCA Congregations: $12
- Disability Ministries: $4
- Youth and Young Adults: $4
- Developing Leaders/FFL: $15
- ELCA Missionaries/YAGM: $22
- Global Ministries: $7
- ELCA World Hunger: $115
- ELCA Malaria Campaign: $15

Horizontal axis: $0, $50, $100

Always being made **New.**
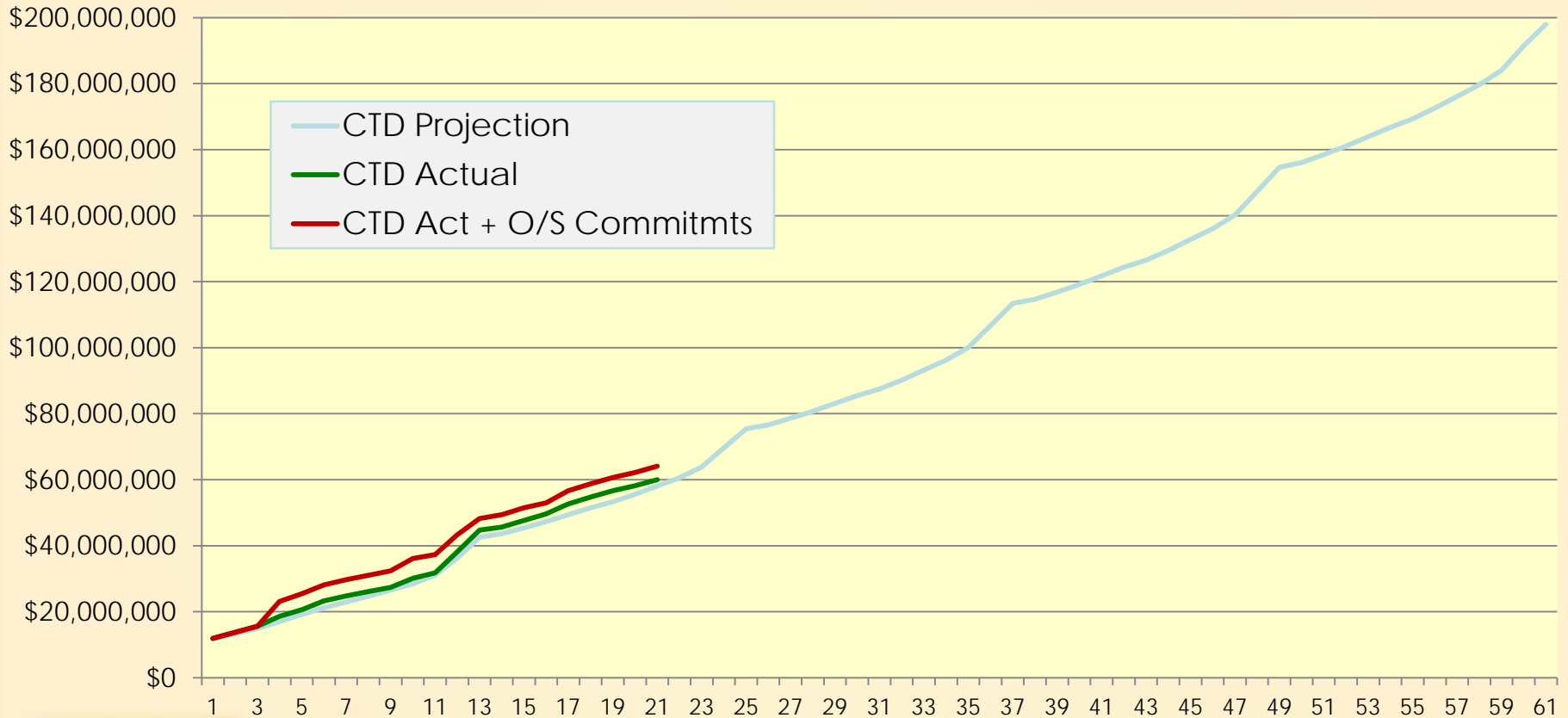
25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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Congregations

Congregations

Proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ

- Renewing Congregations $8 million
- ELCA New Congregations $4 million
- Disability Ministries $4 million

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Renewing Congregations

Renewing Congregations – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections
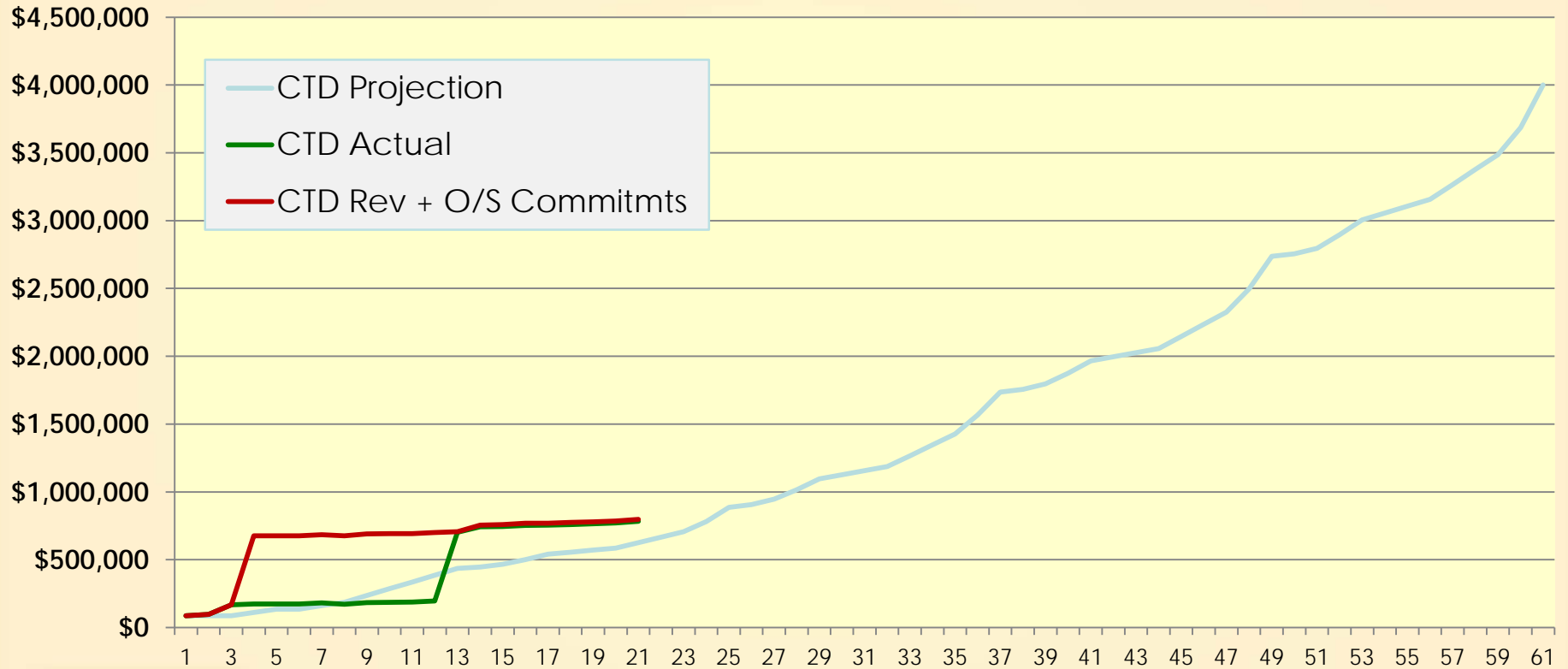
25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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ELCA New Congregations
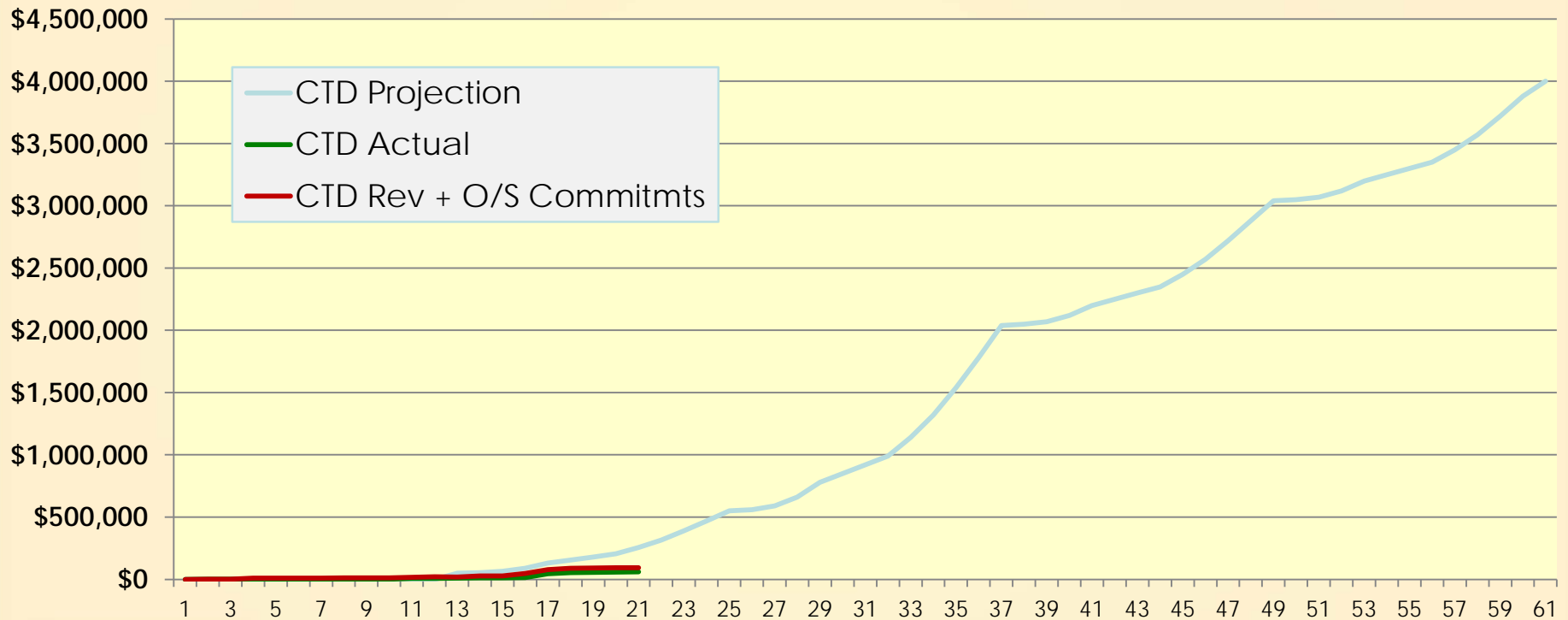
Disability Ministries

Leadership

Leadership

Encourage future leaders for God's work
- ELCA Fund for Leaders $15 million
- Youth and Young Adults $4 million

25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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ELCA Fund for Leaders

ELCA Fund for Leaders – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections

Always being made New.
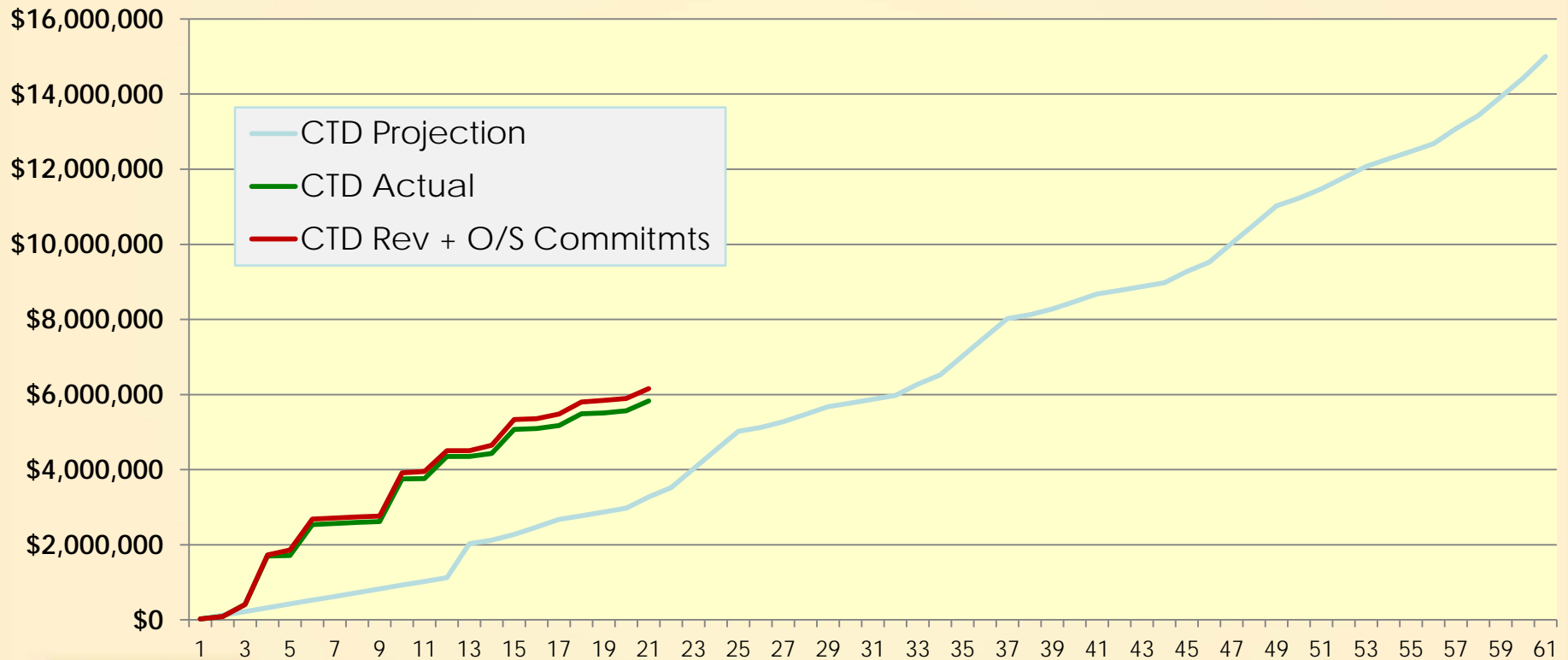
25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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Youth and Young Adults

Youth and Young Adults – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections
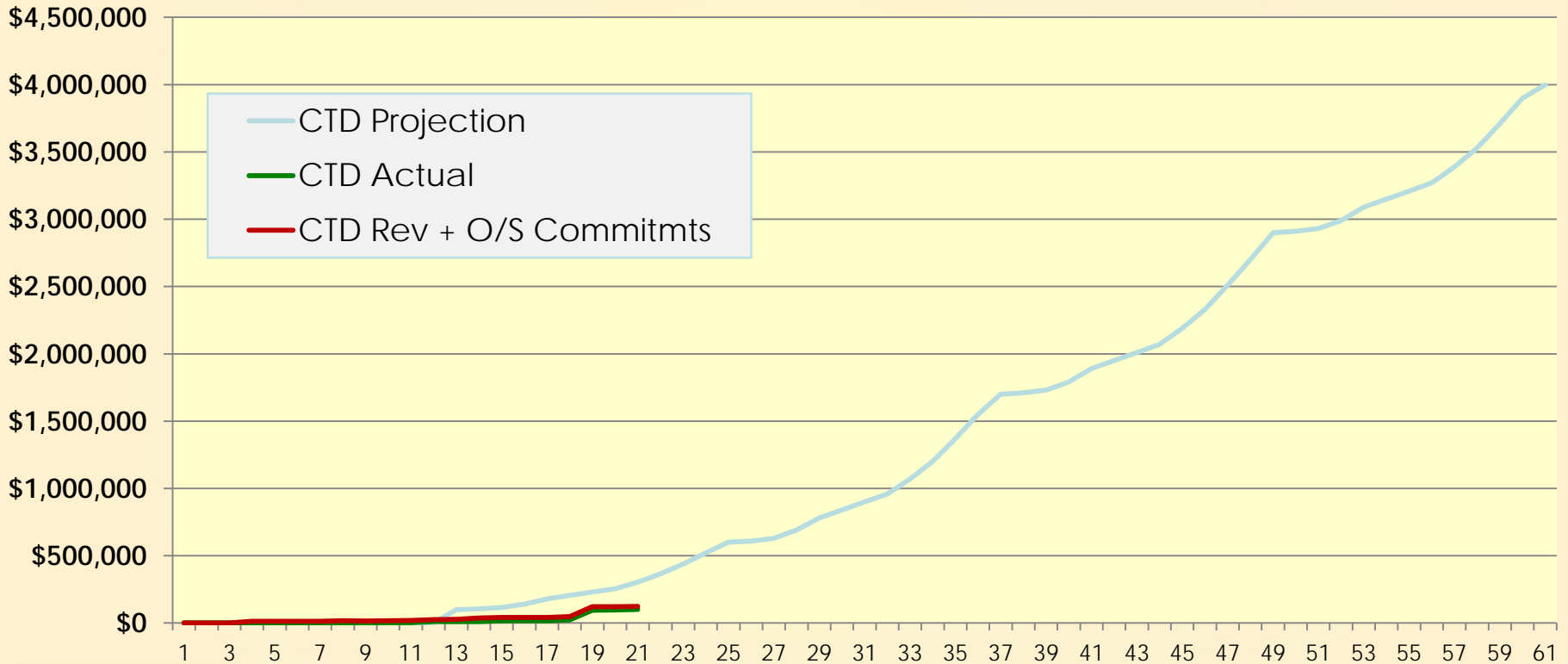
Legend:
- CTD Projection
- CTD Actual
- CTD Rev + O/S Commitmts

Hunger and Poverty

Hunger and Poverty

Strive for justice and peace in all the earth
- ELCA World Hunger $115 million
- ELCA Malaria Campaign $15 million

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ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections

ELCA Malaria Campaign

ELCA Malaria Campaign – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections
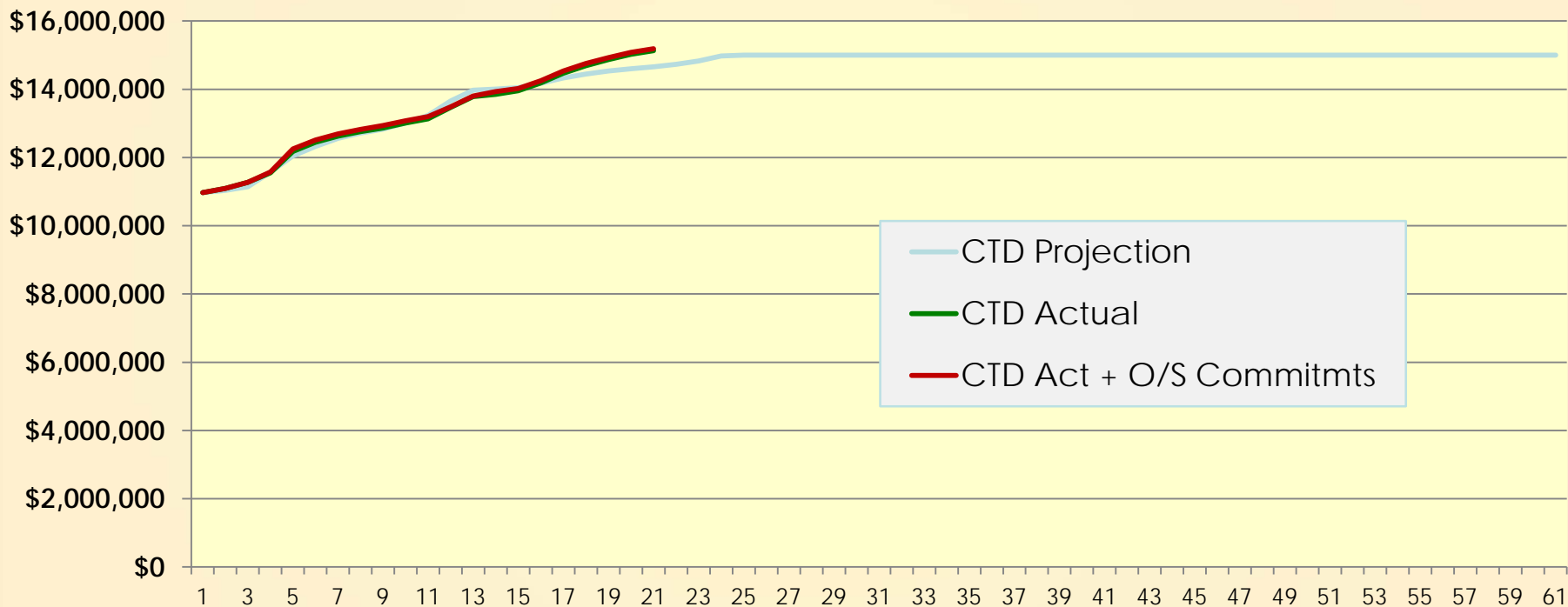
Global Church

Global Church

Grow the Lutheran Church around the world

- Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission $22 million
- Global Ministries $7 million
- International Leaders — Women
$4 million

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Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission

Global Ministries

International Leaders — Women

Help where the need is greatest

Undesignated gifts to the campaign will be used to support campaign priorities where they are needed most.

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Where Needed Most – 20 Months
Revenue/Commitments vs. Projections

Legend:
- CTD Target
- CTD Actual
- CTD Rev + O/S Commitmts

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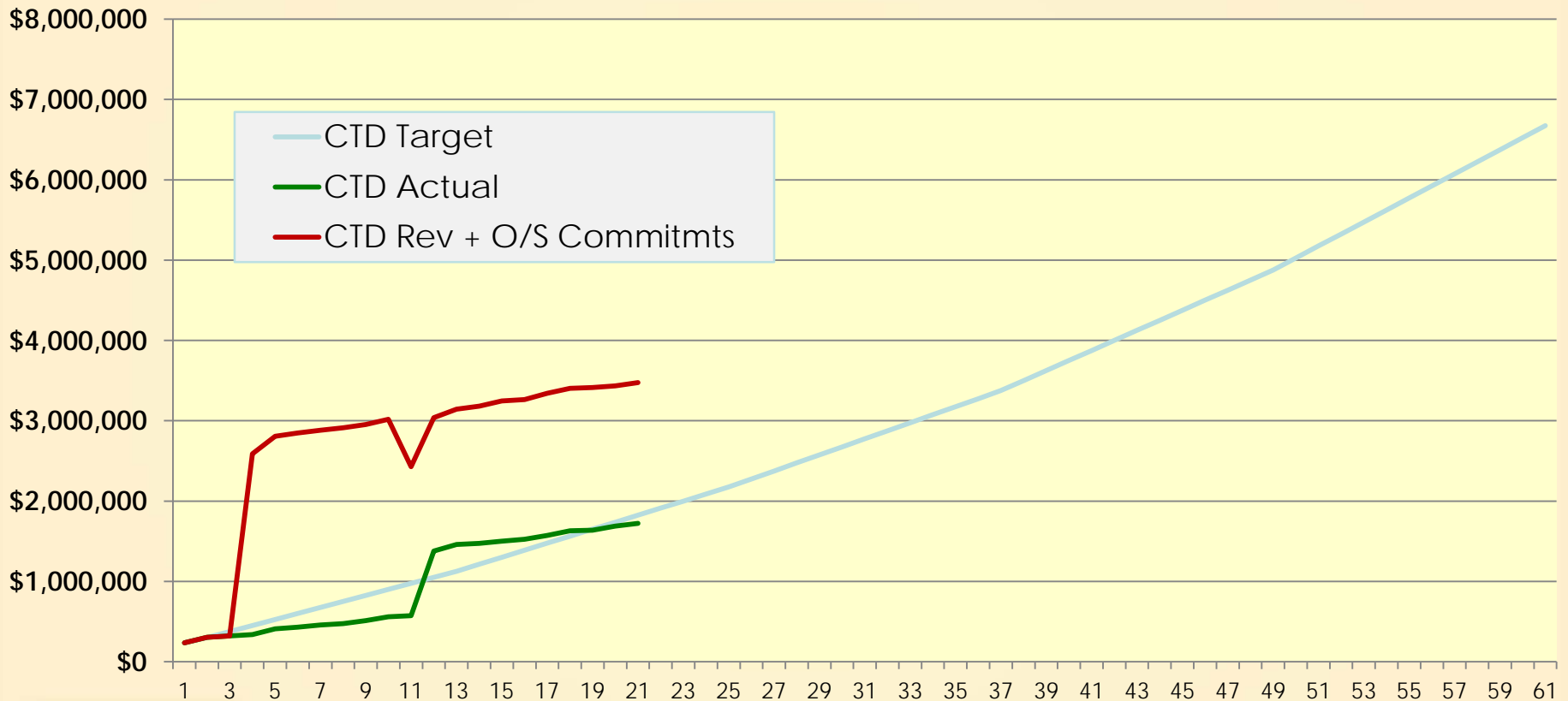
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Summary of Campaign Progress by %

CTD % of Campaign Goal	Revenue Only	Revenue & Outstanding Commitments	Notes
Malaria	100.9%	101.3%	Achieved!
Fund for Leaders	38.9%	41.1%	Above projection
World Hunger	25.4%	26.4%	At or near projection
GCS/LT Missionaries & YAGMs	24.9%	27.6%	At or near projection
New Congregations	19.6%	19.9%	Slightly below projection
GGS/International Women Leaders	15.0%	16.9%	Slightly below projection
Renewing Congregations	7.8%	8.2%	Below projection
GCS/Global Ministries	5.8%	7.2%	Below projection
Young Adult & Youth Leader	2.5%	3.1%	Significantly below projection
Disability Ministries	1.5%	2.4%	Significantly below projection
Not included above: "Where Needed Most"		*$3.475M*	*Yet to be allocated.*

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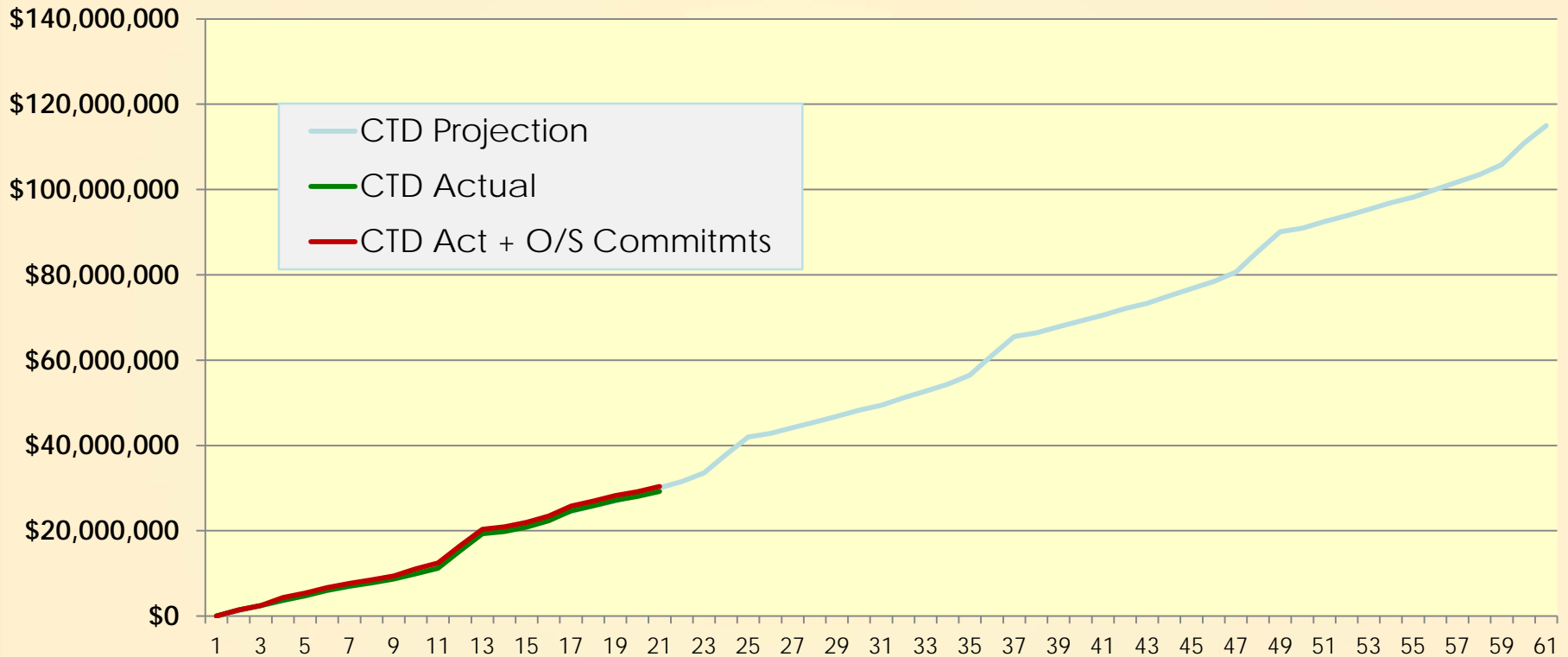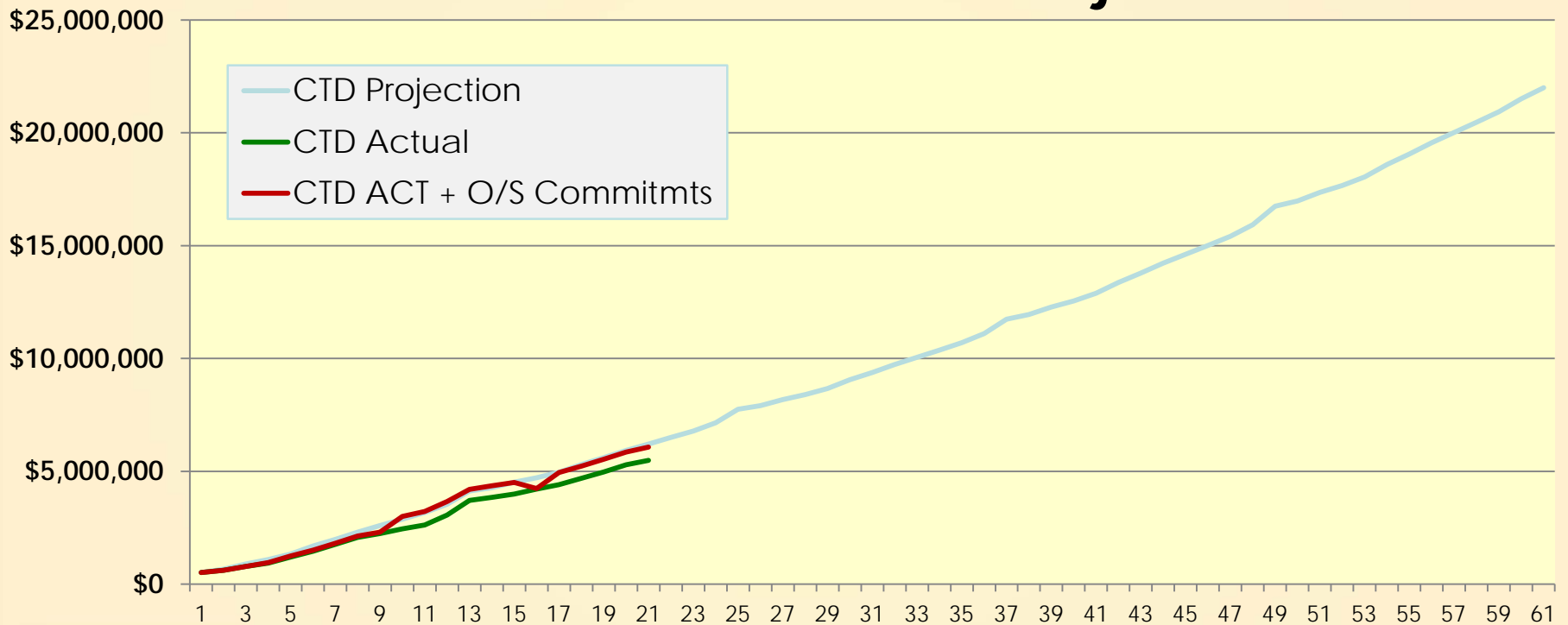25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

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Annual Report
ELCA Campus Ministry
Fall 2015

CONTENTS

A. Background

Each year, the campus ministry sites of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are asked to submit a report on their programs and activities. The information from these reports is used to prepare an annual summary report to the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit and the Church Council.

The annual summary report reflects the ways in which the work of the churchwide organization, synods, and campus ministry sites is coordinated to advance the mission of campus ministry throughout the ELCA. The report provides significant data as the ELCA makes decisions regarding the allocation of financial and programmatic resources.

B. Demographic and Site Information

- *Type of Ministry*: 30% of the sites reported being ELCA center-based, 33% report being ELCA congregation-based, and 20% report being ecumenical center-based.
- *Ethnic and Racial Background*: 97% of the campus ministry sites reported working with white/Caucasian students, 47% with African-Americans/black students, 38% with Hispanic/Latinos, 34% with Asian/Pacific Islanders, 22% with Middle Eastern/Arab-Americans, and 12% with American Indian or Alaska Natives.
- *Religious Background*: 95% of the sites reported working with Lutheran students, 89% with non-Lutheran Protestants, 44% with Roman Catholics, 17% with Muslims, and 13% with Jewish students. 67% of the sites report working with students who have no religious affiliation. These students are often referred to as the "Nones", and they are a critical population of students with whom to connect.
- *Sexual Orientation*: 72% of the sites reported working with students who identify as gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender.
- *Disability*: 22% reported working with disabled/differently-abled students.

C. Highlights

The annual report asks the Lutheran Campus Ministry sites to summarize their yearly activities in ten categories. The report is intended to highlight both the strengths and areas of potential growth of each program as a way of providing feedback to the churchwide and synod offices. The 2015 annual report was similar to those from 2010-2014 in order to identify and clarify ministry trends and statistical patterns. Data was collected from 152 campus ministry sites that submitted information using a newly revised electronic Annual Report form.

1. **Worship**
    a. Worship remains at the heart of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Nearly all sites (92%) reported that Holy Communion was provided for students one or more times per week. Over half (59%) report providing 1 to 5 worship services per month, while 38% provided six services or more. These patterns of a strong worship life have held steady over the last several years.
    b. Student attendance at worship has trended slightly upward. Almost one third of the sites (37%) report 11 to 25 students on average per week. Over 17% of the sites report 26 to 50 students per week, and about 8% report over 50 students on average per week. Approximately 40% of the sites report 50 or more students worshiping at least once per semester. Over 6,000 students attended worship at least once during the academic year.
    c. The presence of a lively worshipping community on campus continues to be a key element of Lutheran Campus Ministry, and it serves as a gift to college and university students across the country.

2. **Evangelism and Outreach**
    a. Lutheran Campus Ministry sites reported initial contacts with 10,348 new students last year, representing an increase over the previous year. This averages approximately 70 contacts per reporting site.
    b. Personal invitation from other students remains one of the most popular ways to make the ministry known to the campus community (86%). Electronic communication is also a widely used method for outreach and evangelism, with almost all ministries using social networking sites like Facebook, their own websites, e-mail announcements, and text messaging to connect with students. A large majority of sites (88%) also have an active presence at student orientation and activity fairs at the beginning of each semester. Traditional media, such as print mailings, phone calls, and newspaper ads have declined in use primarily because of the "social media culture" that exists among students.
    c. Peer ministers continue to be an important outreach tool for almost half of the sites (47%).
    d. Ministries reported 46 baptisms of individuals over the age of 18.

3. **Faith Formation and Christian Education**
    a. Campus ministry staff and student leaders continue to be creative in selecting materials for education and faith formation. Sites have utilized materials that focus on challenging questions about vocation, grace, doubt, ecumenism, interfaith relationships, pluralism, and other critically relevant topics. A variety of resources, such as the "Animate" series from Sparkhouse Publishing, were used to engage students in discussions about the Bible, faith, the Christian life, and contemporary issues.
    b. Nearly all sites (83%) report offering Bible studies for students. Many sites also offer retreats (72%), spiritual direction (44%) and lecture series (27%) for the purposes of Christian education and faith formation. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of sites using a catechumen program among students (13%).
    c. This year, the revised report invited the campus ministry staff to share what they have learned about faith formation in young adults. These insights are being summarized for a future publication. This summary will be available from the campus ministry office later this year.

4. **Creating a Caring Community**
   a. Almost all ministries offer weekly meals for hospitality and community building (93%). Many offer an informal gathering space on a daily basis (82%), with 72% of the sites offering wireless access for students. Annual or semi-annual retreats and trips have continued to be strong components of the campus ministry programs, with some groups participating in international travel experiences.
   b. Designations of Reconciling In Christ or as a "campus safe zone" have continued to increase each year as well. Many sites, particularly those with a Reconciling In Christ designation, report that they are one of only a few religious organizations on their campus that extends a gracious welcome and open hospitality to students regardless of sexual orientation.
   c. Providing hospitality and community building programs on campus are important tools for demonstrating the wonder of God's grace. These spaces of hospitality continue to attract a wide range of students and help ministries reach out to underserved and marginalized populations on campus. This aspect of ministry has been a key to connecting with students who have no affiliation with a religious community, with 67% of the sites reporting that "Nones" have become a part of their ministry community.
   d. Nearly all ministries report that pastoral conversation was a means of care (91%). Most campus pastors and ministers also offer regular office hours (77%). The amount of time per week dedicated to pastoral care conversations has held steady at an average of approximately 7 hours per week.
   e. Training peer ministers with basic support, listening and referral skills continues to be an effective method of pastoral care (48%), especially in situations where the campus pastor is present only part-time.
   f. Many campus pastors also serve on university care or emergency response teams (46%).

5. **Service, Justice and Advocacy**
   a. Campus ministries continue to undertake a broad range of community service programs and projects. Participation has increased slightly over previous years, with 28% drawing 6 to 15 students at least once, 36% involving 16 to 50 students, and 13% drawing over 50 students. Ten sites reported the participation of over 150 students.
   b. The most popular kinds of service projects included working at a food pantry/kitchen/shelter (reported by 70% of the sites), and participating in programs serving children and youth (59%). Many sites also participated in the construction and rehab of homes, working with older adults, and assisting with environmental cleanup projects. It is estimated that students provided almost 50,000 hours of service through these programs and projects during the last academic year.
   c. Half of the sites reported offering a service-learning opportunity involving travel. Of those offering such opportunities, trips averaged between 10 and 25 students, and included a variety of domestic locations, plus Mexico, and Central and South America.
   d. Service-learning trips typically involved pre-departure education sessions, group reflection during the trip, post-return discussions, time for individual reflection, group Bible studies, and group activities to thank those who donated time or money to the trip.
   e. With respect to justice and advocacy efforts, the ministries participated primarily in discussion, direct action, and educational programs. Other activities included hosting speakers with specialized knowledge, coalition-building, and sponsoring forums.
   f. Justice and advocacy programs related to hunger issues have continued to be strong (64%), as well as issues surrounding poverty (56%). Remaining significant are sexuality and gender issues (51%), homelessness (48%), racism (41%), and care of the environment (41%). Activities related to immigration have become more prominent within the past year (24%).
   g. Campus ministry staff have observed that efforts to provide a caring and welcoming community, particularly for persons and groups who are underserved, marginalized or unpopular, are inseparable from justice and advocacy.

6. **Leadership Development**
    a. Lutheran Campus Ministry sites continue to provide many opportunities for the development of young adult leadership. Most sites report students assisting in worship, coordinating events, and planning programs, while many others also have students that represent the ministry at university-sponsored events, and on local boards.
    b. Peer ministry programs continue to be strong, while participation in special leadership retreats is a popular method for cultivating leadership skills among students.
    c. Enrollment in seminary has increased slightly among campus ministry-involved students who have graduated within the past five years (172). The ministry sites also reported 153 recent graduates in the candidacy process.
    d. ELCA-related service programs continue to be popular (Young Adults in Global Mission, Lutheran Volunteer Corps), as well as non-ELCA programs (Peace Corps, AmeriCorps), with 174 recent graduates currently involved in those programs. Sites also reported 312 recent graduates involved in congregational or synodical leadership roles.

7. **Connecting with the Broader Academic Community**
    a. In this year's annual report, Lutheran Campus Ministry staff were asked to respond to this question: "In what specific ways was the ministry involved in the broader academic community this past year?"
    b. The responses to that question were diverse, dynamic and creative. Some examples follow:
        - Teaching university classes and serving as a guest lecturer
        - Sponsoring service programs and projects for the entire campus community
        - Serving on university boards and committees
        - Providing programs for new student orientation
        - Serving on a campus emergency response team
        - Providing educational programs in the residence halls
        - Providing support for student groups on campus that are "marginalized" (undocumented migrant students, LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, etc.)
        - Co-sponsoring interfaith forums
        - Providing pastoral and spiritual support during campus crises
        - Serving as an adjunct member of the university's Student Affairs Office
        - Developing an on-campus food pantry for students in need
        - Offering a free meal on campus attended by 200 students each week
        - Hosting an on-campus lecture series on faith, science and culture
        - Serving as "chaplain" for various student organizations
        - Providing all-campus worship opportunities such as an Ash Wednesday service, Thanksgiving celebration, Earth Day observance, National Day of Prayer

8. **Stewardship and Fundraising**
    a. The most popular strategies for raising financial support continue to be fundraising letters (62%), face-to-face solicitation (61%), e-mail messages (50%), print newsletters (46%), and electronic newsletters (43%).
    b. Continuing a trend over the last several years, applying for and securing grants have increased in popularity as a source of funds. Funds have also been raised through congregations and congregation-based Women of the ELCA groups (66%), while special events (52%) and annual appeals (49%) are also popular. Over 38% of the sites also have funds available from an endowment, while planned giving is now a source of funds at 29% of the sites.
    c. Most of the ministries encourage student giving, and do so primarily through worship offerings (58%).

d. Trends continue to show an increase in the amount of staff time devoted to stewardship and fundraising. Most staff report devoting anywhere from 10% to 25% of their time to fundraising efforts.

9. **Ecumenical and Interfaith Connections**
   a. Ecumenism and interfaith issues continue to be important on college campuses across the country. Lutherans cooperate closely with Episcopal ministries, and regularly coordinate events among other Protestant groups. Lutheran Campus Ministry staff also work closely with Roman Catholic, Jewish and Muslim colleagues in serving the academic community. A little over 100 of the Lutheran Campus Ministry staff serve in some official capacity in ecumenical groups or interfaith committees at their respective universities.
   b. There appears to be increased interest in interfaith educational events on the part of many campus administrators, and a significant number of Lutheran Campus Ministry sites have reported helping organize these events.
   c. Shared meals (65%), cooperative educational programs (60%), and joint service projects (55%) continue to be popular as important components of ecumenical and interfaith work. Many ministries have also engaged in joint worship (54%) and co-sponsorship of speakers (40%). Almost one quarter of the sites were involved in planning and co-sponsoring a campus-wide interfaith week or event.

10. **Connections with the Wider Lutheran Community**
    a. In terms of involvement in local congregations, about 70% of the campus ministries report that the staff person leads worship or preaches. The campus ministry staff also work with local congregations in service projects (56%), assist with local youth ministry and young adult programs (53%), and provide educational forums for congregational members (43%).
    b. At the synod level, approximately 70% of the sites report that they provide displays and other types of presence at synod assemblies. Serving on synod committees and boards was reported by 61 staff members. About one-third of the sites indicate that they provide educational programs for synodical groups.
    c. In terms of outdoor ministry, 51 Lutheran Campus Ministry staff reported that they served as a resource person for training and educational programs.
    d. The Lutheran Student Movement (LSM) continues to operate in some regions, and there has been a renewed interest across the country in providing an annual LSM gathering for college and university students.

D. Closing Comments

1. The 2015 annual reports indicate that Lutheran Campus Ministry continues to thrive as a significant and extensive mission field among young adults within the ELCA. Each Lutheran campus ministry site is a "Center for Evangelical Mission" with a specific focus on the academic community. Each week, thousands of college and university students gather under the banner of Lutheran Campus Ministry in worshipping, learning, serving, and welcoming communities of faith. Lutheran Campus Ministry invites students from diverse backgrounds to explore their vocations as baptized Christians in the context of a gracious community, and to respond to that vocational call in their daily lives and future careers.

2. In addition, the comments in these annual reports make it clear that Lutheran Campus Ministry staff also envision their call as doing more than just developing and maintaining a student community. They also see campus ministry as a call to accompany and serve the broader campus community of staff, faculty, alumni, and all who live and work there. They understand campus ministry to be the very real presence of Christ across the campus, calling them to God's work as they represent the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As one staff person said, "The entire campus is our cathedral!"

3. One of the important goals of Lutheran Campus Ministry is to build relationships with people across the campus who have no interest in the church, who feel that the church is irrelevant, and who may even hold feelings of hostility for the church. Lutheran Campus Ministry seeks to provide a fresh perspective on the church as a community characterized by grace, integrity, openness, inclusiveness, and compassion. This approach takes the campus ministry staff to the far reaches of the university to interact with individuals and groups who have little if any connection to a religious community. This encounter may provide one of the few opportunities for them to experience the true wonder of a God whose love is rich, full, and inclusive. The sign that is displayed in front of University Lutheran Church in Palo Alto, California, serves as an image of this open hospitality:

"Disciples, Seekers, Doubters, Skeptics, Questioners,
Explorers, Sinners, Saints, Scientists, Poets, Speakers,
Listeners, Students, Professors, Staff, Neighbors,
Alumni, Gay, Straight, Wanderers, Wonderers, Secure,
Insecure, Young, Old, Confident, Confirmed, Curious,
Concerned, Hopeful, Hopeless, Open, Opening,
Children of God. ***You Are All Welcome Here!"***

4. The campus ministry staff are excited about the development of the new Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LCMNet). LCMNet has been designed as "an association to sustain and strengthen Campus Ministry in the ELCA by forming collegial relationships, training professional campus ministry leaders, and advocating for the church's ministry on college and university campuses." This network of Lutheran Campus Ministry professionals, now officially incorporated in the State of Minnesota has:
   ▪ Planned and implemented the "2015 LCM Staff Conference" last June at California Lutheran University attended by 125 people;
   ▪ Sponsored a two-day New Staff Orientation for 20 new LCM staff from across the country;
   ▪ Initiated a project to develop a new LCMNet website, newsletters, and a film on campus ministry to be available for synod assemblies;
   ▪ Developed a YouTube channel by and for university students with a new program posted twice each week;
   ▪ Scheduled a webinar in November for Lutheran Campus Ministry staff on "Faith Formation in Young Adults" led by Dr. Roland Martinson;
   ▪ Elected a Board of nine LCM staff to help direct and coordinate the efforts of the network.

5. As one program example, the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Ohio State University is called Jacob's Porch. Grant Eckhart is the campus pastor, and the ministry continues to reach out to students, especially those referred to as "Nones", in innovative and creative ways. In a recent Jacob's Porch newsletter, a student shared the following words:

> *"I was on my way out of faith when I fell into the arms of this community a year ago this month. Broken by former experiences with churches that assumed exclusivity instead of assuming love, I lost hope that I would ever find a church home. Jacob's Porch restored that hope! It is a place that encouraged me to wrestle with the questions that other churches told me to bury. It is a place that told me God would meet me where I was, exactly as I was. It is a place that told me I was loved, and that I was enough."*

Students like this one are regularly welcomed into a gracious and affirming faith community in Lutheran Campus Ministry programs across the country. Many of these students have felt alienated from the church, but find a place of hope and belonging in Lutheran Campus Ministry settings like Jacob's Porch!

6. Campus ministry remains a vital and critically important field of mission within the ELCA. Students, pastors, lay ministers, board members, congregations and synods continue to work as partners to shape the work of campus ministry in adaptive, thoughtful, and creative ways, while asking difficult but important questions about the nature of ministry support in the future.

New Candidacy Manual
Overview Memo

Introduction:

At its March 2012 meeting, the Conference of Bishops asked the Director for Candidacy to review the ELCA's candidacy process which is outlined in the Candidacy Manual.

This review of the candidacy process has taken over two years. The document that you have today is the result of a collaborative review process that included a series of regional consultations which resulted in a large number of comments and recommendations received from the all of the candidacy partners (bishops, synod candidacy committees, seminary presidents, deans, faculty, and psychological assessment providers). All of the recommendations received were reviewed by the Congregation and Synodical Mission candidacy staff team (Director for Candidacy, Associate Program Director for Candidacy, Program Director for Assignments, Program Director for Support of Rostered leaders, and the nine Coordinators for Mission Leadership in the regions) and most were integrated into the new candidacy process. Harvey Huntley has worked with me to do the preliminary editing of the document you have before you.

On Monday, October 5, 2015, the Conference of Bishops reviewed the new Candidacy Manual and endorsed its approval by the Church Council at its November meeting.

Things to note:

- The manual states policy and also provides examples to guide committees' discernment with applicants and candidates
- The manual builds upon four basic principles identified by our Presiding Bishop (we are church, we are Lutheran, we are church together, and we are church for the sake of the world) each identifying leadership competencies followed by sample questions that can be used by Candidacy Committees.
- The manual has a renewed emphasis on God's mission in the world and how we actively participate in God's mission.
- There is an emphasis on discernment.
- There is an emphasis on health and wellness as illustrated in the Wholeness wheel.

What in this new Candidacy Manual is different from the earlier copy received?

The following pieces that were originally a part of the Appendix section have been moved to the candidacy resource page on the web for easy access for applicants and others who may be interested in knowing more about candidacy:

1. Candidacy Summary - Appendix A
2. Applicant's Health Self-Assessment

Additional resources that will be added to our resource page will be:

3. An Applicant financial worksheet
4. Wellness competencies for each step – Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval
5. Section for candidates attending non-ELCA Seminaries has been reworked to provide for more local decision making (p. 40).

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CANDIDACY MANUAL

November 2015

With authority given to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary corrections for clarity and accuracy.

Cover: *Holy Trinity Icon, by Andrei Rublev (15th Century Russian)*

Commentary on the icon of the Holy Trinity: Contemplation of the Holy Trinity as a relational, sending God is central to our faith and therefore guides the church in the discernment that is integral to the candidacy process. The Church invites all who engage in any aspect of the candidacy process – applicants, candidates, Candidacy Committee members, seminary faculty, congregations, campus ministries, and others – to center on God throughout the process and to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

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Chapter 2 Preparing for Entrance

Chapter 3 Entrance

Chapter 4 Admission under Other Circumstances

Chapter 5 Endorsement

Chapter 6 Approval

Appendices

An on-line summary of the candidacy process is available for applicants at
http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Candidacy

Chapter 1 - Candidacy in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us;..."(II Corinthians 5:17-20a, NRSV)

As the Christian Church participates in God's mission in the world, there is a renewed awareness that God is making all things new. As both the Church and its contexts for ministry change, leadership needs in the Church also change. New categories of leadership are emerging and will likely continue to emerge for the foreseeable future.

The ELCA candidacy process is meant to be a welcoming and joyful time for people discerning how to serve through the church. It is a formalized - yet personally and relationally focused - journey that assists people in discernment for church leadership, whether they ultimately become rostered or serve in other lay roles within the church. Discernment is a life-long process which continually assesses how God may be calling a person into a unique ministry. It is a means to determine who might serve as a rostered leader in a Word and Sacrament or Word and Service ministry, as well as who might serve in a variety of lay leadership roles in the church or in the world. The candidacy process will succeed for a person when he or she graciously discovers, through the nurturance of mentors, congregations, and others how and where to serve according to the Spirit's leading.

ELCA seminaries are vital partners in the candidacy process. Some people enter the formal candidacy process prior to or alongside their enrollment in a seminary. Others may choose to attend seminary as a means of discerning whether a church occupation feels right to them. Some people may even participate in theological education as a means of enriching their current roles as lay leaders in the church. All such explorations are appropriate and beneficial for the Church and God's mission in the world.

The ELCA recognizes the emergence of a renewed emphasis upon God's mission in the world in the 21st century. Christians enter into partnership with God's work in the world through baptism into the Body of Christ. Every faith community is part of a mission field that requires a common understanding that every congregation is a mission center in which rostered leaders are called to equip through Word, Sacrament, and Service every baptized Christian to be an ambassador for God's mission in the world.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed to the intentional identification and support of persons whom God has gifted with missional imagination and the ability to provide leadership in the church. The grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ means that all the baptized,

as members of a universal priesthood of believers, are called to a vocation of mission in their daily lives. Members of this priesthood are gifted, enabled, and called to active participation in God's mission, both in their faith communities and in the world. Each person pursues a path of discernment culminating in an awareness of his or her unique call. Such discernment often emerges through years of struggle and searching. The call comes in a variety of ways. For some, the call comes in the form of a dramatic moment of inspiration. For others, it comes in the normal course of a disciplined spiritual life. For still others, the call responds to the urging of church leaders.

Within the context of the universal priesthood of all the baptized, some people discern a call to various leadership roles in the church. In the Lutheran tradition a person's call from God to rostered leadership is both internal and external. In the internal call an individual senses God's leading to consider and prepare for rostered leadership. In the external call the Church accompanies an individual in discerning appropriateness and readiness for such service. Finally, at the conclusion of the candidacy process, the internal call is confirmed by a call to serve in a specific setting (first call).

Through a journey of discernment (see Appendix A), some individuals consider whether they are called by God, through the church, to serve in one of its rostered ministries. Candidacy is a churchwide process of preparation and formation for persons seeking to be rostered in the ELCA. Candidacy involves an active partnership among candidates, congregations, synods, seminaries, peoples of specific culture communities, and the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit.

Accordingly, a mission-oriented leader can be defined as someone who
   a. is rooted in the gospel,
   b. is knowledgeable, passionate, able to articulate his or her faith and the confessional teachings of the ELCA, and
   c. through the church participates in God's mission of love, redemption, justice, and reconciliation.

People who have discerned a call to rostered leadership will demonstrate and build upon the characteristics of a missional leader as understood through a Lutheran confessional lens. Through formation in the candidacy process, such persons will develop an understanding of four basic principles.
   I. We are church
   II. We are Lutheran
   III. We are church together
   IV. We are church for the sake of the world
Related to the above principles, the ELCA seeks candidates for rostered leadership who demonstrate certain competencies. During a candidate's process of formation, the church expects Candidacy Committees to assess a candidate's orientation to mission in a progression from *missional awareness* at Entrance, to *missional articulation* at Endorsement, and finally to *missional actualization and practice* at Approval. Certain competencies listed below have been identified to assist committees in the assessment of a candidate's formation at each of the

major steps in candidacy. These competencies provide a beginning point in understanding the role and forming the skills of a rostered leader.

Once a newly Approved rostered leader completes candidacy, he or she may be called to a ministry context in which people do not share an identical imagination for mission. In such situations, a rostered leader's adaptive leadership skills - learned either during the formation process (candidacy) or early in a first call - will help foster a positive relationship between a rostered leader and a ministry context. Adaptive leaders demonstrate an ability to appreciate and celebrate differing orientations toward mission and move together with others in a ministry context towards a common vision for mission. Such leaders are prepared to undertake ministry in any location and are able to assist the faith community in developing a common life that participates more fully in God's mission in the world.

I.   We are Church

The ELCA is a church centered around worship of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The good news of Jesus Christ conveyed through God's Word and the Sacraments liberates God's people and gives them the freedom and courage to wonder, discover, and boldly participate in God's mission in the world. In our life together we gather around the presence of the crucified and risen Christ, and we respond to the leadership of the Holy Spirit by engaging in ministry in the world.

Competencies

The competencies specific to the new Word and Service roster will be added after the 2016 churchwide assembly decision.

Note: The list of competencies provided below is a descriptive narrative, *not* a template or checklist. It attempts to describe the types of skills and characteristics the church seeks for all rostered leaders. Candidacy committees and seminary faculty should use these competency descriptions in a manner that is flexible, adaptive to context and candidate, and attuned to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

1. *Rooted in the presence and activity of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*. A rostered leader nurtures a vibrant faith and relationship with the Triune God within a community of faith and leads other Christians to do likewise as they participate in God's mission. This competency can be assessed as a Candidacy Committee inquires about a candidate's ability to
   - engage in theological and spiritual discernment that manifests a faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
   - articulate and live out a clear Christian identity, and
   - interpret the Scriptures as the norm for understanding God's mission in the world.

2. *Actively participates in God's mission through the church*. Some key aspects related to this competency are
   - an ability to cultivate a compelling vision for ministry,
   - equipping people to share faith stories,
   - skills in hospitality that invite people to a life of discipleship, and
   - an awareness of the interconnectedness of the church beyond the local congregation.

3. *Cultivates vision and purpose*. This competency includes
   - the use of spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, biblical and theological reflection, and spiritual direction),
   - knowledge of societal and cultural trends that can inform a congregation's vision and sense of purpose,
   - skills for leading congregations and other groups in discernment of God's mission in the world (including the incorporation of input from a diversity of sources and people), and
   - courage to lead God's people into that mission as discerned.

4. *Leadership skills*. Some critical indicators of this competency are
   - a demonstration of adaptive leadership skills that are sensitive to context,
   - a demonstration of skills for leading a community of faith through change while addressing conflicts that might emerge,
   - a capacity to engage people and lead them towards active participation in God's mission in the world,
   - a facility for encouraging collegial decision-making processes,
   - a demonstration of personal holistic stewardship and skill in equipping others, and
   - a grasp of how administrative structures and procedures can serve mission in congregational life.

II. We are Lutheran

While not claiming to possess exclusive theological wisdom in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, Lutherans proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ through a clear focus on God's grace received through faith along with discipleship and participation in God's mission that are a lived response to that grace.

Competencies
5. *Engages the way of the cross*. Empowered by the resurrected Christ, a rostered leader shows people the crucified Christ through word and deed and enables them to envision what God is doing in the world and in their lives. Some indicators of this competency include
   - a willingness to confront and engage suffering in the lives of others and in one's own life, especially among marginalized people,
   - exhibiting qualities of servant leadership,
   - a willingness to serve, risk, and sacrifice for the sake of God's mission, including an ability to identify and lead in exposing the principalities and powers operative in a given context, and
   - responding to life crises as opportunities for experiencing new life.
6. *Proclaims the faith*. Clear indicators for this competency are the candidate's ability to
   - preach the Word as Law and Gospel,
   - teach Scripture,
   - share the faith with others,
   - provide Christian education for all ages and cultures,
   - articulate theological wisdom, and
   - live a disciplined spiritual life.

7. *Leads Worship and administers the Sacraments (Word and Sacrament leaders).* Key aspects of this competency are

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- the ability to plan and lead worship, preach, and administer the Sacraments,
- the ability to adapt the Lutheran liturgical tradition to local contexts, and
- the ability to demonstrate a manner of invoking in worship a sense of the Holy and a welcoming spirit with a view towards God's mission in the world.

III. We are Church Together

The ELCA recognizes the interdependence of all expressions of the church – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization - as well as a wider ecclesiastical ecology that includes seminaries, social ministry agencies, campus ministries, church camps and conference centers, and other affiliated agencies. This church also values the ecumenical interdependence we share with our full communion partners both locally and globally.

Competencies

8. *Interprets mission.* This competency reflects the ability of a candidate to articulate and interpret in a compelling manner, both theologically and contextually, the wider mission of the ELCA through its interdependent partners and expressions. This competency includes a commitment to the mission of the wider church, including synods and the churchwide organization, as well as related institutions and agencies of the ELCA, and facility in interpreting and motivating support for the ELCA beyond the local congregation.

9. *Cultivates Christian community, discipleship, leadership formation, and the practice of reconciliation of differences.* A rostered leader effectively forms and leads Christian communities which intentionally foster the growth of disciples of Jesus Christ and attend to the formation of leaders in the church. Some indicators of this competency are
   - gifts for forming partnerships and networks,
   - the practice of reconciliation and mutual empowerment among diverse groups,
   - convening and empowering teams for mission, and
   - a sense of stewardship in cultivating gifts manifest in a community of believers and delegating and sharing tasks tailored to those gifts.

10. *Cares for people.* A ministry of care encompasses both congregational and community care. Some key aspects related to this competency include
    - visitation,
    - counseling,
    - equipping the baptized to provide ministries of care, both within the congregation and in the wider community,
    - knowledge of community resources for appropriate referrals and participation, and
    - sensitivity to people in major life and cultural transitions.

11. *Practices wellness in one's personal life* (see pages 30). Some factors to consider in this area:
    - a vibrant and resilient faith,
    - a balance of work, play, and self-care,
    - a maintenance of clear and healthy boundaries in all relationships,
    - an attention to diet, exercise, and mental/physical health, and
    - a nurturing of healthy family relationships.

IV. We are Church for the Sake of the World

As baptized people of God, we believe we are freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. This church, accordingly, is a catalyst, convener, and bridge builder which views both the church and the world as interdependent in a way that fosters mutual learning and growth. We participate in partnerships for the sake of unity among Christians, collaboration and dialogue with other faith communities, and for justice and peace locally and globally.

Competencies

12. *Evangelizes*. A rostered leader actively believes and carries out Christ's command to go out and share the Gospel with neighbors. Some key factors related to this competency are
- a passion and imagination for sharing the Gospel,
- a sensitivity and skill for welcoming the stranger into community,
- discovering and implementing creative ways to share the Gospel with people outside the church,
- listening to people's stories and assisting them to interpret their experience in light of the Gospel,
- a valuing of Christian community as formative for faith, and
- a natural and authentic gift for engaging people, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the depths of their lives.

13. *Relates theology with history, context, and culture*. A rostered leader understands and interprets context and culture through the lens of Christian faith and leads a community of faith to opportunities where the Gospel can be understood and shared by people in specific cultural contexts. Some critical indicators of this competency include
- an ability to engage culture and context theologically, critically, and creatively with a sensitivity to historical factors,
- analysis of congregational and community demographics and trends,
- engagement with complex social and religious issues as a practical theologian in context,
- sensitivity to cross-cultural, intra-cultural, and counter-cultural dynamics, and
- skill in addressing cultural differences.

14. *Equips and sends disciples into the world*. A rostered leader prepares disciples to discern the leading of the Spirit as they share the Gospel with neighbors in word and deed. Some important considerations for this competence are
- a demonstrated capacity to mobilize people of faith with different gifts and perspectives that can enrich the church's witness in the world and lead to acts of mercy and justice,
- a personal embodiment of the Christian faith in one's daily life,
- a demonstrated capacity for cultivating communities of well-being and holistic stewardship as illustrated in the Wholeness Wheel (see pages 30-32),
- a theological sensitivity to the presence and activity of God in the world,
- a recognition of the public vocation of the Christian community in the world, and
- the ability to interpret that vocation to people of faith.

Because this is a time of unprecedented change and increasing diversity, not all ministry contexts will have the same imagination for mission and ministry. The church, therefore, needs adaptive leaders with demonstrated abilities for appreciating and celebrating different orientations toward mission, fostering positive relationships within a context, and moving together with others toward a common vision for mission. Adaptive leaders are prepared to

undertake ministry in a variety of locations and to assist a community of faith in developing a common life that participates more fully in God's mission in the world. The church acknowledges that a rostered leader's adaptive leadership skills, reflecting the above competencies, will not be fully formed during the candidacy process. A well-prepared missional candidate will understand that the candidacy process is the beginning of a lifelong process of learning and formation for leadership.

Standards for Word and Sacrament Ministry

Candidates preparing for Word and Sacrament ministry must engage in a comprehensive program of preparation that will help them develop competencies for ministry (see pages 6-9) which includes the following:

1) theological education leading to a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary or a Certificate of Completion for TEEM candidates,
2) theological and practical formation for ministry,
3) one unit of Supervised Clinical Ministry (see page 39), and
4) normally a one year internship supervised by an ELCA seminary (see Appendix F).

Standards for Word and Service Ministry

Note: Candidates preparing for rostered ELCA Word and Service Ministry as Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers will follow the standards and academic requirements outlined for each roster in Appendix G. A task force has been appointed by the Church Council and will bring a recommendation to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly for the unification of the three existing lay rosters into one new Word and Service roster. If approved by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, the standards and academic requirements for the new Word and Service roster will be added to this manual.

Candidacy is an Interdependent Process

Interdependence within the ELCA means that throughout the candidacy process, there is a sharing of responsibility and accountability among partners: candidates, congregations, Candidacy Committees, seminaries, and candidacy staff in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Each partner in the process has a distinctive role but also consistently cooperates with the other partners. They all work together and communicate openly to ensure that the ELCA prepares gifted people who are called by God to serve as rostered leaders in this church.

A consistent candidacy process is essential for preparing candidates for rostered leadership. Every candidate in the ELCA is a candidate for the whole church, not just the synod of candidacy, and is available for service according to the needs of the church. In partnership with synods and seminaries, the candidacy staff in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Secretary of the ELCA, presents to the Church Council any recommend changes to the candidacy process.

Expectations of Partners

Applicant/Candidate

Personal faith, commitment to Christ, and a sense of call are at the heart of an applicant's decision to apply for candidacy. Prior to submitting a Candidacy Application Form, a person

has discerned a readiness for candidacy. At Entrance an applicant will share with a Candidacy Committee experiences and learning acquired during the discernment journey. The process of discernment (see Appendix A) is a lifelong endeavor. It precedes candidacy, continues throughout candidacy and the period of study at a seminary, and evolves into an expression of vocation for the remainder of a person's life. Discernment will be frequently and regularly assessed, not only by the candidate, but also by the community of faith, the seminary, the Candidacy Committee, and others in an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, and openness to the spirit.

To begin the candidacy process, a person seeking to serve as a rostered leader contacts the synod where he or she is active in a congregation or campus ministry. After completing a Candidacy Application Form, an applicant is expected to exercise initiative in completing the pre-entrance candidacy requirements outlined in this manual.

Growth and development are expected as candidates seek to become equipped for rostered leadership. A candidate is expected to be a mature, healthy, and trustworthy partner in the process of preparation, formation, and evaluation for rostered leadership. A candidate provides requested information and a signed release to a Candidacy Committee so that the partners in the candidacy process may fully and openly communicate with each other and share relevant candidacy information.

Upon completion of the candidacy process, it is a clear expectation that candidates are willing to serve in response to the needs of the church. While the ELCA is committed to considering the unique circumstances of individual candidates and their families, restrictions that limit a candidate's ability to serve may delay or prevent the receipt of a call to service.

Congregation
Congregations identify and accompany people as they discern their vocations. For people who have discerned a call to rostered leadership, a congregation submits a Congregational Registration Form, which identifies and affirms a person's gifts for rostered leadership. Congregations maintain a relationship with candidates throughout the entire candidacy process. Even though registration by a congregation is an important part of the candidate's discernment of call to rostered leadership, the responsibility for assessing and approving candidates belongs to the Candidacy Committee.

Congregation Responsibilities
1. Provide a community which encourages and nurtures the discernment of vocation.
2. Complete and submit a Congregational Registration Form, which includes a thoughtful and honest summary of an applicant's involvement in the life of the congregation and its participation in God's mission in the world, identifies characteristics that reflect an applicant's potential for ministry, and notes any concerns about an applicant's health, well-being, or spiritual life. If an applicant is actively involved in a Lutheran campus ministry or other ministry site, it is appropriate for the campus pastor or another rostered leader to add his or her recommendations concerning the applicant as part of the congregation registration.

3. Provide support for a candidate throughout the candidacy process, including prayer, regular communication, and, when possible, financial support to assist with expenses for tuition and other costs related to candidacy. In the case of students enrolled in an ELCA seminary, such assistance is administered by the seminary.
4. Affirm a candidate's potential for ministry through invitations to teach, preach, and lead worship based on a candidate's availability.

Synod

On behalf of the whole ELCA, each synod establishes a Candidacy Committee to perform the important and highly sensitive task of making decisions about the fitness of persons identified as potential candidates for rostered leadership. Synods provide adequate funding for their Candidacy Committees to carry out their responsibilities and meet with applicants and candidates. Synods identify people to serve on Candidacy Committees who bring gifts for welcoming, forming, evaluating, and building relationships with candidates. Synods make committee appointments in accordance with synodical bylaw S6.04.

Voting members on a Candidacy Committee include the synod bishop (or an appointee), appointed (or elected) committee members, and a seminary representative recommended by an ELCA seminary and appointed by the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. As the ELCA seeks to welcome and nurture a wide diversity of candidates for rostered leadership, the need for cross-cultural sensitivity and awareness is critical. In cases where a Candidacy Committee does not have persons serving on the committee who are part of the same cultural background as a candidate of color, it is strongly recommended that the Candidacy Committee identify a person from the same ethnic community who can serve as a mentor and welcoming presence for a candidate during the candidacy process. In many instances, such a person might be a mentor who has previously accompanied a candidate in preliminary discernment (see Appendix A), a candidate's home pastor or campus minister, a seminary faculty person, or other suitable persons identified by the synod.

Synod Candidacy Committee Responsibilities
1. Acts on behalf of the congregations of the synod and the whole ELCA to assess the character and qualifications of applicants and candidates.
2. Schedules meetings, retreats and other events for the candidacy process.
3. Works collegially to make important and sometimes difficult decisions.
4. Provides for appropriate pastoral care for candidates.
5. Evaluates and cares for candidates throughout the candidacy process.
6. Adheres to churchwide policies and procedures.
7. Participates in training and on-going education.
8. Provides support, guidance, and resources to assist applicants and candidates in their ongoing discernment.
9. Oversees the application process.
   a. Provides applicants with the necessary information and material.
   b. Receives an applicant's Congregational Registration Form.
   c. Arranges for an Initial Interview (optional).
   d. Arranges for a psychological evaluation and Background Check.
   e. Offers financial assistance to candidates, when possible.

10. Conducts interviews at appropriate times throughout the candidacy process.
11. Makes requests to the candidacy staff in the CSM unit for equivalencies or waivers from any essential standards or requirements of candidacy, including:
    a. TEEM program entry,
    b. educational requirements,
    c. supervised clinical ministry requirements, and
    d. exemptions to the Lutheran learning and formation requirement for students attending a non-ELCA seminary.
12. Maintains candidacy files according to procedures determined by the candidacy staff in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.
13. Conveys in a timely manner all requested information to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Having received a candidate's release form, Candidacy Committees communicate fully and openly with other partners in the candidacy process. Candidacy Committees use churchwide standards, requirements, and expectations to assess a candidate's readiness at Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval; maintain complete records; and report all decisions to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

When deemed effective, some aspects of candidacy may be conducted through a multi-synodical Candidacy Committee. In such situations, each synod maintains its own candidate records. Multi-synodical committees may act on behalf of participating synods for Entrance, Endorsement and Approval and other aspects of the candidacy process.

After granting Entrance, Endorsement, or Approval, if a Candidacy Committee receives additional information that proves to be harmful to the church and might have resulted in a decision to Postpone or Deny, the committee, in consultation with the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, may decide to rescind its prior action. Any decision to rescind a prior action shall be reported to a candidate, the seminary and the Director for Candidacy. If a candidate has been assigned, the synod bishop in the synod of assignment will be notified immediately. If a Candidacy Committee or synod staff person receives such additional information about an Approved candidate after he or she has received a call, the information shall immediately be communicated to the bishop of the synod where the call was issued.

Characteristics of Synod Candidacy Committee Members:
    a. faith in the Triune God (Father, Son and, Holy Spirit),
    b. a sense of hospitality and the ability to build nurturing relationships,
    c. an understanding of and sensitivity to diverse contexts,
    d. patience,
    e. willingness to receive training and attend/participate in committee meetings,
    f. knowledge of the church and its missional focus,
    g. integrity and trustworthiness,
    h. a commitment to evaluate candidates fairly, combined with an ability to speak the truth in love,
    i. self-awareness, and
    j. membership in a congregation of the synod.

ELCA Seminaries

ELCA seminaries, in consultation with other partners in the candidacy process, provide theological education for candidates, including academic certification, practical experience, and formation for ministry. Every Candidacy Committee includes an ELCA seminary faculty representative identified by the seminary dean and appointed by the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. ELCA seminaries provide evaluative material and make recommendations to Candidacy Committees concerning the Approval of every candidate for rostered leadership who earns a degree or is completing Lutheran requirements. Seminaries will communicate openly and fully with candidacy partners.

Theological education is a period of theological, spiritual, and vocational formation. Seminary faculties have a critically important and highly respected role in providing learning experiences that equip candidates for effective and faithful rostered leadership with a dual focus:

- *theological* - instilling a critical capacity and an ability to articulate Christian faith from a Lutheran confessional perspective and
- *practical* - developing leadership skills for the context being served.

A candidate, seminary faculty, and a Candidacy Committee are interdependent partners in the preparation, ongoing discernment, and evaluation of candidates for rostered leadership. Throughout the candidacy process, free and honest sharing of information and perspectives is in the best interest of all partners. Additional communication beyond written reports is both valuable and necessary for a Candidacy Committee and a seminary as they collaborate and cooperate in the care and guidance of candidates and make wise and faithful decisions.

Seminary Responsibilities

1. Make a decision concerning the admission of a person for study and report this action to the appropriate Candidacy Committee. Normally, admission to an ELCA seminary for study leading to rostered leadership in the ELCA is subsequent to a Candidacy Committee's granting Entrance.
2. Participate in Candidacy Committees through an ELCA seminary representative, who is normally an ELCA member appointed by the Director for Candidacy upon recommendation by the academic dean. When possible, seminary faculties are appointed to the synod where they are rostered or have congregational membership. The seminary faculty member participates in all Candidacy Committee activities with full voice and vote as a representative of the theological education network in the ELCA. Normally, the seminary provides travel allowances for its representatives, while the committee provides housing and meals.
3. Administer financial aid to students. Funds for this assistance come from a variety of sources: congregations, synods, seminaries, and churchwide units.
4. Provide required safe church/boundary training for candidates.
5. Participate in Theological Review Panels (TRP) and Competency Assessment Panels (CAP) as requested by staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.
6. Participate in Endorsement panels for candidates attending the seminary.
7. In consultation with the Candidacy Committee, direct and evaluate a student's practical preparation, such as internship and supervised clinical work, and provide internship and supervised clinical ministry reports to the Candidacy Committee.

8. Regularly communicate with a Candidacy Committee regarding a candidate's academic progress and provide updates on any developmental issues (including personal growth and formation) that emerge in the course of candidacy.
9. Determine a candidate's satisfactory completion of the requirements for the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, other professional degrees, or certificates of theological education.
10. In the case of students attending a non-ELCA seminary, participate in an affiliation relationship with candidates (see page 40).
11. Provide a recommendation and evaluative statement to a Candidacy Committee pertaining to Approval and submit copies of the appropriate report (Form D) to both the Candidacy Committee and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit

The Director for Candidacy, in collaboration with other candidacy staff, develops and provides oversight of the candidacy process in the ELCA. Oversight includes generating standards, procedures, and policies related to the recruitment, preparation, evaluation, and support of candidates for rostered leadership. Development includes monitoring the effectiveness of policies and procedures, identifying problems, and proposing revisions to the ELCA candidacy process as needed, registering psychological consultants, and granting all equivalencies and waivers requested for candidates. Other candidacy partners, notably ELCA seminary personnel working with candidacy and Candidacy Committees, are consulted at each step in the development and revision process. Candidacy staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (normally the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership) work directly with Candidacy Committees to exemplify the interdependent partnership, as well as the churchwide nature of the process. While the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit staff representative relating to each Candidacy Committee does not vote, he or she is present for all major decisions of a Candidacy Committee, unless mutually agreed upon in advance that the representative will not be involved. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit maintains (at the Lutheran Center) an electronic database of candidate records submitted by Candidacy Committees.

Privacy

The integrity and trustworthiness of each Candidacy Committee member and all candidacy partners are critical to a fair and faithful process for identifying, evaluating, and approving candidates for rostered leadership. The collective wisdom, centered in the work of the Holy Spirit, enlivens, strengthens, and supports the decisions made by Candidacy Committees.

Some assumptions can be made regarding privacy in the candidacy process. Privacy requires honesty, good judgment, respect for others, and an ability to hold privileged information. It is primarily a concern for the interests and well-being of individuals (as well as the church), not a legal concern. Privacy should not hinder or restrict the free flow of information to and from the Candidacy Committee. In the United States the church has a constitutional right to decide who its rostered leaders will be, to treat certain internal information as private, and to share or reveal that information as needed among partners within the ELCA.

On behalf of the whole ELCA, Candidacy Committees may seek any necessary information regarding applicants or candidates in order to protect this church and its members and act on their behalf, but also to protect all people from the possibility of abuse by a rostered leader. What is essential is that the committee and its members are very clear about why they are seeking the information. Candidacy Committees should seek out whatever information is important and necessary to assess qualifications for rostered leadership. Religious institutions may make inquiries and enforce standards of character that apply to the private lives of those involved in rostered leadership to a degree that is not legally permitted in secular occupations and professions. Healthy, honest and responsible rostered leaders are essential to the faithful witness of the ELCA in the world.

While it is not necessary for committee members to excuse themselves from decisions regarding an individual whom they know personally, committee members must share the nature of any such personal relationship with the Candidacy Committee. In fact, such personal knowledge can provide insight and awareness to the committee in making its decisions. In the case of a family or pastoral relationship with a candidate, a committee member should recuse himself or herself from the interview.

Any and all information regarding a candidate's qualifications, history, or life patterns can be valuable in making candidacy decisions. Private information, including personal letters to a synod bishop or notes of conversations, should be gathered with great care, shared as necessary, and appropriately safeguarded. Information and analysis from psychological reports and Background Checks should be used in an ethical and responsible way. Committee members should be trained in interpreting these reports.

Although some information received in confidence should not be revealed to a candidate, it is always essential to be fair and allow an individual to respond to negative information and correct misinformation. The Candidacy Committee should take all steps necessary to ensure it has dealt effectively and faithfully with any concerns or issues.

Management of Candidacy Files
Synod Records
It is essential for synods to maintain complete and accurate records on every candidate for rostered leadership. The following guidelines provide specific criteria for the management of the materials in a candidate's file – all of which are confidential.

1. Files on applicants/candidates are the property of the Candidacy Committee and should be maintained in a secure location and manner.
2. At its discretion, a Candidacy Committee may allow an applicant or candidate access to his or her candidacy file. The committee may choose not to allow access to confidential communications, letters, or other information. The applicant or candidate may read the contents of the file at a location and under a procedure determined by the Candidacy Committee. When a candidate or applicant reviews the file, someone from synod staff or the committee should be present. Copies should be made only as authorized by the committee.

3. Committees should use care when duplicating candidacy file material in preparation for meetings. Duplicated file material should be sent as CONFIDENTIAL mail and destroyed at the conclusion of the meeting. All electronic distribution of candidacy files must be password protected and in compliance with ELCA policies on electronic data filing. **Note: Copies of psychological evaluations and Background Checks should not be e-mailed to committee members unless the system is password protected. Review of these documents may take place at a time prior to the Entrance interview.**
4. A candidacy file shall be maintained at the appropriate administrative office of a candidate's seminary in a secure location and be available to the faculty advisor and Candidacy Committee members as appropriate.
5. A candidacy file transferred from another synod requires a new Congregational Registration Form from a congregation in the receiving synod.
6. In the case of a candidate whose Endorsement or Approval has been denied or who has withdrawn from the candidacy process, the synod of candidacy will retain the candidate's file for 10 years, after which it may be destroyed.
7. In the case of a candidate who has been granted Approval, the synod will retain the file for 50 years, after which it may be destroyed.
8. All relevant information on a candidate - Form D and Form E - is shared with the synod of assignment through the churchwide assignment process. Because the candidacy file is not intended for use as part of the call process, the contents of the candidacy file remain with the Candidacy Committee and are not forwarded to the synod of assignment.
9. If for any reason a candidate is transferred to another synod, all materials in the candidacy file will be copied and sent to the new synod of candidacy. The originating synod also retains these records.
10. Maintaining printed paper files is recommended; however, synods may choose to maintain candidacy files electronically in up-to-date formats. Note: Because technology changes rapidly, synods must update technology so that files are accessible for 50 years.

Seminary Records
Seminaries are to maintain candidacy files in a secure manner and location.

Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit Deployed Staff Records
Deployed candidacy staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit may retain files on active candidates in a secure manner. The file may include all information in the Candidacy Committee file.

Churchwide Records
The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit tracks the progress of every candidate. Essential dates and decisions become part of the ELCA Constituent Information System.

Guidelines for Handling a Disagreement with a Decision

Candidacy is an interdependent partnership involving candidates, congregations, synods, seminaries, and the churchwide organization. Entrance, Endorsement, Approval, and Reinstatement decisions are the responsibility of synods through Candidacy Committees and bishops following churchwide policies and procedures. No individual or body has authority to overrule a Candidacy Committee's Entrance, Endorsement, or Approval decisions, or a synodical bishop's decision whether or not to allow an applicant to seek Reinstatement. If an

applicant or candidate disagrees with an Entrance, Endorsement, Approval, or Reinstatement decision, a request for reconsideration may be made to the Candidacy Committee or synod bishop, whoever made the decision.

If a candidate believes proper candidacy procedures have not been followed, he or she shall first consult with the bishop of the synod. If that consultation does not resolve the concern, he or she may request in writing, with supporting documentation to verify the concern, a review of the process by the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The latter will request comment from the synod and may request additional information from any other partners. The Director will report his or her findings to the candidate, the synodical bishop, and the Candidacy Committee.

Guidelines for Transfer of Candidacy

Continuity and consistency in candidacy serve both a candidate and this church. In a rapidly changing and mobile world, however, there may be circumstances when it will best serve a candidate and the church to transfer candidacy from one synod to another. At the request of a candidate who has consulted with the synodical bishop in the synod of origin and received consent for a transfer of candidacy, a synod may transfer his or her candidacy to another synod, provided the receiving synod consents to the transfer.

A transfer request is not equivalent to one of the three decisions in the candidacy process - Entrance, Endorsement, or Approval. A Candidacy Committee may neither deny nor delay a transfer of candidacy solely on the grounds of a candidate's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Normally, a candidate remains with the Candidacy Committee where the process originated, especially in the following situations:
- if a candidate's Entrance, Endorsement, or Approval has been Denied or Postponed on other grounds,
- if Denial or Postponement has been recommended by an interview team or a Theological Review Panel on other grounds, or
- the Candidacy Committee has not considered the recommendation.

A person who withdraws from candidacy for any reason must reapply for candidacy in the synod where he or she was originally a candidate. A Candidacy Application Form to reapply may be accompanied by a request from a candidate for transfer to another synod.

In all instances involving a transfer of candidacy, the committee chairpersons of both synods, after consultation with the Candidacy Committees of their respective synods, will give written authorization for the transfer. Consultation with the Candidacy Committees may be done by email or other electronic means to avoid undue delay. To assure full awareness and the sharing of relevant information, the sending synod shall copy all records pertaining to a candidate in question, including summaries of their current assessment of a candidate, and transmit them to the receiving synod. Whenever candidacy is transferred to another synod, a candidate must

submit a new Congregational Registration Form from a congregation in the receiving synod. The receiving synod may also inquire of a candidate's previous congregation concerning additional relevant information made available since the original registration. If a candidate is already enrolled in or affiliated with an ELCA seminary, the Candidacy Committee of the receiving synod shall notify that seminary concerning a transfer between synods.

Transfer of Persons Seeking Reinstatement
In accordance with ELCA bylaws and policies outlined on pages 20 - 22 in this manual, if an applicant is seeking both Reinstatement to a roster and a transfer to another synod, the Secretary of the ELCA must consent to the transfer, as well as the synods involved. A transfer of candidacy when a Reinstatement is involved requires the concurrence of both Candidacy Committees and both bishops.

Guidelines for People in Same-Gender Relationships

1. Heterosexual and homosexual applicants and candidates shall be treated equitably.
2. When working with an applicant or candidate who is in a same-gender relationship, the Candidacy Committee will follow the same processes for discernment and evaluation as with all other candidates and will use the standards of this church and the *Vision and Expectations* document for the appropriate roster.
3. When this church's diversity of faith-based opinions concerning these matters is present on a Candidacy Committee and/or in its context, some conversations and decisions will be complex and challenging. Integrity can be maintained best when committee members honor others with differing convictions and keep in mind the foundational responsibilities and purpose of the Candidacy Committee. Aspects of this integrity include
    a. treating each committee member, applicant, and candidate with respect,
    b. inviting and expecting candor by all applicants and candidates about their relationships, and
    c. being candid with one another and with applicants and candidates about whether committee members are able to support or not support the rostering of people in a same-gender relationships leading to marriage.
4. In some instances, the transfer of candidacy to another synod will be a helpful tool for respecting the faith convictions of a candidate and of all members of a Candidacy Committee; and a candidate may be encouraged to seek a transfer (see pages 18-19). Similarly, in some instances an applicant wishing to begin candidacy, after consultation with the bishop of his or her synod, may be well advised to apply for candidacy in a synod other than the one of congregational membership. In that case, the Candidacy Committee may depart from normal practice and accept registration from the congregation of membership, even though it is in another synod.
5. It is always appropriate in the candidacy process to invite further conversation about a candidate's responses on the Candidacy Application Form. Such responses may open the possibility for further helpful conversation with a candidate.
6. In this arena of responsibility, as in others, this church continues to trust its Candidacy Committees and others to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to rostered leadership. Accordingly, it is essential that the committee report to the synodical bishop and to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit any relevant information, as well as any procedural or policy problems

encountered, so that the ELCA candidacy process can be enhanced for the sake of mission and the good of all concerned.

Guidelines for Reinstatement to the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Guided by the "Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the ELCA,"
Adopted by action of the Church Council as policy of the ELCA, April 16, 1989, revised on November 14, 1994, and further revised by the Church Council on April 12, 1999 [CC99.04.29], November 14, 2004 [CC04.11.69c] and November 15, 2009 [CC09.11.80]

I. Reinstatement Process
A. Reinstatement to the rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is the responsibility of the Candidacy Committee of the synod where the applicant was last rostered.
B. In the case of an applicant whose previous rostered ministry was in one of the ELCA predecessor churches, the successor ELCA synod has the responsibility. In every case, the process begins in the synod from which the applicant left the roster or its successor.
C. In the case of an applicant whose removal from the roster was the result of one of the following:
   1. the official disciplinary process of this church,
   2. resignation or removal from the roster in lieu of the disciplinary process, or
   3. application of ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.31.16., where the person was on leave from call after conduct or allegations that could lead to disciplinary charges,
   then a minimum of five consecutive years without call must elapse before an application for reinstatement may be considered. The passage of five years without call does not guarantee reconsideration.

II. Application for Reinstatement
A. The applicant provides the completed Application for Reinstatement to the appropriate synod, and the synod sends a copy to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for information.
B. Upon receipt of the Application for Reinstatement, the synodical bishop will notify the Office of the Secretary and request any pertinent information the churchwide office may have concerning the applicant.
C. With the approval of the ELCA Secretary, the Reinstatement process continues with the completion of a new Candidacy Application Form and a new RLP. At this time the applications may be transferred from the synod of previous roster to the synod of current residence, upon the written concurrence of both candidacy committee chairs (in consultation with members of the Candidacy Committee) and both synod bishops. The original synod will provide the receiving synod with all information and documentation concerning the applicant.
D. The bishop of the synod in which the Reinstatement application will be considered schedules an interview with the applicant. The purpose of this interview is to determine the applicant's eligibility to be a candidate in the synod. The bishop also determines whether the application is timely under paragraph I.C. above.
E. In the case of an applicant where inappropriate conduct or allegations of misconduct led to resignation or removal from the roster, the synodical bishop examines the

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applicant for indications of repentance and amendment of life as well as indication of or attempts at reconciliation with those injured by the conduct. The bishop also documents corrective actions that have occurred before proceeding with Reinstatement. The bishop should invite comments from those directly affected by the applicant's inappropriate conduct or alleged misconduct.

    F. The Candidacy Committee considers an applicant for Reinstatement when the synodical bishop forwards the application to the committee. The bishop may, in his or her sole discretion, decline to forward the application to the Candidacy Committee or may forward the application with a written statement of the bishop's opinion of the application.

III. Candidacy Committee

    A. The Candidacy Committee will receive and review the Congregational Registration Form from the congregation where the applicant is a member in good standing.

    B. The committee shall determine that it has received all records and information concerning the applicant, including verification of synodical records concerning the reason for removal from the roster. If synodical records are incomplete, this verification may include conferring with the former bishop, synod staff, or with the churchwide office.

    C. The committee may request any additional information from any source that it deems necessary in order to determine the applicant's readiness for ministry and suitability for Reinstatement.

    D. The applicant must prepare an Approval Essay and submit it to the Candidacy Committee.

    E. The committee may request a new psychological evaluation and Background Check when necessary; however, in the case of any applicant who has been off the roster or without call for more than five years, the Candidacy Committee will require the applicant to participate in a psychological evaluation. The expense of this evaluation is the responsibility of the applicant.

    F. The Candidacy Committee follows the standards and procedures in this manual as its guide in considering a request for Reinstatement. The Candidacy Committee interviews the applicant to explore all concerns related to Reinstatement, including but not limited to
        1. the circumstances surrounding the removal of the applicant from the roster, including the applicant's reason(s) for leaving the roster,
        2. the applicant's reason(s) for requesting Reinstatement with a special focus upon what has changed in the person's life, faith, attitudes, and circumstances since the time of removal,
        3. discussion of the applicant's understanding of the specific roster in the ELCA and the applicant's willingness to serve in response to the needs of this church, and
        4. discussion of *"Vision and Expectations"* and the applicant's commitment to live according to them.

    G. The Candidacy Committee may request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to convene a Theological Review Panel to determine the applicant's theological readiness for Word and Sacrament or Word and Service ministry. The Theological Review Panel will make a recommendation to the committee following the procedures developed by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

IV. Decision

    A. The Candidacy Committee will decide the applicant's suitability to serve as a rostered leader of this church. This decision is one of the following:

1. grant Approval for Reinstatement upon receipt and acceptance of a letter of call,
2. postpone Approval with specific recommendations for remedial or developmental work before further consideration for Reinstatement, or
3. deny Approval for Reinstatement.

B. If the decision of the Candidacy Committee is to deny an applicant Reinstatement, that decision is final. Any such applicant who desires reconsideration must begin the process again by applying under II.A. above.

C. If an applicant who was removed from the roster under the circumstances described in I.C. above is approved for Reinstatement by the Candidacy Committee, such Approval is not effective unless affirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the total membership of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. After the Candidacy Committee reports its approval and the reasons for it to the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, the Executive Committee may obtain whatever additional information or advice, including legal advice, it deems necessary before affirming the decision of the Candidacy Committee.

V. Approval

A. If approved, the candidate will complete the normal assignment paperwork and will participate in the churchwide assignment process.

B. If the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit determines that the process for Reinstatement described herein has not been fully or properly completed, following consultation with the synodical bishop and the unit executive director, then the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit shall post-pone the candidate's participation in the assignment process until all requirements are met.

C. An approved candidate is eligible for a call for a period of one year after Approval by the synod. Any delay occasioned by a Postponement under V.B. above is not counted toward that one-year period of eligibility.

D. The process for Renewal of Approval, as defined in this manual, is the same as that for other candidates for rostered leadership.

E. Upon receipt and acceptance of a properly issued and duly attested letter of call, the candidate is Reinstated to the appropriate roster.

Chapter 2 – Preparing for Entrance

Discernment as Preparation for Candidacy

Prior to applying for and being granted Entrance, individuals should engage in intentional discernment about a sense of call and readiness for candidacy, including but not limited to participation in opportunities provided by congregations, campus ministries, synods, and seminaries. If such intentional discernment has not been the experience of an applicant when contacting a Candidacy Committee, it is appropriate for synod candidacy staff to recommend resources and possible discernment mentors to work with such an applicant in advance of an Entrance interview.

For those who choose to apply for candidacy as a result of their preliminary discernment, a written reflection on discernment is part of the Entrance Essay submitted to a Candidacy Committee. An applicant who has worked with a mentor may invite him or her to share some written reflections with the Candidacy Committee and the applicant, including a letter of reference for Entrance, and to accompany him or her to the Entrance interview with the Candidacy Committee.

Psychological Evaluations

Persons seeking to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA shall complete a psychological evaluation. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit has developed guidelines for use by both psychological consultants and Candidacy Committees (see Appendix B). The primary purposes for a psychological evaluation are to provide a Candidacy Committee with insights regarding an applicant's psychological health and readiness for candidacy and to help individuals gain greater self-understanding and appreciation of their own emotional well-being. A psychological evaluation is part of a larger discernment process that relates to the ELCA candidacy process. A Candidacy Committee is responsible for keeping the purpose of a psychological evaluation in perspective. The desired outcome is an evaluation that candidly assesses an applicant's psychological health and readiness for candidacy and potential future rostered leadership.

Responsibilities of the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit

The Director for Candidacy and the candidacy team in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit have the following responsibilities:
1. establishing and maintaining churchwide policies and guidelines for assessing applicants,
2. registering and regularly reviewing the services of participating psychological consultants, and
3. providing consultation and guidance regarding particular situations, such as for candidates of color and candidates with unusual circumstances.

Responsibilities of the Candidacy Committee

A Candidacy Committee is responsible for deciding whether an applicant is ready to begin candidacy. A psychological consultant's report is only one of the components used by a Candidacy Committee in making such a determination. A Candidacy Committee is responsible for the evaluation and care of a candidate throughout the Candidacy process.

1. *The Candidacy Committee gathers the required information for registering a psychological consultant and submits it to the Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for approval and registration before a contract is finalized.* Using the form "Registration of a Psychological Consultant with a Candidacy Committee," a Candidacy Committee provides the Director for Candidacy with information about the education, experience, professional affiliation, licensure, and liability coverage of the person who seeks registration as a consultant. In addition, the ELCA expects a commitment to the underlying intent of the evaluation process; namely, to provide insights regarding the applicant's psychological health and readiness for candidacy.

   To be accepted for registration by the Director for Candidacy, a psychological consultant must
   a. be licensed as a psychologist and competent to sign an evaluation report, or be licensed as a mental health professional (career counselor, counselor, social worker, psychotherapist, etc.) and consult with a licensed psychologist registered with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to supervise and oversee the evaluation process and co-sign the evaluation report,
   b. demonstrate through professional education, experience, and affiliations both competence in providing psychological evaluations and an ongoing commitment to professional growth,
   c. display interest in working with the ELCA and an understanding of the psychological concerns and ecclesiastical goals of the ELCA candidacy process, and
   d. be familiar with the standards and criteria by which the ELCA assesses its candidates.

2. *The Candidacy Committee contracts with a psychological consultant registered with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for psychological evaluation services.* Any contract should include clear expectations regarding instruments used, fees, etc. Forms or guidelines for reporting should be provided, including a written release-of-information form. It is desirable for the consultant to meet with a Candidacy Committee at least annually to review the clinician's approach to evaluation reports and to provide assistance to committee members in understanding and utilizing evaluation reports.

3. *The Candidacy Committee arranges for a psychological evaluation as part of the Entrance process.* Following the Initial Interview (if used) and well in advance of an Entrance interview, a Candidacy Committee instructs an applicant to schedule a psychological evaluation. The synod covers the fee for a psychological evaluation. As deemed appropriate, an applicant may be assessed an "application fee" to cover a portion of the total costs related to candidacy. Each Candidacy Committee determines the amount of such fees.

A Candidacy Committee must receive a written psychological evaluation report prior to an Entrance interview. When there is serious concern about an applicant's psychological health or situational factors, the Candidacy Committee may confer with the psychological consultant.

If a psychological consultant recommends counseling, treatment or other services, the Candidacy Committee will determine whether or not the recommended counseling/therapy

should be completed prior to granting Entrance. If the Candidacy Committee decides to Postpone Entrance for this reason, the committee may suggest at least three counselors - none of whom provided the applicant's psychological evaluation - and ask the applicant to seek prior approval from the committee for counseling with a particular therapist. Normally, a Candidacy Committee will request written communication from the therapist an applicant chooses for additional counseling.

4. *The Candidacy Committee considers concerns and complaints about psychological consultants*. The Candidacy Committee should periodically review the contract with a psychological consultant and may terminate the relationship if services provided are not satisfactory.

   An applicant who is dissatisfied with a psychological evaluation may secure a second opinion from another professional registered with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Applicants are financially responsible for such additional evaluation. When an applicant requests a second evaluation, both reports – the original and the second opinion - must be released to the Candidacy Committee in order for the applicant to be considered for Entrance into candidacy.

If there are any complaints about a psychological consultant, a Candidacy Committee will notify the Director for Candidacy. Such notification should include concerns regarding any pattern of complaints indicating a particular psychological consultant who is perceived as being insensitive or inappropriate toward persons on the basis of gender, age, class, race, culture, etc. Such notification is also appropriate if the evaluations received by the committee do not reflect the intended completeness or usefulness of the reports for the candidacy process (see above). Such notification is critical for the integrity of psychological evaluations and their continuing helpfulness to both applicants and Candidacy Committees.

Background Checks

Background checks are required of all applicants seeking Entrance into candidacy. Applicants are also required to submit on the Entrance Information Form written answers to specific questions about personal history and conduct. Recent legislation and technological advances have made it easier to obtain personal information about applicants. Given the unique position of trust enjoyed by rostered leaders, denominations regularly make use of Background Checks as part of a comprehensive candidacy screening process.

Areas to be covered by a background check include
1. criminal history database search,
2. county criminal record check,
3. Sex Offender Criminal Registry,
4. credit check report,
5. Social Security trace, and
6. motor vehicle check.

The Background Check should cover at least seven years. If a candidate has moved during the period in question, all relevant geographical areas should be included in the Background Check. These guidelines are intended to be the minimum focus for candidate Background Checks. Candidacy Committees may be flexible in determining when additional checks are needed or advisable. A committee does not have to use exactly the same list of checks for all

candidates. Because different Background Check firms use varying terminology, Candidacy Committees should endeavor in good faith to match the required checks with those available through the chosen provider.

Purpose

A criminal Background Check, or any other screening tool, is only a small portion of the entire candidacy process, which focuses on the evaluation and assessment of applicants. In this process, a Candidacy Committee needs to identify the types of people most likely to do well in rostered leadership, as well as characteristics and behaviors that suggest a good fit with rostered leadership. A Candidacy Committee is obligated to screen out people who might use their position as a rostered leader in damaging or illegal ways.

Candidacy Committees should exercise care and good judgment in using information about an applicant so as not to damage the person's reputation or self-identity as a valued child of God. The candidacy process rightfully looks carefully at each individual and assesses and discerns that person's potential for ministry. Background Checks are not a substitute for using other screening tools or risk reduction techniques, nor are they infallible records of a person's previous conduct or misconduct. The absence of any reported misconduct is not a guarantee of future behavior. If an individual has never been arrested or convicted, a criminal Background Check will not reveal anything; however, Background Checks must include any and all instances of sexual misconduct or child abuse.

The principles which undergird screening in the ELCA candidacy process include fair and equitable application and interpretation of screening tools, which are to be applied consistently with all applicants. Each Candidacy Committee has the right to add specific checks to the basic minimum standards. Candidacy Committees may explore a variety of options, since individual applicants may require different types of Background Checks. As with all screening tools utilized in the ELCA candidacy process, the results are normally shared with the applicant, especially if there is any negative information. Such practice provides the applicant with an opportunity to explain and verify the information.

Because of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and laws separating church and state, Candidacy Committees have greater freedom in asking applicants questions. Both the committee and the ELCA are protected by law; therefore it is possible to ask whatever is necessary in assessing future church leaders.

Responsibilities of the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit is responsible for
1. establishing churchwide policies, guidelines, and programs for evaluating applicants and candidates,
2. arranging for and regularly reviewing the services of participating firms that provide required Background Checks, and
3. periodically evaluating the approach used for Background Checks to meet changing needs.

Responsibilities of Firms Providing Background Checks

1. Any firm providing Background Checks for ELCA Candidacy Committees is expected to

a. implement Background Checks in ways that are consistent with the needs and goals of the ELCA candidacy process,
b. be sensitive to ways that race, language, gender, age, and ethnicity may play a role in the process,
c. provide the necessary forms and communications so the process can be conducted in a professional, consistent, and fair manner, and
d. assist both the Candidacy Committee and the applicant in understanding the rights of individuals and the significance of any results provided.

Types of checks to be provided:
a. **Criminal Background Checks** should include any indication of sexual misconduct, child abuse, or other serious misconduct. Such checks can be done in a number of ways.
   1) Some synods may choose to work through local law enforcement agencies and on-line registries to check on criminal behavior.
   2) Other synods may use Background Check firms that provide a comprehensive service to synods seeking information on criminal and other records.

Federal, state, and county authorities have increased the availability of criminal background information. Technological advances allow for faster, more widespread, and more accurate searches. Nevertheless, criminal background searches are not a quick and easy process. Currently, there is no nationwide up-to-date repository of criminal history records available to employers or the general public. In reality, searches for criminal records must be conducted through various jurisdictions throughout the United States, wherever arrest and conviction records are initiated and/or compiled. Information may be available through federal, district, and statewide searches, specialized registries, child abuse registries, and sex offender registries.

b. **Credit Checks** assist in confirming the identity of an applicant. Since each applicant has a Social Security number, it is possible to verify identity information via a "Social Security number trace" through a credit bureau. Credit reports also disclose outstanding debts and payment history, as well as civil actions (e.g., judgments, liens, and bankruptcies). Credit reports provide a seven-year history of individual or joint financial information. Since rostered leaders will be in a position of handling money or other organizational assets and have check-writing or investment authority, a credit check is a reasonable risk-management procedure.
c. **Motor Vehicle Records** (MVRs) are available through the Department of Motor Vehicles in all 50 states and most countries. Depending on the state, violations are provided for the last three to five years. Since most church leaders will be required to operate a company or church vehicle, rental car, or their own vehicle for business purposes, checking an applicant's driving records is a reasonable risk-management procedure.

Responsibilities of the Candidacy Committee
The Candidacy Committee is responsible for the evaluation and care of candidates throughout the candidacy process, all of which is part of an individual's formation as a Christian and a public servant in the church.
1. The Candidacy Committee obtains a Background Check covering the areas listed above. For this purpose the Candidacy Committee may contract with a firm to provide required Background Checks. The synod staff person responsible for this process should consult

with the synod's attorney regarding appropriate procedures and forms for authorizing a Background Check.

2. The Candidacy Committee arranges for an applicant to complete the necessary forms for a Background Check. A good practice is for the Candidacy Committee to identify one staff contact person who understands the process to handle requests, receive reports, and maintain an appropriate degree of privacy.

3. The Candidacy Committee arranges for payment of fees for Background Checks. Synods are responsible for the cost but they may request an application fee from applicants to cover a portion of the total costs incurred in the candidacy process. In addition, synods may request a congregation registration fee to be paid at the time the congregation submits the registration form. This is a tangible gesture of support on the part of a congregation to both the applicant and the synod.

4. The Candidacy Committee receives and reviews the results of a Background Check prior to the Entrance interview and shares concerns or issues with an applicant and an applicant's seminary as deemed appropriate.

Note: The Candidacy Committee will notify the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit if there are patterns of concern or complaints that suggest a firm providing a Background Check is being insensitive or inappropriate with applicants on the basis of gender, age, class, race, culture, etc., or if the results of a Background Check do not reflect the intention and guidelines of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for the candidacy process. Such notification is critical for the integrity of candidacy screening and continuing helpfulness to applicants.

Using Background Check Results

When reporting the results of a Background Check, a Candidacy Committee needs to have in place a procedure for evaluating the resulting information for each applicant and appropriately sharing pertinent information with the full committee. Guidelines for such procedures need to address the types of information that are to be shared with the full Candidacy Committee, what offenses or other information will disqualify an applicant, and what other factors should be considered. Circumstances to consider when evaluating an offense include

1. the nature and seriousness of the offense,
2. the circumstances under which the offense occurred,
3. the age of the person at the time of the offense and how much time has passed since the offense occurred,
4. societal conditions that may have contributed to the nature of the offense,
5. the probability that the person will repeat the offense, and
6. the person's commitment to rehabilitation, restitution, and reconciliation.

An applicant should be denied Entrance when he or she has knowingly made a false statement of any material fact or attempted deception or fraud in the application process.

Releases. The Candidacy Application Form contains a release, in which an applicant agrees to authorize the ELCA synod or seminary to check references and background information and also permits third parties to release and provide personal information and opinions. A Candidacy Committee may ask applicants to complete additional Background Check authorization forms as part of the application process.

Chapter 3 - Entrance

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Corinthians 12:4-7, NRSV).

Entrance Components

The Entrance process in candidacy is the first formal discernment by a Candidacy Committee and an applicant of his or her readiness for candidacy. A decision to grant Entrance officially accepts an applicant into candidacy. Normally, a Candidacy Committee will grant Entrance prior to an applicant's beginning seminary studies. Entrance into candidacy begins a formal relationship in a community of discernment that includes the appropriate Candidacy Committee, the worshipping community of which a candidate is a part, the seminary of enrollment, and the candidacy team in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. As these relationships are formed and cultivated, a candidate continues his or her discernment of call. A key aspect of the ongoing discernment being fostered through candidacy is attendance at a seminary and gaining experience in contextual settings. It is very legitimate for a candidate to pursue such a course without having total clarity about what God is inviting him or her to consider in living out one's Christian vocation.

As part of the Entrance process, the synod establishes a file for each applicant. As an inquirer moves through application and into candidacy, the file serves as an applicant's official record of candidacy. At the time of the Entrance interview, the file should include the following:

1. evidence of active membership in an ELCA congregation for a minimum of one year, during which an applicant has demonstrated appropriate leadership roles (usually part of the Congregational Registration Form),
2. information provided by the applicant
   a. the Candidacy Application Form,
   b. an Entrance Essay,
   c. a Personal Financial Worksheet, http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Candidacy
   d. a Personal Health Assessment, http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Candidacy
   e. letters of reference from a non-family member and from a member of an applicant's worshipping community,
   f. transcripts, licenses, certificates of completion for continuing education, and
   g. when appropriate, evidence of payment of the application fee,
3. information gathered by the Candidacy Committee
   a. a Congregational Registration Form,
   b. screening reports completed by agencies and other professional assessors,
   c. a psychological evaluation report (see Appendix B), and
   d. a required Background Check (see pages 25–28).

Note: Very rarely, as in the case of an applicant currently rostered in another Christian tradition whose on-going membership in that tradition is required in order to maintain job-related accreditation, an applicant may be exempt from formal congregational membership and may be an associate member of an ELCA congregation. *Active participation in an ELCA worshiping*

community, however, is required. Because there is a significant and ongoing partnership in candidacy between the home congregation and the Candidacy Committee, there may be benefit in inviting a home pastor or campus minister to accompany a candidate to the Entrance interview (and subsequent interviews with the Candidacy Committee) and observe the actual interview process. The role of a home pastor or campus minister is not that of an advocate for a candidate but primarily to be an observer and caregiver for a candidate. Such a person can provide the committee with a helpful longitudinal perspective on a candidate and can also offer regular support and pastoral care to a candidate throughout the candidacy process.

THE INITIAL INTERVIEW

The Initial Interview is an optional resource Candidacy Committees may use in addition to the communal discernment information gathered in the expanded Congregational Registration Form. While no longer a requirement for Entrance, the interview can provide a Candidacy Committee with additional information about an applicant. It offers the further advantage of providing an applicant with opportunity for further discernment and self-reflection, both during and following the actual interview.

Normally, the Initial Interview occurs early in the candidacy process. Only someone who has been trained to conduct the interview should meet with an applicant for this purpose. The Initial Interview is most effective when done face-to-face in a private setting to ensure confidentiality.

When used, the report for the Initial Interview (see Appendix C) is the property of the Candidacy Committee and becomes part of an applicant's file. A copy of the report may be shared with an applicant.

THE WHOLENESS WHEEL

The Wholeness Wheel, a guide for balancing all aspects of a person's health, depicts the interconnectedness of individual aspects of wellness. It visually portrays a process that is colorful, dynamic, vital, centered, balanced, contained, and inter-related.

One use of the Wholeness Wheel is as a tool and resource at the time of Entrance. It helps those in discernment and those accompanying them to understand better an applicant's giftedness and readiness for beginning candidacy. In preparation for the Entrance interview, applicants provide information, participate in evaluations, and answer questions – many of which touch upon various aspects included in the Wholeness Wheel.

Candidacy Committees can also use the Wholeness Wheel as a guide for exploring an applicant's balance and well-being. Committees review information provided by applicants in the areas described below as they interview, discern, and make an Entrance Decision.

THE WHOLENESS WHEEL

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(U.S. Patent and Trademark SN 86/238,903, 86/238,971, 86/252,356, 86/252,371, 86/252,365, 86/252,438, 86/257,977).

Social and Inter-Personal Well-being
Candidacy is lived out in the context of various formative and trustworthy communities, including partners in the candidacy process. This is demonstrated in the following:
- one letter of reference from a non-family member who knows the applicant in social and non-work related settings,
- one letter of reference from a member of the ELCA worshiping community where the applicant currently participates, and
- a completed Background Check.

Emotional Well-being
Being emotionally healthy is a necessary aspect of candidacy. Knowing who one is as a person and where one's emotional strengths and challenges lie are significant understandings to bring to candidacy and address frequently throughout the process. This is demonstrated in the completion of the required psychological evaluation.

Physical Well-being
Because candidacy is a challenging and demanding process, for many candidates staying well will be a challenge. Understanding one's physical health and the ability to manage it is the candidate's responsibility, as demonstrated in the on-line Personal Health Assessment.

Financial Well-being
Financial wellness is essential for a successful candidacy experience and for long-term faithful service as a rostered leader. These are demonstrated in the following:
- a completed Background Check and
- a completed Personal Financial Worksheet.

Vocational Well-being

An applicant's work experience contributes to his or her readiness for candidacy. This is demonstrated in the report of all previous and current employment (included in the Candidacy Application Form).

Intellectual Well-being

Candidates are expected to exhibit intellectual ability, curiosity, and analytical and communication skills. These are demonstrated in the following:

- copies of transcripts of all post-secondary education (completed degrees and non-completed degrees) and
- copies of certificates of completion for all continuing education and other professional and academic work.

Spiritual Well-being

Through Word and Sacrament every candidate participates in the life of a worshiping community.   The latter is an important partner in the candidacy process, because it identifies, nurtures, and supports potential leaders. This is demonstrated in the completed Congregational Registration Form, which is neither a decision regarding candidacy nor a determination for service as a rostered leader. Instead, it is an important statement concerning an applicant's readiness to begin the candidacy process and his or her potential to serve in rostered leadership from the perspective of a community of faith. Information provided by a campus minister, when applicable, can be a helpful addition or attachment to the Congregational Registration Form.

Entrance Interview

As Candidacy Committees prepare for an Entrance interview, they will focus on many characteristics, including a candidate's potential for rostered leadership. At Entrance the Candidacy Committee focuses on a candidate's *awareness* of missional leadership characteristics and God's mission in the world. When a Candidacy Committee evaluates an applicant at Entrance, the following aspects of readiness deserve careful consideration:

1. faith in the Triune God, spiritual maturity, passion for justice, and compassion for God's people,
2. demonstration of a healthy lifestyle,
3. awareness of both missional leadership characteristics and what it means for the church to participate in God's mission in the world,
4. awareness of both theological and practical perspectives on the nature of Christian ministry, the various forms of rostered leadership in the ELCA, and an understanding of the call to rostered leadership,
5. familiarity with Lutheran congregational life, including a minimum of one year's active participation in an ELCA worshiping community,
6. academic readiness, including
    a. appropriate undergraduate preparation,
    b. language skills—oral and written, and
    c. foundational knowledge of the Scriptures and Lutheran theology, and
7. a realistic assessment of one's potential for rostered leadership including gifts, abilities, and pertinent situational factors.

The Entrance Interview may not be held until all components of the candidacy application process are complete. The applicant, the Candidacy Committee, and the seminary of

enrollment can utilize various Entrance components to identify growth and developmental issues for an applicant and to assist his or her formation and growth.

Guide for the Entrance Interview

This interview guide describes the flow of a thorough interview process. Each Candidacy Committee may adapt the structure to its own style and needs, while keeping in mind the important components set forth in this manual. These guidelines assume that interview panel members will have read and become familiar with the following:

1. *Vision and Expectations,*
2. Guidelines for Discernment (see Appendix A),
3. the Entrance section of the Candidacy Manual, and
4. an applicant's file, including all Entrance components.

The Entrance Interview may involve the entire Candidacy Committee or a panel with no less than three committee members. Since the purpose of the interview is to build relationships with applicants and to be comprehensive in reviewing submitted materials, the committee will need to allow sufficient time for the interview and committee deliberation.

I. **Introduction**
   Extending hospitality to an applicant is critical to the effectiveness of both the interview itself and the candidacy process. Hospitality conveys encouragement and a sense of community. All members of the panel or Candidacy Committee will introduce themselves to applicants. Many applicants and Candidacy Committees value the opportunity to begin an interview with prayer.

II. **Interview with an Applicant**
   The following is a suggested order for the flow of conversation during an Entrance interview.
   A. **Discernment Process**
      1. Describe your personal discernment process.
      2. In what ways has your sense of call been identified and affirmed by your community of faith?
      3. How do you understand the particular roster to which you feel called?
      4. What do you consider to be the most pressing needs of the church?

   B. **Readiness for Candidacy**
      More than ever, the church today is seeking leaders with a deep faith in Jesus Christ and an understanding of mission. This means having an ability to analyze context critically, evaluate needed changes, identify new approaches to ministry, and lead people in mission - often beyond their comfort zone. The questions below are suggested to encourage applicants to tell their own faith story and ~~to~~ give the committee a means of evaluating their missional awareness.
      1. What rostered leaders have influenced your view of mission and ministry?
      2. Where do you see God active in your life? In the world?
      3. Describe your relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
      4. Describe an instance where you shared your faith/God's love with another person.
      5. Describe a community or group where you have held a leadership role (formal or informal). What was difficult for you? What did you learn?

6. How will your pursuit of candidacy and rostered leadership affect your family life?
7. Are you open to serve the church wherever there is a need?

In the course of the interview, the committee will also review and discuss the psychological evaluation report. The next following questions can facilitate helpful discussion of this Entrance component.

8. What was your response to the psychological evaluation? What insights from it have been useful in your discernment process? <u>Note</u>: Interviewers will want to be attentive to any concerns regarding health-related issues (physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual).

C. Required Entrance Questions

Because ELCA rostered leaders accept responsibility for protecting both this church and its members, they are called to live in the world as faithful examples of the Christian life. For that reason, Candidacy Committees need to ask those considering rostered leadership about their personal conduct. An applicant may or may not have self-knowledge and self-awareness that can assist the committee in assessing readiness for candidacy. Some situational factors must also be addressed to invite awareness and openness regarding potential for healthy leadership in the ELCA. Some factors will disqualify applicants, including a history of sexual attraction to minors or sexually deviant behavior with children or minors. Careful attention should be given to an applicant's answers on the Candidacy Application Form and the ways issues have been addressed or resolved. The Candidacy Committee should inquire specifically about issues that could indicate significant obstacles to readiness.

As part of the Entrance interview, the committee invites an applicant to offer reflections and/or clarifications related to his or her responses to the required Entrance questions. The committee may also raise additional questions generated by an applicant's responses. If the committee identifies concerns related to an applicant's fitness for candidacy, it should make further inquiry and consultation pertaining to such concerns before making an Entrance decision. At the time of the Entrance interview, both an applicant and a member of the Candidacy Committee will sign a copy of the Candidacy Application Form and the Entrance Information Form. The signed copies, along with any written analysis or review by the Candidacy Committee, should become part of the candidacy file.

During the Entrance interview, usually near the conclusion of it, the Candidacy Committee will discuss with every applicant the questions listed below that are asked on the Candidacy Application Form.

Out of care for the church every candidate answers these questions as part of the Candidacy Application Form. Now we invite you to discuss your written answers and share other information you feel would be helpful to the Candidacy Committee.
1. *Are you familiar with the document Vision and Expectations? Do you intend to live in accord with its standards of conduct as a candidate and as a rostered leader in the ELCA?*
2. *Do you belong to any organization or lodge like the Free Masons or Eastern Star which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church?*

3. *Do you have or have you had any health conditions (physical or psychological) that might interfere with your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?*
4. *Are there issues in your family situation or personal life that could adversely affect your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?*
5. *Is your personal debt, excluding mortgage, greater than $31,500?*
6. *Have you ever defaulted on a loan or declared bankruptcy?*
7. *Do you now engage or have you ever engaged in any addictive behavior, including drug or alcohol abuse or sexual or pornographic addictions?*
8. *Have you ever been terminated or resigned from any employment or volunteer activities due to accusations of misconduct, whether financial, sexual, ethical, or other improper behavior?*
9. *Have you ever engaged in, been accused of, charged with, or convicted of a crime or illegal conduct, including conduct resulting in suspension or revocation of your driver's license?*
10. *Have you ever been engaged in, accused of, sued, or charged with sexual molestation, sexual harassment, child neglect or abuse, spousal neglect or abuse, or financial improprieties?*
11. *Do you have any sexual attraction toward children or minors, or any history of sexually deviant behavior, including behavior with children or minors?*
12. *Have you engaged in any behavior or been involved in any situations that, if they became known by the church, might seriously damage your ability to continue in candidacy for rostered leadership?*
13. *Are you prepared to accept a call from this church based on the needs of the church which might require service in a location different from where you now live?*
14. *Is there additional information that would assist the Candidacy Committee in considering your candidacy or that you believe the committee should know?*

D. Spiritual Formation

Spiritual formation has both individual and corporate dimensions. An applicant is expected to be a member in good standing of an ELCA worshiping community for a minimum of one year. The Candidacy Committee will ask about the applicant's involvement in the life of his/her worshiping community.

It is important for the committee to explore an applicant's ability to articulate and be formed by faith experiences. Here are some possible lines of inquiry that could be incorporated into an Entrance interview.

1. What Bible stories are especially meaningful for you and inform your spiritual journey?
2. How will you sustain your faith during candidacy? (An applicant might propose a plan for his/her faith life that includes such practices as the use of a trained spiritual director, participation in a group discipleship experience, retreats, personal devotions and daily prayer, and regular participation in corporate worship).
3. In what ways are you currently practicing holistic stewardship of life?
4. How do you intend to engage in ongoing vocational discernment during candidacy?
5. What kinds of healthy habits for self-care are you developing for yourself?

III. **The Recommendation**
At the conclusion of the Entrance interview, an applicant is excused from the room, while the panel or committee comes to a decision and prepares a written statement regarding an applicant. In the case of a panel recommendation, the actual Entrance decision is made by the full Candidacy Committee.

The Entrance Decision

Using all available information, a Candidacy Committee makes an Entrance decision. In the case of a multi-synodical Candidacy Committee, primary responsibility for an applicant resides with the synod of candidacy. All Entrance decisions should be clearly communicated on the Entrance Decision Form to an applicant, the ELCA seminary of choice, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The Entrance decision is one of the following:

- **Entrance Granted.** An Entrance Granted decision indicates the committee's confidence in an applicant's potential and readiness for candidacy. The decision means the applicant demonstrates gifts, abilities, and potential for rostered leadership.

- **Entrance Postponed.** If an applicant demonstrates gifts and abilities but lacks sufficient readiness (physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual), the committee recommends Postponement. In doing so, the committee will identify developmental or situational issues that need to be addressed and/or conditions that must be met before an applicant can be reconsidered for Entrance. Factors that might indicate Postponement include the following:
  a) emotional and psychological factors that could improve with therapy or other interventions,
  b) indications of current substance abuse,
  c) current or very recent marital distress, separation, or divorce,
  d) a family situation that will be highly stressed by geographic relocation,
  e) financial stress with a heavy debt load,
  f) limited familiarity with Lutheran congregational life,
  g) lack of basic biblical and catechetical knowledge,
  h) substantial health problems, or
  i) recent life crises without adequate time for healing.
  Other factors relating to academic readiness, including poor writing skills or inadequate undergraduate preparation, will be determined by the seminary admissions process. If the committee has academic concerns, consultation with the appropriate seminary admissions director is advised.

When Entrance Postponed is indicated, the committee must clearly state on the Entrance Decision Form the reasons for the decision. The committee will also ask an applicant to submit a written plan for addressing the identified issues, concerns, or difficulties. An applicant and the committee together will determine how progress will be monitored, when reconsideration may be scheduled, and what procedure will be followed for reconsideration.

- **Entrance Denied.** This decision states specific reasons why an applicant is not an appropriate candidate for rostered leadership. The rationale for such a decision may include issues related to discernment, health, readiness, or other situational factors. If an applicant clearly lacks the gifts and abilities needed for rostered leadership, then a Candidacy Committee will consider denying Entrance. In the event of Denial, the committee should provide appropriate pastoral care at the time the committee shares its

discernment with an applicant. The Candidacy Committee should also assist an applicant in further discernment as to where his or her particular gifts might be more appropriately used in this church or in other areas of service. The Candidacy Committee has an important contribution to make in relation to an applicant's understanding of vocation and may need to devote extra time to discern with an applicant other possible avenues for living out her or his vocation. An applicant whose Entrance has been denied may reapply for Entrance after one year. The Candidacy Committee will at its discretion determine whether or not to act on such reapplications.

Reporting Entrance Decisions

The decision of the Candidacy Committee will be reported to an applicant, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, and the ELCA seminary of choice, using the Entrance Decision Form. All reports and decisions of the Candidacy Committee, including Denials, shall be maintained in an applicant's file. Such files shall be maintained according to the Candidacy Records Management Policy (see page 16).

Withdrawal of Entrance

Entrance does not guarantee the committee's final Approval of a candidate. If warranted by written allegations of actions that may prove harmful to the church, a Candidacy Committee has the responsibility to withdraw Entrance prior to Endorsement. A decision to withdraw Entrance is a significant action that ends candidacy. When considering withdrawal, a Candidacy Committee will normally communicate with a candidate prior to making such a decision.

Reapplication after Entrance Denial

Reapplication must be made to the original synod of application, unless there are extenuating circumstances (see Guidelines for Transfer of Candidacy, page 18). If the Candidacy Committee decides to act on a reapplication, it will retrieve, activate, and appropriately update an applicant's stored file. The Candidacy Committee reports any new Entrance decisions to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Contact Person/Relator

Because personal contact with a candidate throughout the candidacy process is essential for formation, growth, and personal development, Candidacy Committees need to appoint a contact person/relator who is a member of the committee for each candidate granted Entrance. The contact person/relator serves throughout candidacy as a liaison between the committee and a candidate to share mutual joys and concerns. The guidelines suggested below apply to the role of a contact person/relator.

1. Be present for all interviews with assigned candidates.
2. Exchange contact and other personal information with assigned candidates early in the relationship.
3. Be prepared to update the current status of assigned candidates prior to any committee meetings or decisions.
4. Pray for assigned candidates.
5. Maintain contact with assigned candidates through letters, e-mail, telephone calls, visits, retreats, birthday cards, etc.

6. Encourage assigned candidates to share significant news or concerns and provide updates on academic and practical progress.
7. Assist assigned candidates in ongoing discernment of call, identifying and monitoring areas of growth, developing a Candidate Accompaniment Plan (see Appendix D), and sharing experiences of grace.

Because the role of the contact person/relator is critical for continuity and healthy communication throughout the candidacy process, Candidacy Committees need to be attentive to the activities of these persons and the frequency and quality of their contact with assigned candidates. When a committee member leaves the committee, the Candidacy Committee in a timely manner will identify a replacement contact person/relator for all candidates who were relating to the departing committee member. Special sensitivity to how the departure of committee members affects candidates is very appropriate, including seeking the input of a candidate concerning a suitable replacement for the former contact person/relator.

Seminary Admission
In consultation with the Candidacy Committee, individuals normally apply to an ELCA seminary and follow the seminary's admissions process. Those who consider study at a theological school or seminary other than an ELCA seminary must affiliate with an ELCA seminary before completing the Candidate Accompaniment Plan (see description below). ELCA seminaries will normally not extend an offer of admission to an ELCA applicant until receiving notification of Entrance Granted by a Candidacy Committee. An applicant who has begun but not yet completed Entrance into candidacy may receive a provisional offer of admission by the seminary. Such a provisional offer will be withdrawn unless the Candidacy Committee grants Entrance by the end of the first term or semester of study. Granting Entrance does not guarantee seminary admission. A seminary may deny admission for academic or other reasons.

Candidate Accompaniment Plan
The increasing diversity of seminary leadership formation programs and related curricula make it necessary for Candidacy Committees to develop a process for gathering candidate information in order to better accompany candidates. A Candidacy Committee needs access to such information when determining the appropriate timing for a candidate's Endorsement and Approval interviews. Many Candidacy Committees already have a good system for gathering the information used to schedule interviews and may decide to continue their present practice.

The primary intent of the Candidate Accompaniment Plan is to strengthen the partnership between Candidacy Committees, candidates, and ELCA seminaries. The model presented below is an option for Candidacy Committees to consider.
1. Following the decision to grant Entrance, the Candidacy Committee will assume primary responsibility, in consultation with the seminary of enrollment, for gathering the necessary information to complete the Candidate Accompaniment Plan (see Appendix D).
2. When necessary, a Candidacy Committee may request the regions Ministry Leadership Coordinator to assume responsibility for facilitating the conversation among partners in order to complete the Candidate Accompaniment Plan. This may be helpful when a candidate will be attending a non-ELCA seminary.

3. The purpose of the Candidate Accompaniment Plan is to develop a tentative timetable for the candidacy process. Factors to consider in developing such a plan are the timing of Endorsement, a candidate's circumstances, and the seminary program in which a candidate is enrolled.
4. Participants may use distance conferencing media to avoid excessive time and expense.

Copies of a completed plan for each candidate will be kept by the Candidacy Committee, the seminary of enrollment, and the candidate.

Guidelines for Supervised Clinical Ministry (CPE)

Introduction
The ELCA requires all candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry to complete one unit of supervised clinical ministry. Candidates normally complete this unit before Endorsement and must meet this requirement prior to internship and Approval. The preferred way for meeting this requirement is a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). Other recognized accrediting bodies include the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) and the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE).

Supervised clinical ministry offers candidates an opportunity to experience learning in direct, integrated ways while practicing the art of pastoral ministry. Among the benefits of such a learning experience are growths in pastoral identity, self-understanding, and theological reflection. Interaction with peers and a supervisor in an interpersonal learning group is a key feature of the experience.

The Candidacy Committee, in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, evaluates and approves alternative programs and equivalencies in advance. Candidates who opt for a non-accredited program should be mindful that it will not fulfill the unit of CPE required for admission to an ACPE residency. This may have important implications for candidates considering future training leading to ecclesiastical endorsement and certification in specialized pastoral care ministry.

The seminary has primary responsibility for the management and administration of this educational requirement.

Standards
The standards for an approved supervised clinical ministry program include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. a specified time period of no less than 400 hours,
2. active reporting and evaluation of one's practice of ministry, utilizing a small peer group and individual supervision,
3. a supervisor who is trained, qualified, and credentialed,
4. an inductive, experiential model of learning that uses the clinical/case method and focuses on one's whole person in the practice of ministry,
5. learning the art of pastoral and spiritual care,
6. an individual contract for learning, developed collaboratively by the student and supervisor, that includes

a. a theology of pastoral ministry,
b. self-understanding and self-integration as demonstrated in the Wholeness Wheel,
c. identification of personal strengths and weaknesses in pastoral care,
d. participation in a peer group in order to give and receive supportive and challenging feedback,
e. working collaboratively with interdisciplinary teams to develop pastoral identity and authority, and
f. clear and specific goals for continuing pastoral formation.

Guidelines for Students Attending Non-ELCA Seminaries

All candidates preparing for rostered leadership are expected to demonstrate and build upon the characteristics of an ELCA missional leader listed under each of the four basic principles outlined on pages 5-9 in this manual. To develop and strengthen these characteristics, candidates are strongly encouraged to earn a M.Div. degree at an ELCA seminary. Some candidates may elect to attend a non-ELCA seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). These candidates follow all the candidacy steps outlined in this manual. Because developing a Lutheran confessional understanding is important for ministry in the ELCA, candidates are required to participate in structured Lutheran learning and formation opportunities approved by an ELCA seminary. Such learning opportunities may include online courses and cohort groups offered by one of our ELCA seminaries, or approved Lutheran learning opportunities offered at non-ELCA seminaries. ELCA candidates attending non-ELCA seminaries may also satisfy Lutheran learning and formation requirements at an ELCIC seminary (ELCA constitution – 7.31.13.b).

Students attending non-ELCA seminaries must affiliate with an ELCA or ELCIC seminary after being granted Entrance. Failure to affiliate early in the candidacy process will delay Endorsement, Approval, Assignment, and First Call. At least one year must elapse between Endorsement and Approval. Affiliation assists a candidate in understanding the variety of ways ELCA seminaries, in collaboration with synods, have developed to fulfill the Lutheran learning and formation requirements. Affiliation assists candidates with the following:
- identifying an appropriate CPE program,
- identifying and receiving oversight of the required internship,
- selecting approved Lutheran learning and formation opportunities offered at an ELCA/ELCIC seminary, or at the non-ELCA seminary where a candidate is registered,
- facilitating the process for ELCA/ELCIC seminary faculty recommendation required at Approval (Form D).

After being granted Entrance by a Candidacy Committee and being admitted to an accredited non-ELCA seminary, a candidate works with a Candidacy Committee representative, the dean/faculty of the ELCA seminary of affiliation and the non-ELCA seminary to complete the Candidate Accompaniment Plan and identify how the Lutheran learning and formation requirements will be met (see Appendix D). Every student attending a non-ELCA seminary is charged a one-time affiliation fee collected by the seminary of affiliation. The Candidacy Committee may request the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership to work with the

candidate and appropriate seminary representatives to develop the plan, which can help the Candidacy Committee, seminary, and candidate identify approximate timing for CPE, Endorsement, Internship, and Approval. The completed plan becomes part of the candidate's file. The synod will send copies of the plan to the ELCA/ELCIC seminary of affiliation. A synod that already has a system in place for gathering the information requested on the Candidate Accompaniment Plan may continue to use it.

Outcomes for Lutheran Learning and Formation
The expectations and outcomes established for Lutheran learning and formation occur not only in the classroom but also through the total teaching/learning experience at an ELCA/ELCIC seminary (or at another seminary program approved by an ELCA seminary). The outcomes are
1. a solid grounding in Lutheran systematic theology and the Lutheran Confessions,
2. the articulation of a Lutheran theological perspective through the study of theology, church history, Bible, worship, preaching, Christian education, pastoral care, and ethics,
3. a holistic understanding of ministry in a Lutheran context, including the integrity and varieties of Lutheran worship, and familiarity with policies and practices associated with ELCA polity, assignment, call, and mobility, and
4. participation in current theological conversations within the ELCA, including establishing relationships with future colleagues characterized by mutual support and consolation, accountability, and a clear sense of shared mission.

The Lutheran learning and formation guided by an ELCA seminary is a constitutional requirement of the ELCA and will normally not be waived or reduced in length (ELCA constitution - 7.31.13.b). It may be possible for a candidate with an M. Div. degree from a non-ELCA seminary to earn an advanced degree while fulfilling the Lutheran learning objectives during a year of learning and formation at an ELCA/ELCIC seminary. A candidate seeking to earn an advanced degree while in residency must also complete admission requirements at the ELCA/ELCIC seminary of affiliation.

Rarely will a full or partial waiver of the Lutheran learning and formation requirement be granted by a Candidacy Committee, but only after receiving a recommendation for waiver from a special TRP or similar panel convened for this specific purpose (see page 47). To assist the panel in making an informed recommendation, a candidate will participate in the interview and provide samples of academic papers and other written documents that provide sufficient evidence that the Lutheran learning and formation outcomes listed above have been fulfilled. If a waiver is granted, the Candidacy Committee will inform the Director for Candidacy in writing. A decision to waive the Lutheran learning and formation requirement must occur at Endorsement and does not alter the requirements for an internship supervised through an ELCA/ELCIC seminary and a supervised clinical ministry experience. Candidates for whom the Lutheran learning and formation requirement has been waived must still receive a faculty recommendation from an ELCA/ELCIC seminary of affiliation (Form D) in order to be Approved.

CPE/Internship
For candidates enrolled at non-ELCA seminaries, the ELCA seminary of affiliation, in consultation with the non-ELCA seminary and the appropriate Candidacy Committee, arranges the CPE experience and determines the timing of the internship year (see Appendix F).

Chapter 4 - Admission under Other Circumstances

Theological Education for Emerging Ministries

Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) is a leadership formation process in the ELCA designed for persons who meet the established criteria. Authorized in the ELCA constitution (7:31.14) and described in the Study of Ministry (2003), the Study of Theological Education (1993; 1995), and the ELCA's Plan for Mission adopted at the 2003 Churchwide Assembly, the TEEM process responds to ministry needs of the ELCA.

TEEM candidates do not self-identify. Consideration for admittance into the TEEM process begins with the granting of Entrance by a Candidacy Committee followed by a recommendation from a synod bishop (see below). The Director for Candidacy in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit then grants acceptance of a candidate into the TEEM process, when the criteria for acceptance listed below are met.

Criteria for Acceptance into TEEM

A person seeking to complete all the academic and practical requirements for Word and Sacrament ministry through the TEEM process will demonstrate the characteristics outlined on pages 5-9 of this manual. Every candidate participating in the TEEM process must be serving in an emerging ministry site identified by a synod bishop.

What is an emerging ministry?

Emerging ministries are Word and Sacrament communities that meet one or more of the following criteria:
1. ethnic-specific, multicultural, or recent immigrant ministries,
2. small membership rural or urban congregations where a synod bishop has had difficulty identifying and placing a candidate for call,
3. new mission starts authorized through normal ELCA processes,
4. redevelopment ministries authorized through normal ELCA processes, and
5. ministries with people who are differently abled.

The TEEM Process

TEEM candidates complete all the steps in the candidacy process outlined in this manual. A candidate's admittance into TEEM occurs only after the steps listed below have been completed.
1. A synod bishop provides a letter recommending a candidate for admission into the TEEM process.
2. A bishop's letter of recommendation must identify a specific ministry site where a candidate will serve. The same ministry site will serve as both the candidate's teaching parish experience and the site for a supervised internship.
3. The Director for Candidacy must accept a candidate into the TEEM process following the granting of Entrance.

After TEEM candidates complete the academic and practical ministry requirements and are granted Approval by a Candidacy Committee, they normally serve their first call in the ministry site identified by a synodical bishop. Following first call, the opportunities for mobility are the same as for all ELCA rostered leaders.

Steps in Candidacy for TEEM
1. Candidates for the TEEM process must be granted Entrance by a Candidacy Committee. In preparation for an Entrance interview, the following are required:
    a. a Candidacy Application Form and Entrance Information Form,
    b. a Congregational Registration Form,
    c. a Background Check,
    d. a psychological evaluation, and
    e. an Entrance Essay.
2. Following the granting of Entrance, a Candidacy Committee sends the following documentation to the Director for Candidacy:
    a. the Entrance Decision Form,
    b. the Entrance Essay, and
    c. a bishop's letter of recommendation identifying the ministry site where a candidate will be serving.
3. After review of the documentation, the Director for Candidacy sends a synodical bishop and the Candidacy Committee a written notification of acceptance or rejection into TEEM with copies to the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership. Candidates not accepted into TEEM may continue the candidacy process by applying for admission into a Master of Divinity program at an accredited seminary.

Competency Assessment Panel (CAP)
Following notification of a candidate's acceptance into the TEEM process, the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership normally convenes a Competency Assessment Panel (CAP) with faculty from a seminary that offers a TEEM curriculum. When a CAP is convened in a synod, the synod will be responsible for travel costs for seminary faculty asked to serve on a CAP. In some cases a synod may request the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership to convene a CAP using electronic technology. The primary responsibility of a Competency Assessment Panel is to assess a candidate's knowledge and leadership abilities in each of the competency areas identified below. In conversation with a candidate, a CAP will identify the academic work needed to strengthen a candidate's ministry skills. A Competency Assessment Panel does not have authority to reverse a Candidacy Committee's Entrance decision. CAP members normally include
    a. the seminary TEEM director and one seminary faculty person,
    b. a synodical bishop or his/her designee,
    c. a Candidacy Committee member,
    d. a CSM candidacy staff person,
    e. when a candidate is a person of color, a member from the appropriate ethnic community, and
    f. when a candidate is an approved lay mission developer, the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission.

The seminary TEEM director normally serves as a candidate's faculty advisor accompanying him or her to completion of the candidacy process.

The number of CAP meetings with a candidate varies depending on synod and seminary expectations. Normally, a CAP will meet with a candidate at the beginning of the process, at Endorsement, and again prior to Approval. Communication technologies such as conference calls, web meetings, and others may be used to facilitate CAP meetings.

4. **Endorsement**

At approximately the mid-point of the process, a TEEM candidate participates in an Endorsement interview with a CAP, which serves as an Endorsement panel and makes a recommendation concerning Endorsement to the Candidacy Committee. Endorsement is a pivotal point in the candidacy process because it provides a Candidacy Committee with an opportunity to assess a candidate's progress and readiness to complete candidacy. Prior to the interview, a candidate completes an Endorsement Essay. The TEEM director, or in some cases the faculty advisor, participates in the panel. Based on a CAP recommendation, the Candidacy Committee makes an Endorsement decision.

5. **Approval**

When a candidate successfully completes a program of study, a Competency Assessment Panel acts on behalf of the seminary faculty and completes the Approval recommendation (Form D). The Candidacy Committee then follows the regular process for Approval, including an Approval Essay and interview. The granting of Approval by a Candidacy Committee is required for completion of the TEEM process.

6. **Assignment**

Following being granted Approval and completing the necessary assignment forms, TEEM candidates participate in the churchwide assignment process, which administratively assigns them to the synod where their ministry site is located. If a TEEM candidate is granted an Approval and the ministry site where the candidate is serving is no longer able to extend a call, he or she enters the regular churchwide assignment process to seek assignment and first call.

Competencies

A Competency Assessment Panel (CAP) assesses a candidate's understanding of Lutheran confessional theology and identifies additional resources and course work that will strengthen a candidate's ability to integrate Lutheran theological understandings with the praxis of ministry. The following competencies are assessed by a CAP:

1. **Bible** – skills for understanding and interpreting Scripture through a Lutheran hermeneutic,
2. **Theology and Ethics** – an ability to reflect critically through Lutheran theological and ethical lenses,
3. **Lutheran Confessions** – an ability to teach the foundational teachings of the Lutheran church,
4. **Church History** – a basic understanding of the history of Lutheranism in the United States, and
5. **Worship** – an ability to lead worship, preach, and serve as a spiritual leader,
6. **Teaching** – an ability to teach the Christian faith to others,
7. **Evangelical Mission and Stewardship** – skills and knowledge for leading and developing communities of faith in responding to God's mission through outreach and the practice of wholistic stewardship,
8. **ELCA Structure and Polity** – an understanding of the interrelationship among all expressions of the church,
9. **Administration** – basic church administrative skills,
10. **Service** – a commitment to justice and skills for addressing hunger and poverty, and
11. **Pastoral Care** – knowledge, skill, and experience in providing basic pastoral care to persons in various life circumstances, as well as the ability to lead and prepare others to provide appropriate ministries of care.

Seminary Experience

Seminary TEEM programs provide the following:
1. a solid grounding in Lutheran theology and the Lutheran Confessions to enable a candidate to articulate a Lutheran theological perspective,
2. a firm understanding of ministry and mission in a Lutheran context, including the integrity and variety of Lutheran worship,
3. opportunity for a candidate to participate in current theological conversations and establish relationships with future colleagues in ministry, and
4. participation in the seminary's boundary and safe church workshops or the equivalent offered by a synod.

Internship

Following Entrance and in the first year in ministry a TEEM candidate receives supervision mutually agreed upon by the Candidacy Committee and the seminary in the site where he or she is presently serving. Supervision provides a TEEM candidate with an opportunity to receive structured feedback from an experienced pastor. The seminary internship evaluations or other structured feedback forms are normally completed during a candidate's second year of service in a ministry site and sent to the appropriate Candidacy Committee and the seminary TEEM director.

Supervised Clinical Ministry

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is important for the development of pastoral care skills. The CPE program selected must be sensitive to and understand a candidate's culture and ministry responsibilities. When a ministry setting would be negatively affected by a candidate's prolonged absence, or when a regular CPE program is not available, a Candidacy Committee may recommend an alternative contextualized CPE program in consultation with a CAP.

Admission of Persons Ordained to Word and Sacrament Ministry in Another Lutheran Church or in Another Christian Church Body

Sections I-VII below are from "Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the ELCA," originally adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 16, 1989 [CC89.04.54], and adopted, as revised, by the Church Council, November 14, 1994 [CC94.11.86].

For persons ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry in another Lutheran Church body or in another Christian tradition, the Candidacy Committee honors the background of every candidate who seeks to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA and provides hospitality and orientation to the candidacy process. The latter provides an opportunity to engage in mutual conversations with a focus on discernment and assessment. The particular needs of this church are important in determining who will be Approved. The mission of the ELCA involves worship, nurture, outreach, service, and advocacy for justice. While the scope of this mission is global, its particular focus is on ministry in the United States and the Caribbean. It is essential to have leaders who are familiar with and have experience in the cultural context of the ELCA. Candidates need to appreciate and be familiar with ELCA teachings, polity, liturgy, and traditions.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Following certification of good standing on the roster of the ELCIC and with the approval of the bishop of the ELCA synod in which a candidate will serve, Word and Sacrament ministers of the ELCIC are received by transfer,

upon acceptance of a valid call from an ELCA congregation, a synod council, or the Church Council of the ELCA. This process is not a Candidacy Committee responsibility.

Full Communion Partners. The availability of Word and Sacrament ministers from church bodies which are in full communion with the ELCA is not a candidacy matter. Guidelines for such exchange can be found in the Orderly Exchange documents of this church. When a Word and Sacrament minister of a full communion partner church seeks to be rostered in the ELCA, a Candidacy Committee will follow the candidacy process according to the procedures outlined below. If such a Word and Sacrament minister has already served in an ELCA congregation, such experience should be acknowledged.

Lutheran World Federation Partners. Many Word and Sacrament ministers of LWF churches serve in the ELCA through short-term or temporary arrangements with ELCA congregations or synods. Although such programs can benefit both Lutheran churches involved, these matters are not candidacy concerns.

A Candidacy Committee may consider the application of a Word and Sacrament minister of an LWF church seeking to commit to long-term service within the ELCA. Early consultation with the Global Mission unit is essential in such cases. Any concerns related to agreements or implications for the churches involved can be identified and considered when there is open communication among the partners.

The candidacy process should always include a deep respect for the credentials and background of those seeking to be rostered in the ELCA. Credentials need to be examined in order to ensure that an applicant has good standing in the partner church and possesses good moral character. For applicants who come from outside the United States, there are additional factors to consider, such as length of time in the United States, familiarity with American culture, and prior service in the ELCA.

Other Lutheran Church Partners. Word and Sacrament ministers of other Lutheran churches should be treated with dignity and respect. The perspective of an individual with such credentials can enrich the ELCA and broaden an understanding of mission. The primary foci of the candidacy process in such situations are evaluation for suitability, screening, and orientation to the ELCA. The procedures Candidacy Committees follow are outlined below.

Other Christian Traditions. Word and Sacrament ministers who serve in other Christian traditions may be admitted to the roster of the ELCA, if they meet and maintain standards for Word and Sacrament ministers and are committed to the confession of faith of this church. The appropriate candidacy procedures appear below.

Policy and Procedures
I. **Basic Standards for Word and Sacrament Ministers**
    A. According to ELCA bylaw 7.31.11, persons admitted to the ELCA roster of Word and Sacrament ministers shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following:
        1. commitment to Christ,

2. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church,
3. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church,
4. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships,
5. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living,
6. membership in an ELCA congregation, and
7. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call.

II. Initial Application

A. Application for candidacy occurs in the synod of residence. In the case of someone who does not reside in the United States, application may be made to a synod where there is a familial or mentor relationship; or a request may be made to the Conference of Bishops for a synodical assignment. Synods should consult with the Global Mission unit regarding candidates from outside the United States (other than the ELCIC).

B. The applicant provides the Candidacy Committee with the following information:
1. the Candidacy Application Form , the Entrance Information Form, and the Application Form for Persons from Another Lutheran Church or Christian Tradition,
2. academic transcripts for all post-secondary education (degree or non-degree),
3. certificates of study (if any),
4. documentation of supervised field experience (i.e. internship, clinical education, etc.),
5. a statement or certificate of Word and Sacrament status in another Lutheran church body or Christian tradition,
6. a letter of reference from an applicant's current or former ecclesiastical supervisor,
7. INS documentation (for those seeking to immigrate to the United States),
8. a completed psychological evaluation and Background Check,
9. a recent sermon,
10. a personal statement, including the theological rationale for why the applicant seeks to serve on the Word and Sacrament roster of the ELCA, and
11. a recent photograph.

C. Upon receipt of the foregoing information, a synod bishop, in consultation with the Candidacy Committee, arranges an interview with an applicant. The purpose of the interview is to determine an applicant's readiness to enter the ELCA candidacy process. Entrance into candidacy is based upon the adequacy of the information provided and an applicant's intention to serve as a Word and Sacrament minister of the ELCA. If an applicant comes from an overseas church with formal relations with the ELCA, the Candidacy Committee will consult with the Global Mission unit for the purpose of receiving additional information regarding an applicant available from the appropriate church body. After completing the interview and receiving the required information, the Candidacy Committee considers an applicant for Entrance followed by Endorsement after receiving a recommendation from the TRP (see below).

III. Theological Review Panel/Endorsement

A. After granting Entrance to a candidate, a Candidacy Committee requests the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to convene a Theological Review Panel

(TRP). Such a panel normally includes the seminary representative serving on the Candidacy Committee, another seminary faculty person, representatives from the Candidacy Committee, an ethnic or community representative (if appropriate), an interpreter (if needed),and the regions Coordinator for Missional Leadership, who serves as convener. The Theological Review Panel may be convened either on the territory of the synod or at an ELCA seminary. The convener submits a report from the TRP to the Candidacy Committee and the Director for Candidacy.

    B. The Theological Review Panel, following an interview with a candidate, makes a recommendation to the Candidacy Committee concerning Endorsement and components for completing candidacy. Recommendations from the panel may include

        1. immediate recommendation for an Approval interview with no additional requirements,

        2. a plan of preparation followed by an Approval interview,

        3. a plan of preparation with a follow-up interview with the same Theological Review Panel prior to the Approval interview, or

        4. a recommendation for Postponement or Denial of Endorsement.

    C. The panel informs the Candidacy Committee and a candidate in writing of its recommendations. The Candidacy Committee then acts on the recommendations at its next regular meeting.

IV. Approval

When a candidate successfully completes the recommendations of the Theological Review Panel, the Candidacy Committee considers a candidate for Approval. A Candidacy Committee reports an Approval decision in writing to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The candidate completes the churchwide assignment forms in order to be assigned to a region and a synod for first call.

V. Ordination or Reception of a Candidate

    A. After a candidate receives and accepts a letter of call, the synodical bishop in the synod of assignment consults with the Office of the Secretary concerning reception of a candidate.

    B. The ELCA receives Word and Sacrament ministers from churches which believe, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds.

    C. Those from traditions which do not confess the above creeds will be ordained according to the Service of Ordination. The Office of the Secretary determines how this policy applies in the case of each candidate.

VI. Pastoral Care and Support

For those who come to the ELCA from other Christian traditions, the beginning of service as an ELCA pastor is a time to establish significant relationships for support and growth. During the early years of service the synod bishop may provide a mentor who supports and nurtures the newly rostered pastor.

Chapter 5 - Endorsement

"After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest'" (Luke 10:1-2, NRSV).

THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

Endorsement - a second major point of discernment in the candidacy process - normally occurs after a candidate has completed a minimum of one third of the academic work required or its equivalent. Whereas Entrance focuses on discernment of readiness for candidacy, at Endorsement a Candidacy Committee and its seminary partners affirm the following:

- a candidate's continued discernment of a call to and gifts and skills for a specific rostered ministry and
- mutual discernment among a Candidacy Committee, seminary faculty, and a candidate of his or her readiness to complete candidacy successfully.

At Endorsement a Candidacy Committee acts on behalf of the whole church in affirming a candidate's call and gifts for rostered leadership. Both a Candidacy Committee and seminary faculty express support and affirmation of a candidate's continued progress in candidacy leading towards Approval (see Chapter 6).

By the time of Endorsement, a candidate, a committee, and seminary faculty will know each other well enough and have sufficient information to determine whether or not it is desirable to proceed further. Some practices Candidacy Committees have found useful for building relationships between a Candidacy Committee and candidates include the following:

- regular contacts between a candidate and his/her relator or contact person,
- developmental interviews with the committee between Entrance, Endorsement, or Approval,
- retreats that include candidates and members of the Candidacy Committee,
- conversations with a seminary faculty advisor, and
- annual updates from candidates to the committee.

If Denial or Postponement is being considered, Endorsement is the most appropriate time for determining that a candidate is not a good fit for service as a rostered leader. Such a decision may be made by a candidate as a result of his or her ongoing discernment, by a Candidacy Committee, or by both. In instances where a candidate does not seem well-suited for rostered leadership, making such discernment at Endorsement relieves a candidate of taxing finite resources of time, finances, and emotional energy. At this point honest feedback and clarity of discernment by a Candidacy Committee can be an expression of deep caring and love for both a candidate and the church. It is appropriate for a candidate and discernment partners to reach mutual agreement that a candidate's gifts and sense of call are better suited for some type of service other than rostered leadership. To arrive at such a decision is not a failure on the part of a candidate, a seminary, or a Candidacy Committee. Rather, it is an indication of faithfulness in being open to how God is speaking to a candidate and to the church.

Endorsement is the official action of a Candidacy Committee recognizing and affirming
   (a) a candidate's readiness to complete the candidacy process and
   (b) a candidate's demonstration of appropriate gifts and characteristics for a specific roster.

The period between Entrance and Endorsement will vary in length due to the variety of curricular approaches and timelines utilized by different seminaries and a candidate's own rate of progress. This period is normally a time for theological study, ongoing spiritual formation, personal growth, and continuing discernment and clarification of call. Topics that will be addressed during this period include
   1. a candidate's *articulation* of God's mission in the world and missional leadership,
   2. a candidate's understanding of a call to a specific roster or to some other form of service,
   3. personal spiritual growth and faith commitment,
   4. educational and theological wisdom, and
   5. personal and interpersonal skills.

Some Indicators of Readiness for Endorsement
The suggestions below may assist candidates, Candidacy Committees, and seminary faculty in determining when a candidate *might* be ready for an Endorsement interview.

- Has a candidate successfully completed CPE?
- Has a candidate achieved success and competence in theological study in core areas, such as Bible, theology, and the Lutheran Confessions?
- Has a candidate demonstrated competence and leadership in practical areas of the roster for which she or he is preparing?
- Has a candidate gained understanding of the larger church?
- Has a candidate cultivated collegial relationships and accountability?

Leaders Seeking a Change of Roster
Current ELCA rostered leaders who apply for a different roster enter the candidacy process at Endorsement. The Candidacy Committee thereafter follows the same procedures outlined in this manual for the remainder of the candidacy process.

ENDORSEMENT INTERVIEW PANEL
The timing of Endorsement will be included in the Candidate Accompaniment Plan following Entrance (see Appendix D). An Endorsement interview panel includes representatives from the Candidacy Committee (e.g., at least a candidate's contact person and another committee member) and faculty from a candidate's seminary (e.g., the faculty advisor, the dean of students, or others who know and work with a candidate). CSM churchwide staff may also be asked to participate in Endorsement panels.

During the Endorsement process, a Candidacy Committee and seminary faculty collaboratively monitor and assess a candidate's progress in formation for rostered leadership and review issues already identified at Entrance. Candidates who attend a non-ELCA seminary must affiliate with an ELCA seminary prior to Endorsement.

For candidates enrolled at ELCA seminaries, a member of the Candidacy Committee convenes and chairs the Endorsement interview panel at a time and location arranged through the seminary. Optimally, the panel meets on the seminary campus in a face-to-face format. Any variance to this procedure will be in consultation with the appropriate CSM candidacy staff

person. The panel makes its recommendation to the full Candidacy Committee, and the latter makes the official decision regarding Endorsement.

ENDORSEMENT COMPONENTS

Well in advance of the Endorsement panel interview, the Candidacy Committee distributes to each panel member the following confidential items:

- the Entrance Decision Form with noted areas for growth,
- a copy of the **Endorsement Essay** (available on the ELCA website at http://www.elca.org/Resources/Candidacy),
- a CPE report,
- information on a candidate's participation in seminary community life including Boundary/Safe Church workshops, and
- examples of a candidate's demonstrated competencies (see pages 5-9).

Guidelines for an Endorsement Panel Interview

This interview guide for use by Endorsement interview panels and Candidacy Committees describes the flow of an Endorsement interview. Each synodical or multi-synodical Candidacy Committee may adapt the basic elements of this guide to fit its own style and situational needs. Even so, each Endorsement interview panel needs to adhere to a consistent pattern in its approach.

Pre-interview Briefing

Prior to the interview panel members review a candidate's file with particular attention to issues identified at Entrance, discuss a candidate's Endorsement Essay and other relevant materials, and share their knowledge of a candidate. The panel identifies in advance primary topics for discussion and may formulate lead questions for each topic.

The Endorsement Interview

The panel establishes a conversational tone and invites a candidate to engage in dialogue in a spirit of mutual interest, trust, and exploration. This is a time for mutual assessment of a candidate's strengths and growth areas in discerning readiness for completing candidacy.

What follows are some possible questions for an Endorsement interview.
Competency 1: A rostered leader is rooted in the presence and activity of the Triune God.
1. In what ways have you experienced grace in your life? How have you shared that experience with others?
2. Describe your relationship with the Triune God?

Competency 2: A rostered leader actively participates in God's mission through the church.
1. What is your theology of mission?

Competency 3: A rostered leader cultivates vision and purpose.
1. What spiritual practices do you regularly use?

Competency 4: A rostered leader demonstrates leadership skills.
1. How do you engage people and lead them towards active participation in God's mission?

Competency 5: A rostered leader engages the way of the cross.
   1. How do you understand the relationship between suffering and faith?
   2. How do you talk with people about the theology of the cross?
   3. In what ways are you grounded in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Competency 6: A rostered leader proclaims the faith.
   1. What is your understanding of law and gospel?

Competency 7: A rostered leader leads worship.
   1. In what ways do you experience a sense of the Holy while leading worship?

Competency 8: A rostered leader interprets mission.
   1. What is the wider mission of the ELCA through its interdependent partners and expressions?
   2. What is your personal commitment to the wider church?

Competency 9: A rostered leader cultivates Christian community, discipleship, leadership formation, and the practice of reconciliation of differences.
   1. In what ways have you participated and engaged in the seminary community?
   2. How central is an understanding of baptismal vocation for Christian community?
   3. How do you identify and encourage the gifts of others?

Competency 10: A rostered leader cares for people.
   1. What indicators have you received from others that you have sensitivity to the needs of people?

Competency 11: A rostered leader practices wellness in one's personal life.
   1. Choose one of the areas of wellbeing on the Wholeness Wheel and describe how you are embodying this in your life?

Competency 12: A rostered leader evangelizes.
   1. What experiences have you had sharing your faith with an unchurched person?
   2. How do you engage in conversation with people of different or no faith?

Competency 13: A rostered leader relates theology with history, context, and culture.
   1. Describe how you have adapted to different contexts where you have lived? Which adaptations were most difficult for you?
   2. How have you shared your faith with people of a different culture?

Competency 14: A rostered leader equips and sends disciples into the world.
   1. What are some ways you live out your Christian faith?
   2. What do you understand to be the mission of God in the world?
   3. How do you empower others for discipleship?

The panel also needs to ask if a candidate is living and intends to continue to live in a manner consistent with *Vision and Expectations*.

Panel Reflection and Consultation
The Endorsement panel discusses a candidate's readiness for Endorsement and prepares its recommendation for the Candidacy Committee. When the recommendation is to Postpone

Endorsement, the panel identifies specific areas needing further development. When the recommendation is to Deny Endorsement, the panel arranges for appropriate pastoral care.

Panel Recommendation
The Endorsement panel meets with a candidate and shares its recommendation. The panel clarifies that the final decision concerning Endorsement is the responsibility of the Candidacy Committee, which will communicate its decision to a candidate in a timely manner. If the panel's recommendation is to Postpone Endorsement, the panel and candidate need to clarify goals and requirements for reconsideration of Endorsement.

Report Preparation
The panel prepares and submits to the Candidacy Committee a final written report with its Endorsement recommendation.

Guidelines for Endorsement of Candidates at Non-ELCA Seminaries

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To avoid unnecessary delays and misunderstanding following Entrance, candidates enrolled at non-ELCA seminaries work closely with the Candidacy Committee and the ELCA seminary of affiliation. In preparation for Endorsement, affiliate students (those receiving a degree from a non-ELCA seminary but completing an internship and core Lutheran courses through an ELCA seminary) complete a check list (see Appendix E) and submit it with the Endorsement Essay to the Candidacy Committee. In completing the checklist, the candidate also consults with the seminary dean and/or other appropriate faculty persons to formulate a Candidate Accompaniment Plan (see Appendix D).

As a candidate moves through candidacy following Entrance, there may need to be adjustments to the Candidate Accompaniment Plan. As the need for such adjustments arises, both the seminary of affiliation and the Candidacy Committee need to share a common understanding of how a candidate intends to meet both academic and candidacy requirements.

The Endorsement Decision
Based upon the recommendation from an Endorsement panel and other relevant information, the full Candidacy Committee may make three possible decisions: **Endorsement Granted, Endorsement Postponed, or Endorsement Denied.**

When the decision of a Candidacy Committee differs from an Endorsement panel's recommendation, the committee will inform faculty members who served on the Endorsement panel of its decision. In all cases, the final responsibility for Endorsement rests with the Candidacy Committee.

- **Endorsement Granted** reflects a Candidacy Committee's confidence in a candidate's formation and growth. Barring unforeseen difficulties, there is every reason to believe a candidate will complete candidacy. The committee may make recommendations for continued growth and formation and include them in the Endorsement Decision Form.
- **Endorsement Postponed** indicates that certain developmental issues must be addressed and/or specific conditions realized before a candidate can be Endorsed. The Endorsement Decision Form should clearly specify any developmental issues and/or conditions that are to be met prior to reconsideration of Endorsement. The committee

designates who will monitor its recommendations, determine when reconsideration may be scheduled, and delineate the procedures to be followed.

- **Endorsement Denied** is a discernment that there are specific reasons why a candidate is not suitable for rostered leadership. A Candidacy Committee must clearly identify its reasons for Denial. In properly documenting its decision and the reasons for it, a Candidacy Committee makes certain the candidacy process has been faithfully followed. The committee will offer appropriate pastoral care when communicating its decision to a candidate and arrange for follow-up care, including assistance in identifying and affirming where a candidate's particular gifts for ministry might be a good fit in the church and/or the community.

Reporting Endorsement Decisions

Using the Endorsement Decision Form, the Candidacy Committee reports its decision to a candidate, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, and the appropriate seminary.

Withdrawal of Endorsement

Although Endorsement is a strong word of confidence, it does not guarantee the committee's final Approval of a candidate. If warranted by written allegations of actions that may prove harmful to the church, a Candidacy Committee has the responsibility, after prayerful deliberation, to withdraw its Endorsement prior to Approval. A decision to withdraw Endorsement is a significant action that ends candidacy. When withdrawal of Endorsement is being considered, a Candidacy Committee will normally communicate with a candidate prior to making such a decision. If the allegations are proved false, the Committee may reverse its decision to withdraw and reinstate the candidate in the candidacy process at the point where candidacy was terminated.

Reapplication

A minimum of one year must pass before a person denied Endorsement or whose Endorsement was withdrawn may reapply for candidacy. A Candidacy Committee must consult with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to determine the appropriate point of reentry into candidacy.

From Endorsement to Approval

Endorsement remains in effect until Approval. While there is no annual renewal of Endorsement, Candidacy Committees maintain regular contact with candidates. Candidacy Committees and the seminary of enrollment (or the seminary of affiliation, in the case of candidates studying at non-ELCA seminaries) share responsibility for monitoring a candidate's continued growth. Accordingly, a Candidacy Committee may provide suggestions to a seminary concerning an appropriate internship setting, as well as other recommendations concerning a candidate's ongoing formation and preparation for rostered leadership. The seminary in turn will provide regular reports to the Candidacy Committee on a candidate's course work, supervised clinical ministry (CPE), contextual education, internship, and any other pertinent information that might assist the committee.

Internships

The ELCA requires candidates to complete satisfactorily an approved internship, which consists of supervision in a context designed to contribute to the formation of pastoral identity and the development of competencies for rostered leadership. Because new and diverse seminary models now permit internships to occur at different points in a candidate's formation process, Appendix F offers detailed guidelines for internships that will meet the expectations of the ELCA.

Chapter 6 – Approval

"Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy" (I Corinthians 4:1-2, NRSV).

Approval Process

The final step in the ELCA candidacy process is Approval - a significant milestone in a candidate's lifelong journey of discernment. At this stage a Candidacy Committee, the seminary of enrollment (or affiliation), and a candidate are discerning readiness to serve as a rostered leader after successful completion of all academic and candidacy requirements. Such discernment is the culmination of an extensive process that began prior to Entrance as a period of preliminary discernment, continued at Entrance with a mutual discernment of readiness for candidacy, became more focused at Endorsement with a discernment of readiness to complete candidacy, and now reaches a point of mutual affirmation and celebration of readiness for service as a rostered leader. Barring unexpected complications, the climate for Approval should normally be confirmation of earlier discernment.

Approval is not a point for directing candidates away from rostered leadership. In an effective and faithful candidacy process, such a determination will normally occur much earlier, preferably at Endorsement. Even at Approval, however, it is appropriate for a candidate and other discernment partners – a Candidacy Committee, seminary faculty, and others – to reach mutual agreement that a candidate's gifts and sense of call are better suited for some type of service other than rostered leadership. To arrive at such a decision is not a failure on the part of a candidate, a seminary, or a Candidacy Committee. Rather, it is an indication of faithfulness in being open to how God is speaking to a candidate and to the church.

Responsibility for Approval of candidates for rostered leadership resides with the Candidacy Committee. The process described in this chapter reflects procedures and guidelines developed by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in regular consultation with candidacy partners.

Granting Approval is of major significance, not only for a candidate but also for ministry settings in which a candidate will serve as a rostered leader. In granting Approval, the Candidacy Committee is acknowledging on behalf of the ELCA that a person is qualified and suited to serve under call as a rostered leader. This final step in candidacy is a threshold in the sense that when a candidate receives and accepts a letter of call, there will be further public acknowledgment of his or her qualifications for rostered leadership.

Two ELCA documents speak directly to a candidate's qualifications for rostered leadership - the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and *Vision and Expectations.* The first document defines the basic standards candidates must meet for a specific roster. The second document sets forth what the ELCA expects of those who serve in positions of trust and responsibility and states a vision for what rostered leadership can be. At Approval, candidates will be asked and must state a clear intention to live and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with *Vision and Expectations.*

1. Approval Components

Candidacy Committee members interviewing candidates for Approval need to have a candidate's complete file available for review and study. In addition, the material listed below is necessary for Approval.

- **The Approval Essay**
    a. The Approval Essay, prepared by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with the assistance of an appointed writing team, is available to candidates, Candidacy Committees, and ELCA seminaries on the ELCA website. Because candidates attending non-ELCA seminaries may not have the same awareness of timelines and access to announcements, the Candidacy Committee should give such candidates direct notification about the posting of the essay along with the deadline for submitting it.
    b. The Approval Essay provides an opportunity for a candidate to demonstrate readiness for rostered leadership by exercising theological wisdom related to practical situations and ministry tasks. Candidates also prepare a personal reflection on rostered leadership and submit a sermon or project. A candidate is responsible for sending the completed Approval Essay to the Candidacy Committee by the required date.
- The ELCA Seminary Faculty Recommendation (Form D)
- An internship evaluation
- Academic transcripts
- A final report on CPE or other supervised clinical ministry, especially if completed after Endorsement
- The Approval Information Form

The Candidacy Committee may request and review any other materials it deems relevant for discerning a candidate's readiness for rostered leadership.

The Approval Interview

Approval is a threshold for rostered leadership in the ELCA, not the conclusion of a process. Discernment and formation for rostered leadership are lifelong processes that encompass candidacy, First Call Theological Education, and lifelong learning.

The Approval Interview is the Candidacy Committee's final meeting with a candidate. In preparation for it, members of a Candidacy Committee read the Approval Essay, as well as other pertinent material from a candidate's file (see components listed above), previous decisions of the Candidacy Committee, and Form D. The purpose of the Approval interview is to review in depth a candidate's readiness for rostered leadership.

In preparing for an Approval interview, Candidacy Committee members will be mindful of the competencies expected of rostered leaders.

1. Rooted in the presence and activity of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A rostered leader nurtures a vibrant faith and relationship with the Triune God within a community of faith and leads other Christians to do likewise as they participate in God's mission. This competency can be assessed as a Candidacy Committee inquires about a candidate's ability to

- engage in theological and spiritual discernment that manifests a faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
- articulate and live out a clear Christian identity, and

- interpret the Scriptures as the norm for understanding God's mission in the world.

2. Actively participates in God's mission through the church. Some key aspects related to this competency are
- an ability to cultivate a compelling vision for ministry,
- equipping people to share faith stories,
- skills in hospitality that invite people to a life of discipleship, and
- awareness of the interconnectedness of the church beyond the local congregation.

3. Cultivates vision and purpose. This competency includes
- the use of spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, biblical and theological reflection, and spiritual direction),
- knowledge of societal and cultural trends that can inform a congregation's vision and sense of purpose,
- skills for leading congregations and other groups in discernment of God's mission in the world (including the incorporation of input from a diversity of sources and people), and
- courage to lead God's people into mission as discerned.

4. Leadership skills. Some critical indicators of this competency are
- demonstration of adaptive leadership skills that are sensitive to context,
- skills for leading a community of faith through change while addressing conflicts that might emerge,
- a capacity to engage people and lead them towards active participation in God's mission in the world,
- a facility for encouraging collegial decision-making processes in a congregation,
- demonstration of personal holistic stewardship and skill in equipping others, and
- a grasp of how administrative structures and procedures can serve mission in congregational life.

5. Engages the way of the cross. Empowered by the resurrected Christ, a rostered leader shows people the crucified Christ through word and deed and enables them to envision what God is doing in the world and in their lives. Some indicators of this competency include
- a willingness to confront and engage suffering in the lives of others and in one's own life, especially among marginalized people,
- exhibiting qualities of servant leadership,
- willingness to serve, risk, and sacrifice for the sake of God's mission, including an ability to identify and lead in exposing the principalities and powers operative in a given context, and
- responding to life crises as opportunities for experiencing new life.

6. Proclaims the faith. Clear indicators for this competency are the candidate's ability to
- preach the Word as Law and Gospel,
- teach Scripture,
- share the faith with others,
- provide Christian education for all ages and cultures,
- articulate theological wisdom, and
- live a disciplined spiritual life.

7. Leads worship and administers the Sacraments (Word and Sacrament leaders). Key aspects of this competency are
- the ability to plan and lead worship, preach, and administer the Sacraments,
- adapt the Lutheran liturgical tradition to local contexts, and
- a demonstrated manner of invoking in worship a sense of the Holy and a welcoming spirit with a view towards God's mission in the world.

8. Interprets mission. This competency reflects the ability of a candidate to articulate and interpret in a compelling manner, both theologically and contextually, the wider mission of the

ELCA through its interdependent partners and expressions. This competency also includes a commitment to the mission of the wider church, including synods and the churchwide organization, as well as related institutions and agencies of the ELCA, and facility in interpreting and motivating support for the ELCA beyond the local congregation.

9. *Cultivates Christian community, discipleship, leadership formation, and the practice of reconciliation of differences.* A rostered leader effectively forms and leads Christian communities which intentionally foster the growth of disciples of Jesus Christ and attend to the formation of leaders in the church. Some indicators of this competence are

- gifts for forming partnerships and networks,
- the practice of reconciliation and mutual empowerment among diverse groups,
- convening and empowering teams for mission, and
- a sense of stewardship in cultivating gifts manifest in a community of believers and delegating and sharing tasks tailored to those gifts.

10. *Cares for people.* A ministry of care encompasses both congregational and community care. Some key aspects related to this competency include

- visitation,
- counseling,
- equipping the baptized to provide ministries of care, both within the congregation and in the wider community,
- knowledge of community resources for appropriate referrals and participation, and
- sensitivity to people in major life and cultural transitions.

11. *Practices wellness in one's personal life*. Some factors to consider in this area:

- a vibrant and resilient faith,
- a balance of work, play, and self-care,
- maintenance of clear and healthy boundaries in all relationships,
- attention to diet, exercise, and mental/physical health, and
- nurturing healthy family relationships.

12. *Evangelizes*. A rostered leader actively believes and carries out Christ's command to go out and share the Gospel with neighbors. Some key factors related to this competence are

- a passion and imagination for sharing the Gospel,
- a sensitivity and skill for welcoming the stranger into community,
- discovering and implementing creative ways to share the Gospel with people outside the church,
- listening to people's stories and assisting them to interpret their experience in light of the Gospel,
- a valuing of Christian community as formative for faith, and
- a natural and authentic gift, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for engaging people in the depths of their lives.

13. *Relates theology with history, context, and culture*. A rostered leader understands and interprets context and culture through the lens of Christian faith and leads a community of faith to opportunities where the Gospel can be understood and shared by people in specific cultural contexts. Some critical indicators of this competency include

- an ability to engage culture and context theologically, critically, and creatively with a sensitivity to historical factors,
- analysis of congregational and community demographics and trends,
- engagement with complex social and religious issues as a practical theologian in context,
- sensitivity to cross cultural, intra-cultural, and counter-cultural dynamics, and
- skill in addressing cultural differences.

14. *Equips and sends disciples into the world*. A rostered leader prepares disciples to discern the leading of the Spirit as they share the Gospel with neighbors in word and deed. Some important considerations for this competence are

- a demonstrated capacity to mobilize people of faith with different gifts and perspectives that can enrich the church's witness in the world and lead to acts of mercy and justice,
- a personal embodiment of Christian faith in one's daily life,
- a demonstrated capacity for cultivating communities of well-being and holistic stewardship as illustrated in the Wholeness Wheel (see pages 30-32),
- a theological sensitivity to the presence and activity of God in the world,
- a recognition of the public vocation of the Christian community in the world, and
- the ability to interpret that vocation to people of faith.

In addition to the above, Candidacy Committees will want to explore the following:

- **a candidate's personal integrity** expressed through consistent behaviors, values, methods, principles, expectations, and morals, as well as a commitment to live one's life faithfully among the people of God as articulated in *Vision and Expectations,*
- **a candidate's trustworthiness** reflected in a reliable ability to respect confidentiality and inspire confidence by caring for and being respectful of others, and
- **a candidate's call to ministry and ministry gifts,** whereby the committee can confirm to its satisfaction that a candidate possesses the preparation, commitment, character, and gifts and abilities expected of those called to rostered leadership.

Guidelines for an Approval Interview

This interview guide for use by Candidacy Committees describes the flow of an Approval interview. Each Candidacy Committee may adapt the model provided to its particular situation and needs.

Preparation for the Interview (Pre-Work)
A. Vision and Expectations
Prior to the Approval interview, the Candidacy Committee arranges for each candidate to respond to a series of questions (see below) related to *Vision and Expectations*. The latter document articulates the ELCA's vision and expectations for both Word and Sacrament and Word and Service rosters. At Approval those expectations deserve consideration and in depth conversation.

In discussing *Vision and Expectations,* it can be useful to ask candidates about their understanding of the call to rostered leadership, their faithfulness to the ELCA's Confession of Faith, their view of the importance of living an exemplary life, and their articulation of a faith in the church and in the world.

To assist both a committee and a candidate in clarifying his or her knowledge of and commitment to the expectations of the ELCA, the following questions may be asked:

- a. What does it mean to be properly called and ordained/commissioned or consecrated?
- b. What is your understanding of the Confession of Faith of the ELCA (Chapter Two of the ELCA Constitution)?
- c. Do you have any questions or reservations concerning that Confession of Faith?
- d. What is your understanding of the expectation for rostered leaders to be personal examples and faithful witnesses of holy living?

e. In what ways will you as a future ELCA rostered leader support the mission and ministries of the ELCA beyond the local congregation or site where you serve? How important is this to you personally?

f. Are you living and do you intend to continue to live and conduct your life in a manner consistent with *Vision and Expectations?*

B. *Approval Information Form*

Prior to the Approval interview, a candidate will complete an Approval Information Form that includes the following:

___ No ___Yes   1.   Do you now engage or have you ever engaged in any addictive behavior, including drug or alcohol abuse or sexual or pornographic addictions?

___ No ___ Yes   2.   Have you ever been terminated or resigned from any employment or volunteer activities due to accusations of misconduct, whether financial, sexual, ethical, or other improper behavior?

___ No ___ Yes   3.   Have you ever been engaged in, accused of, charged with, or convicted of a crime or illegal conduct, including conduct resulting in suspension or revocation of your driver's license?

___ No ___ Yes   4.   Have you ever been engaged in, accused of, sued, or charged with sexual molestation, sexual harassment, child neglect or abuse, spousal neglect or abuse, or financial improprieties?

___ No ___ Yes   5.   Do you have any sexual attraction toward children or minors, or any history of sexually deviant behavior, including behavior with children or minors?

___ No ___ Yes   6.   Have you engaged in any behavior or been involved in any situations that, if they became known by the church, might seriously damage your ability to be a rostered leader?

___ No ___ Yes   7.   Do you have or have you had any health conditions (physical or psychological) that might interfere with your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?

___ No ___ Yes   8.   Are there issues in your family situation or personal life that could adversely affect your ability to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA?

___ No ___ Yes   9.   Is your personal debt, excluding mortgages, greater than $31,500. If your answer is "yes," be prepared to discuss this matter with the Candidacy Committee.

___ No ___ Yes   10.   Have you ever defaulted on a loan or declared bankruptcy?

___ No ___ Yes   11.   Are you familiar with the document *Vision and Expectations*?

___No ___Yes   12.   Do you intend to live in accord with its standards of conduct as a candidate and as a rostered leader in the ELCA?

___No ____Yes   13.   Are you prepared to accept a call from this church based on the needs of the church which might require service in a location different from where you now live?

Following a discussion with the Candidacy Committee about a candidate's responses to these questions, a candidate and at least one member of the Candidacy Committee sign the form and place it in a candidate's permanent file.

C. A *Candidate's File*
Prior to the Approval interview, members of the Candidacy Committee review pertinent information from a candidate's file, including the Approval Essay, internship evaluations, CPE reports, and other relevant material.

The Approval Interview
At Approval, the Candidacy Committee has the privilege and responsibility of welcoming candidates, affirming ways in which they have been formed, and having intentional conversation with them about their readiness for rostered leadership. Candidacy Committees utilize a variety of formats for the Approval interview, such as panels instead of the entire committee, retreat settings, and separate sections for different foci in the interview. Consideration of the role of a candidate's contact person is part of preparing for the interview.

Understandably, candidates experience considerable anxiety in anticipation of an Approval interview. The panel or committee, therefore, will want to clarify the purpose of the interview and establish a tone of hospitality and appreciation with a candidate.

To facilitate and strengthen conversation during the Approval interview, a Candidacy Committee may structure the interview around the components described below.
   a. *Reflection on leadership (internship).* A Candidacy Committee reviews internship evaluations and faculty recommendations (Form D) for clear instances of behavior and experience in which a candidate has demonstrated the characteristics of a missional leader (see above).
   b. *The Approval Essay.* The focus here could be a candidate's theological articulation of the Church's understanding of mission and how that relates to God's mission in the world. It is important to have conversation about each section of the Approval Essay. There may be concerns in one area that require more detailed questioning. It is also important to affirm strengths revealed in the essay.
   c. *Developmental needs of a candidate*. The committee reviews and discusses with a candidate the following areas:
   - growth areas and developmental needs previously identified at Entrance and Endorsement,
   - any issues that have surfaced from the discussion of *Vision and Expectations* and the Approval Information Form,
   - identification of focal points for ongoing discernment and First Call Theological Education, and
   - hopes for future ministry settings.

In the Approval interview it is critical for the Candidacy Committee to allow sufficient time to address all three of the components outlined above to ensure a comprehensive consideration of vital factors. To that end a committee will want to budget the time and approach used for the interview to maintain a balance among the three components in order not to neglect or short-change any of the components.

One possible strategy for attaining such a balance is for the Candidacy Committee to set up separate panels for each component – internship, Approval Essay, and developmental needs. After the separate panels have met, the entire committee can discuss together what each panel heard and concluded from its segment of the interview. Another model for such a process is an Approval retreat utilizing a three panel format. Candidacy Committees determine how to handle the suggested process for an Approval interview and the format that works best for them.

Following the Approval interview, the Candidacy Committee excuses a candidate while it enters into further discernment and discussion. It is difficult to determine in advance exactly how much time might be required. If a committee anticipates a difficult decision regarding a candidate's Approval, it is important to allow adequate time for careful deliberation. The goal of such deliberation is for the Candidacy Committee to reach agreement – preferably by consensus – on Approval (Approval Granted, Approval Postponed, or Approval Denied). Once a committee makes a decision, it informs a candidate of its decision.

Recommendation of Candidates by ELCA Seminaries

During the final year of candidacy, every candidate studying at or affiliated with an ELCA seminary must receive a recommendation from the faculty of an ELCA seminary (Form D). The ELCA seminary faculty makes an assessment as to whether a candidate is ready to serve as a rostered leader in the ELCA.

The Faculty Interview
In preparing an ELCA seminary faculty recommendation (Form D), some members of the faculty meet personally with a candidate in order to review the program of study and assess readiness for rostered leadership. Usually a candidate's faculty advisor participates in the review. At some seminaries a single interview serves both as an internship debriefing and an Approval recommendation. The interview focuses on a candidate's spiritual, vocational, theological, intellectual, professional, and personal development. Following the interview, the faculty panel states to the entire faculty whether or not a candidate meets the basic constitutional standards for rostered leadership in the ELCA, including
- commitment to and faith in the Triune God,
- acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church,
- willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church, including public support for its wider ministries,
- academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships, and
- commitment to lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example of faithful service and holy living.

After review and action by the entire faculty, the faculty interview panel or one member of it prepares a written evaluation of a candidate (Form D), gains faculty approval for it, and

submits it to the seminary, the appropriate Candidacy Committee, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

The faculty recommendation does not replace or duplicate the Approval interview with a Candidacy Committee. Instead, it offers a critical and essential perspective grounded in a comprehensive engagement with a candidate over a lengthy period of time. The faculty recommendation reflects primarily on a candidate's seminary experience – both academic and practical – with the goal of assessing a candidate's readiness for rostered leadership. The Candidacy Committee, on the other hand, during the Approval interview focuses on the Approval Essay and a candidate's readiness for rostered leadership.

The Faculty Recommendation
The full faculty of an ELCA seminary will make one of three recommendations concerning a candidate:
1. **Approval Granted**
2. **Approval Postponed**
3. **Approval Denied**
Faculty members who are not well acquainted with a candidate may abstain. The decision should normally be by a two-thirds majority. When the vote is less than two-thirds but still a majority, the outcome should be noted in the report to the Candidacy Committee.

An ELCA seminary faculty and the Candidacy Committee may sometimes come to different conclusions regarding Approval of a candidate. In such cases, the Candidacy Committee, after careful deliberation and further consultation with the seminary through the dean, may Deny Approval to a candidate who has been recommended by an ELCA seminary faculty.

When an ELCA seminary faculty recommends Approval Denied, the seminary will inform not only the Candidacy Committee but also the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The Candidacy Committee will regard a faculty recommendation for Approval Denied with the utmost seriousness.

When the Candidacy Committee receives a recommendation from an ELCA seminary faculty for Approval Postponed or Approval Denied, it will consult directly with representatives of the appropriate seminary faculty before the Approval interview in order to understand the factors informing the faculty recommendation. The Candidacy Committee may also invite a member of the faculty to be present at the Approval interview and participate in the committee's deliberations. Expenses for the participation of the faculty member will be the responsibility of the seminary. A representative of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit must also be present at a Candidacy Committee meeting when candidates who have been denied a positive faculty recommendation are being considered for Approval.

In instances where there has not been adequate or conclusive consultation between an ELCA seminary faculty, the Candidacy Committee, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Candidacy Committee will normally Postpone Approval until such consultation can occur and any misunderstandings are resolved. After all partners have been included in the discussion of a candidate, the Candidacy Committee makes the final decision regarding Approval.

The Faculty Recommendation (Form D)
In completing the faculty recommendation for Approval (Form D), an ELCA seminary prepares two sections:

1. a written evaluation of a candidate that must be reviewed and may be amended by the academic dean, the candidate's faculty advisor, and other members of the faculty but must be approved by the whole faculty, and
2. the internship evaluation compiled by seminary staff responsible for internship based on evaluations submitted by the intern, the internship supervisor, the internship committee, and the faculty debriefing.

Both reports and the formal recommendation concerning Approval are part of the completed report (Form D).

The seminary sends the faculty recommendation (Form D) to both the Candidacy Committee and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The faculty may attach additional explanatory comments to assist the Candidacy Committee in the Approval decision. In such commentary, the faculty needs to be as explicit and concrete as possible. The faculty, for example, might address specific areas of continuing education and formation that in its opinion need to be identified as focal points for First Call Theological Education (FCTE). If any new information emerges after the completion of (Form D) that might alter or affect the seminary faculty recommendation, the seminary will share such information with both the Candidacy Committee and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Candidates at Non-ELCA Seminaries
Candidates who attend non-ELCA seminaries are not exempt from the requirement of a recommendation from an ELCA seminary faculty. Such candidates are required to be affiliated with an ELCA seminary and normally spend one year in Lutheran learning and formation through an ELCA seminary. As a result, most candidates will be known well enough by an ELCA seminary faculty for them to make an informed recommendation. In instances where such a relationship has not been established, or where a candidate is not in residence on the campus of an ELCA seminary, it is a candidate's responsibility to meet with an ELCA seminary faculty and provide whatever information the faculty needs to make a meaningful recommendation. Candidates from non-ELCA seminaries may provide additional references from the faculty of the seminary they attended to both the ELCA seminary faculty and the Candidacy Committee.

The Approval Decision
The ELCA depends on the wisdom and discernment of the Candidacy Committee in determining who will serve as rostered leaders. Such responsibility relies first and foremost upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit and calls for the utmost seriousness and humility on the part of those who serve on the Candidacy Committee.

Before an Approval interview, the Candidacy Committee receives all required material, including the seminary faculty recommendation (Form D), a final CPE report, a final internship or field experience evaluation, and the Approval Essay. In the case of fourth-year internships, it is recommended that internship be completed prior to the Approval interview. This normally means fourth-year interns participate in the churchwide assignment of candidates later in the final year of candidacy. In some cases, the final internship evaluation may be prepared after a minimum of nine months, following consultation and agreement between the ELCA seminary of enrollment or affiliation and the Candidacy Committee.

At Approval, there are three possible decisions the Candidacy Committee may make.
- **Approval Granted** confirms readiness for rostered leadership.

- **Approval Postponed** indicates certain issues or conditions need to be resolved prior to a candidate's being considered again for Approval. In this case, a committee provides clear directions to a candidate concerning specific developmental goals and concerns that need to be addressed and a date when a candidate may return to the committee. A candidate should be encouraged to provide a written response stating his or her understanding of the concerns and how he/she intends to address them.
- **Approval Denied** means candidacy is ended. A committee will state clearly in writing its reasons for its discernment. A committee will want to make certain the candidacy process has been faithfully followed and provide appropriate pastoral care with a candidate. Such discernment is also an opportunity for a Candidacy Committee to spend additional time exploring with a candidate appropriate avenues for service and enabling him or her to exit candidacy with a renewed sense of value, giftedness, and possible direction for pursuing and expressing an understanding of vocation.

Reporting Approval Decisions (Form E)

The Candidacy Committee reports its Approval decision using Form E to a candidate, a candidate's ELCA seminary, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Following Approval, a candidate remains under the care and guidance of the Candidacy Committee until he or she receives and accepts a call. When a candidate does not receive a call reasonably soon after Approval and the completion of academic work, the period of uncertainty and perceived delay may be especially stressful. It is important, therefore, for the Candidacy Committee to continue to support and care for candidates during such times.

Withdrawal of Approval

The Candidacy Committee may withdraw Approval by action of the full Candidacy Committee at any time prior to a candidate's receipt and acceptance of a letter of call. Such action may be taken when the committee determines a candidate is no longer qualified to serve in rostered leadership. Reasons for such action may be related to

1. conduct that is inappropriate for the standards and expectations of this church or
2. a change in a candidate's personal life that disqualifies her or him.

If a candidate has already been assigned to a synod for first call, the Candidacy Committee may act to withdraw Approval only after consultation with the bishop of the synod of assignment. The Candidacy Committee taking such action will report its decision to the bishop of the synod of assignment, a candidate's seminary, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Such action ends candidacy.

Reapplication

A minimum of one year must pass before a person who had Approval Denied or withdrawn may reapply for candidacy. Consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit is required to determine the appropriate point of reentry into candidacy.

Assignment

The ELCA calls and sends rostered leaders where they are needed in the life of the church and its participation in God's mission in the world. The ELCA is committed to effective, fair, and appropriate placement of rostered leaders for mission and ministry; therefore all approved candidates need to go through the ELCA assignment process before being considered for call.

Following Approval, assignment to regions and synods occurs at Churchwide Assignment Consultations arranged by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The assignment of Approved candidates is a complex process, dependent upon the leading of the Holy Spirit, which seeks to integrate and correlate the needs of the church with the gifts and situations of candidates. Those who participate in the Churchwide Assignment Consultation engage in prayer and thoughtful conversation when making assignment decisions. Relevant information about assignments is available on the ELCA Web site in "A Guide to the ELCA Assignment Process."

Approved candidates submit Form ABR and a Rostered Leader Profile (RLP) electronically to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit by the published deadline in order to be included in the assignment process. Completed candidate assignment forms are available to all bishops in advance of the churchwide assignment consultation. Some ministry contexts warrant a more immediate response to extraordinary missional needs of the church. At the request of a synodical bishop, an administrative assignment may be made when authorized and approved through a procedure established by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Renewal and Re-approval

Renewal (three years)
If an Approved candidate has not received and accepted a letter of call within one year after Approval, the Candidacy Committee determines whether it will renew Approval for that candidate. An interview is not required for such a decision but may be requested by the committee. A renewal, like Approval, is effective for one year and may be repeated twice. An Approved candidate requests renewal in writing to the Candidacy Committee, who communicates its decision to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Unless reassigned, a candidate remains assigned to the synod of original assignment.

Re-approval
If three years have elapsed without the receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, an Approved candidate makes a request for Re-approval. The Re-approval process normally includes the following components:
- preparation of the current Approval Essay,
- a Theological Review Panel (TRP) recommendation (required if more than five years have elapsed since the original Approval) from a panel that normally includes faculty from the ELCA seminary where a candidate graduated or affiliated,
- a psychological evaluation, and
- an Approval interview.

Re-approval is valid for one year and can be renewed twice. Seeking Re-approval includes participating in the churchwide assignment process. If Re-approval is granted, the Candidacy Committee submits a new Approval form (Form E) electronically to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

A candidate then provides the required information for assignment (see above) in a timely manner according to the schedule for assignment.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Discernment

Journey of Discernment

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2 NRSV).

A journey of discernment designed specifically for the ELCA candidacy process focuses on the development of healthy habits and practices during a lifelong process of discernment. Such discernment is not an additional decision point in the candidacy process. Rather, it is a continuum encompassing the entire life span of an applicant – before, during, and following candidacy. Consequently, a Candidacy Committee should not expect applicants at Entrance to have answers to all the questions that will be addressed during their seminary formation process and their continued discernment of call throughout the candidacy process.

God works in the life of every person. Every Christian has a baptismal call to ongoing discernment of God's activity in the world, in the Church, and in one's life. The primary purpose behind emphasizing a phase of discernment prior to candidacy - normally with a pastor or mentor - is to assist applicants in reflecting upon aspects of their lives that might confirm a call to rostered leadership. Some aspects worthy of consideration include an understanding of baptismal vocation, spirituality and prayer life, critical life experiences, relationship with a community of faith, significant life influences, and family of origin. Such preliminary discernment can help applicants clarify the interrelationship between internal and external dimensions of a call. It can also enable them to articulate some definite insights about what God is calling him or her to consider vocationally. The ultimate outcome of such discernment will be a decision whether or not to apply for candidacy. Even if the individual discerns God is calling him or her to another expression of baptismal vocation, this time of discernment will have been a valuable use of the church's resources.

Once a person begins candidacy, there will be further discernment. At its best, the candidacy process – both through a Candidacy Committee and on a seminary campus – provides a way for persons of faith to arrive at a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and the various ways in which God calls a person into ministry, as a rostered leader or as a lay person, both in the church and in the world. The goal of discernment is to walk with a person of faith in such a way that he or she comes to a firm sense of what God is inviting in his or her life. Whatever the final outcome might be, the process will have been faithful to its objective of accompanying people of faith in discernment, if the individual takes ownership of his or her discernment outcome and completes or exits the process with a positive sense that the direction so discerned is a good fit for his or her gifts and interests.

Several theological understandings undergird a journey of discernment.
1. Discernment is an ongoing process that may begin at different points in a person's life, continues over a lifetime, and is revisited periodically. This is true both for applicants who enter into candidacy and for those who choose to pursue opportunities for service other than rostered leadership in the ELCA.

2. Discernment of readiness for candidacy originates in the context of how the Church understands the vocation of every Christian. Some are called to a ministry of Word and Sacrament or to a ministry of Word and Service; however, many Christians are called to other avenues of service that are better suited to their gifts and interests. All paths are valuable and necessary for God's mission through the Church in the world.
3. Discernment of readiness for candidacy includes a communal component that is part of belonging to a community of faith. Such discernment is both internal (personal) and external (corporate). Both the internal and external dimensions complement each other.

What follows are suggested ways to structure and guide preliminary discernment with potential applicants for candidacy, along with recommended resources. It is not intended that every model and every resource will be utilized with every individual. The needs of the individual and the circumstances of the individual's context will determine applicable approaches.

Since discernment of call is a continuum and not a step in candidacy, usually a Candidacy Committee will not work directly with individuals during this phase. Instead, this preliminary discernment will normally occur in the individual's current context, e.g. home congregation, campus ministry, or a Lutheran outdoor ministry setting. A person may select a discernment mentor who will assist them during this period. A mentor can be the individual's pastor, a lay leader in the individual's congregation, a campus minister, a camp director, a college or seminary faculty person, or a spiritual director.

The characteristics of persons who might serve as discernment mentors include the following:
   a. ongoing spiritual growth and maturity in his or her own life,
   b. embodiment of personal holistic stewardship and well-being as illustrated in the Wholeness Wheel,
   c. a love for the Church,
   d. an ability to listen deeply and actively reflect with others,
   e. an ability and willingness to pray with the individual, both in person and when apart, as a regular practice,
   f. an ability to think critically and ask difficult questions, and
   g. a commitment to a process of discernment with an individual.

Discernment mentors can benefit from a focused orientation and preparation on how to use the discussion guide and other tools provided in this manual. To facilitate the discernment process, a synod may select a discernment team of two or three persons who will help identify and train mentors. Synods will want to be flexible in applying the guidelines for discernment and adapting them to the specifics of the individual's situation, in order to honor and respect the particular needs and uniqueness of each person.

1. Call

A Lutheran understanding of call is threefold. There is an internal call, in which an individual senses God's leading to consider rostered leadership. There is also an external call, in which the church discerns, along with the individual, his or her appropriateness for such service. Finally, following completion of candidacy, the call is confirmed by a specific ministry setting in which the individual will serve.

Much of the focus of a preliminary discernment will be on call. In discernment conversations, attention might specifically address the following:

- one's faith story, especially reflecting on where the individual has experienced God as active,
- understanding of the baptismal call,
- understanding of the wider church and how one's individual call to service is related to and representative of the whole church, and
- exploration of possibilities and preparation for bi-vocational ministry and other leadership needs of the church.

Possible lines of inquiry
1. Share your faith story, especially times when you have been aware of God's call in your life.
2. Who is the Triune God in your life?
3. How do you understand your baptism and its connection to your sense of vocation?
4. What is the relationship between your personal sense of call (internal call) and the call of the whole church (external call)?
5. What other vocations have you experienced or considered? How might you envision those in tandem with your anticipated ministry?

Tools and Related Resources
- Background papers on the theology of vocation and ecclesiology
- Background paper on Call to Word and Sacrament and Call to Word and Service
- Suggested readings for discussion:
  Gustav Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*
  Timothy Wengert, *Priesthood, Pastors, Bishops*: *Public Ministry for the Reformation and Today* (Fortress, *2008)*
  William C. Placher, ed. *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation (*Eerdman*, 2005).*
- Spiritual direction. One noteworthy resource for discernment is spiritual direction. Probably the most desirable approach for the discernment described in this manual is personal spiritual direction with a trained practitioner, who is mature in the spiritual life and in a good position to be helpful to an applicant. Spiritual direction can draw from a variety of traditions and approaches, many of which are not specifically Lutheran. In cases where either a seminary or a Candidacy Committee recommends spiritual direction to applicants, it is helpful for the partner who is recommending this to have firsthand knowledge of the expertise and experience of any persons recommended for referral. Normally spiritual direction occurs on a frequency mutually determined between the directee and the spiritual director and continues over a period of several months to several years. The focus of conversations in personal spiritual direction is the prayer life and spiritual sensitivity of the person seeking direction in a climate of confidentiality and transparency on the part of both director and directee. Some reliable sources for more information about spiritual direction in general and contact information for locating individuals who offer it are the following:
1. The Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.Website: *http://shalem.org/*
2. The Academy for Spiritual Formation.Website: *http://academy.upperroom.org/*
3. Spiritual Directors International. Website: *http://www.sdiworld.org/*

4. Synod offices and ELCA seminaries are additional sources for identifying persons who offer spiritual direction.

2. Current Life Situation

Many aspects of an individual's life can have an impact on his or her ability to prepare for and serve in rostered leadership. Some topics to discuss during discernment are the following:

- reflection on one's family situation, how this journey will impact other family members, and gauging support from family,
- realistic assessment of one's financial situation and a plan for paying for seminary education,
- consideration of how one's health may enhance or hinder ministry, and
- the likelihood of geographic relocation for theological education and first call.

Possible lines of inquiry

1. Think concretely and specifically about how a possible call will impact others in your life, such as parents, spouse, children, or a significant other. How are you addressing their concerns and needs in relation to your anticipated future life directions?

2. After completing a financial assessment, what do you identify as your financial strengths and challenges? What plans are you developing to cover the costs of further education?

3. What health issues do you need to address to sustain a healthy lifestyle throughout candidacy and ministry?

Tools and Related Resources

- Health assessment (see on-line candidacy resources)
- A Money Autobiography, such as the one developed by Dr. Marty Stevens at Gettysburg Theological Seminary and published in *How Much is Enough?* (available through Region 9 ELCA, 1003 Richland Street, Columbia, SC 29201)
- A financial assessment instrument (Web link to be added)
- The Wholeness Wheel (see page 31), which provides a visual overview of all facets of one's life that need to be considered in a time of ongoing discernment.

3. Life Experience

No matter what our age, all of us bring past experiences into any new venture. It is important to have an understanding of how our experiences impact us - positively and negatively. Some areas of specific focus might include

- educational background,
- transferable skills from work and volunteer positions,
- cross cultural experiences and travel,
- self-awareness of gifts and growing edges, and
- formative experiences and influences.

Possible lines of inquiry
1. How has your educational experience prepared and shaped you for theological education? How has your prior education influenced or informed your sense of call?
2. What skills from previous work or volunteer experiences have prepared you for rostered leadership?
3. What kinds of cross cultural experiences (such as travel or ethnic immersion) might inform your sense of ministry? In what ways might such experiences make a difference in how you approach ministry and mission?
4. What persons or experiences have had the greatest impact on your life? How have they shaped you spiritually, vocationally, and personally?

Tools and Related Resources
- Spiritual direction (see above)
- Wholeness Wheel (see pages 30-32)
- Suggested reading: Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*.

4. Leadership Models
The role of rostered leaders in the life of the church continues to change and develop. Individuals may have limited experience with a variety of leadership models. During the discernment period it will be important for the individual to explore and reflect upon the following:
- understanding of the church's need for rostered leadership with a sensitivity to mission,
- various models for leadership, and
- one's own leadership skills and style.

Possible lines of inquiry
1. What persons or leaders stand out for you as models for ministry? What qualities in these persons do you most wish to emulate? Why?
2. What is your understanding of missional leadership? Why is this important for the church in our time? What specific gifts or barriers for missional leadership do you recognize in yourself?
3. What is the relationship between missional leadership and servant leadership in your approach to ministry?

Tools and Related Resources
- Suggested readings for discussion:
  Alan Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, The *Missional Leader*
  Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*
  Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective*
  Craig Nessan, *Beyond Maintenance to Mission: A Theology of the Congregation*. 2nd edition (Fortress, 2010)
- Marjorie Thompson, *Soul Feast*
- A spiritual gifts inventory, such as the one available on the ELCA website (http://www.elca.org/)
- A tool for determining leadership style, such as DISC.

There are a variety of seminary (ELCA and non-ELCA) and other accredited degree programs that prepare people for rostered leadership. Preliminary discernment can be an important time for exploring options and developing a plan for preparation. Some topics for consideration and reflection might include

- ELCA seminaries which offer a curricular focus that matches your ministry interests,
- resources at each seminary that might enhance your formation as a rostered leader,
- the ethos of various seminaries (Where would you fit?), and
- a realistic plan and timeline for the curricular options under consideration.

Possible lines of inquiry
1. What areas of ministry particularly excite you?
2. What are you seeking in a seminary community?
3. What for you are the deciding factors in your choice of a seminary?
4. What resources are you utilizing to make a decision about where you might attend seminary?
5. What is your anticipated timeline for entering and completing seminary studies?
6. Given your understanding of the church's need for servant leaders with sensitivity to God's mission in the world, what do you consider to be the most important formative elements in your preparation for rostered leadership?

Tools and Related Resources
- Summary of ELCA seminaries with descriptions of curriculum and context
- Readings in Bible, theology, worship, sacraments, etc.
- List of ELCA Coordinators for Missional Leadership in each region
- Expectations for Lutheran learning and formation (see page 41)
- Philip G. Camp, *Finding Your Way: A Guide to Seminary Life and Beyond*.

Appendix B: Guidelines for Psychological Consultants

1. **Qualifications**

A psychological consultant is expected to

    a. be registered as an approved psychological consultant with the Director for Candidacy,

    b. conduct a psychological evaluation consistent with the theological purposes and goals of the ELCA candidacy process,

    c. be sensitive to issues of race, language, gender, age, and ethnicity and utilize appropriate tools for evaluation,

    d. provide a Candidacy Committee with recommendations regarding an applicant's current psychological/emotional state and specific issues for further attention or conversation,

    e. provide an applicant with an assessment of personal strengths and areas for growth, including a candid evaluation of psychological/emotional health, and

    f. at a minimum use the assessment instruments recommended by the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

2. **The Interview and Assessment**

A psychological consultant conducts a comprehensive assessment with an applicant, including testing instruments and a personal interview. The evaluation shall be conducted in keeping with accepted standards for psychological evaluations.

Every assessment should evaluate an applicant's ego strength, self-awareness, self-concept, physical health, family health history, relational systems issues, interpersonal skills, personal and professional priorities/values, emotional intelligence, psychological health, personal qualities (including potential for leadership), as well as any perceived deficiencies that might disqualify or impede a person from beginning candidacy. Clinicians are invited to recommend other psychological and/or vocational instruments that may be especially appropriate for the ELCA candidacy process. They may also use additional assessment tools requested by a Candidacy Committee.

At a minimum, psychological consultants will use the following instruments:

    a. Personality Instruments

        1) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2 or the MMPI-2-RF)

        2) Another personality assessment of the consultant's choice, such as the California Personality Inventory (revised) Meyer-Salovy Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), The Sixteen Personality Factor, Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI), Profiles of Ministry, or any other valid and commonly used instrument

    b. Vocational Inventories, such as the Strong Campbell Vocational Interest Inventory (or another valid inventory)

    c. IQ and Cognitive Functioning assessments, such as the Shipley-Hartford Institute of Living Scale, Concept Mastery Test (Terman), or Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (should be administered only if a psychological consultant doubts

an applicant's intellectual capacity for graduate-level work)
d. Culturally-sensitive and/or alternative language instruments and professional resources as appropriate, (e.g., the Spanish language version of the MBTI and/or consultation with a culturally-sensitive psychologist).
Note: Where major language or cultural barriers exist, the Candidacy Committee may contact the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for further guidance and assistance.

Because a psychological evaluation is critically important for both an applicant and the Candidacy Committee, an applicant should not be rushed during the testing and interview process. As noted earlier, it is especially important that a psychological consultant explain fully the evaluation results that will be summarized in a written report, especially any areas for further growth or development.

After sharing the results of an evaluation with an applicant, a psychological consultant provides a written   summary and secures an informed written release of information for both the Candidacy Committee and the ELCA seminary where the applicant has applied for admission. The report will then be sent to the Candidacy Committee for use in the Entrance decision and to the ELCA seminary named on the release of information form. The report becomes part of the confidential candidacy files maintained by the seminary and by the Candidacy Committee. An additional written release of information from an applicant should be obtained before the report can be shared beyond the Candidacy Committee and the seminary of admission.

A psychological consultant may make recommendations for counseling, treatment, or other services. Such recommendations should be thoroughly and sensitively discussed with an applicant during the evaluation feedback session. The Candidacy Committee has the responsibility to decide whether or not the recommended counseling/therapy should be completed prior to granting Entrance. If a Candidacy Committee recommends counseling/therapy, it should **not** be with the consultant who provided the evaluation.

3. Reporting to a Candidacy Committee
In the summary report the psychological consultant provides the following information:
a. personal identity/level of self-awareness and self-concept
b. quality of past and present family relationships
c. sense of vision or imaginative ability
d. intellectual capacity
e. integrity
f. emotional maturity and coping ability/durability
g. motivation for religious service
h. empathy and affective expression
i. interpersonal relationship skills
j. any history of misconduct related to employment
k. any history of deviant and pathological maladaptation
l. any history of medical and psychiatric illness
m. any history of substance abuse or addictions
n. flexibility

o. leadership style

p. assets and liabilities relating to leadership roles in the ELCA, as described in the documents of this church provided to the psychological consultant

q. personal and professional values/priorities.

Appendix C: Initial Interview Report Form

Synod: _____

Name of Applicant: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE APPLICANT

- Manner
- Self-expression
- Responsiveness
- Overall appearance
- First impressions

WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Relevance of work or volunteer experience
- Sufficiency of work or volunteer experience
- Leadership experience
- Skills and competencies that can be useful in rostered leadership
- Adaptability
- Productivity
- Initiative
- Follow-through
- Interpersonal relationships
- Growth/development

EDUCATION

- Scope and relevance
- Courses completed
- Leadership
- Discernible patterns in learning style
- Intellectual abilities
- Self-discipline

- Motivation, interests

EARLY YEARS AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

- Family of origin dynamics
- Socio-economic status
- Parental examples
- Basic values (attitudes toward people, achievement, work ethic, service)
- Self-image
- Influential developments or significant family events (e.g. divorce of parents, death of a parent, death of a sibling, etc.)

CURRENT LIFE SITUATION

- Significant relationships
- Diversity of interests
- Situational factors
- Economic situation
- Marital/family situation

FAITH FORMATION AND CALL TO MINISTRY

- Journey of discernment
- Faith formation and discipleship
- Family attitudes
- Involvement in congregational life
- *Vision and Expectations*
- External indicators of call

APPLICANT'S SELF-AWARENESS

- Identified personal strengths
- Identified growth areas

INTERVIEWER'S SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix D: Candidate Accompaniment Plan

Candidate's Name: _____

Contact Information:

      Mailing address: _____

                                   _____

      Telephone: _____
      Email: _____

Synod of Candidacy:_____

Date of Entrance Decision: _____

Candidacy Committee Relator: _____

Seminary Where Enrolled: _____

Seminary Program/Track: _____

Seminary Advisor:_____

      Mailing address: _____

                                     _____

      Telephone: _____
      Email: _____

Anticipated Timeline of Candidate's Seminary Program:

Anticipated CPE Site/Program and Dates/Duration:

Anticipated Contextual Learning and/or Field Experience Site/Program:

Contextual Learning and/or Field Experience Supervisor(s):

_____

      Mailing address: _____

                              _____

      Telephone: _____

      Email: _____

Anticipated Timing of Candidate's Endorsement and Approval Interviews:

Endorsement:

Approval:

Section for Candidates Attending a Non-ELCA Seminary

ELCA seminary of affiliation _____

ELCA Faculty Advisor _____ e-mail _____

Outline below your plan for fulfilling Lutheran Learning and Formation requirements.

Appendix E: Pre-Endorsement Checklist for Candidates at Non-ELCA Seminaries

Student:_____

Seminary of attendance:_____

ELCA seminary of affiliation*:_____

Degree: _____   **From (seminary)** _____

ACADEMIC PLAN:
1. What are your plans for completing your seminary degree requirements? When do you expect to graduate?

2. How are you progressing with your plans and timeline for completing the Lutheran learning and formation requirement?

3. How has your identity as a Lutheran Christian been strengthened or challenged as you have studied at a non-ELCA seminary? In what ways has it been a blessing?

5. **Have you completed your CPE requirement?** _____
   a. **Date of completion** _____
   b. **Place** _____
   c. **Supervisor** _____
   d. **Was a copy of the supervisors report sent to your Candidacy Committee?** __
   e. **Date sent** _____

6. **When do you plan to do internship?**

_____   _____
  Candidate Signature   **ELCA Seminary Representative**

Synod Candidacy Representative

Appendix F: Guidelines for Internship

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit has established standards and guidelines for internship for candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry. Each seminary, in turn, creates policies and procedures for implementing those standards.

1. An ELCA seminary, in consultation with the synodical bishop where the site is located and the appropriate Candidacy Committee, approves internship sites.
2. An approved internship will consist of a minimum of 2,000 documented contact hours, or one year, in an approved site.
3. An internship supervisor will meet with an intern on a regular basis and document the meetings. An internship supervisor may be on-site or off-site.
4. An internship committee selected from members of the ministry site will meet regularly with the intern during the internship.
5. An intern will have opportunities to experience the full scope of pastoral duties, including worship leadership, regular preaching, teaching the faith, relationships across the spectrum of ages, pastoral visitation, administration, and, as much as possible, participation in significant life events like baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals.
6. Both the supervisor and the internship committee will submit regular reports to the seminary and the synod Candidacy Committee.
7. The internship site and the seminary will agree upon remuneration for the intern, including housing and health coverage.

Responsibilities of ELCA Seminaries

1. Provide adequate policies, procedures, resources, support, and faculty staffing to maintain an internship program consistent with the expectations of the ELCA.
2. Place eligible students on internship in accordance with the expectations of the ELCA and the policies and procedures of the seminary.
3. Distribute seminary policies and procedures concerning internships.
4. Maintain effective communication with synodical bishops concerning settings and supervisors and with synodical Candidacy Committees regarding internship candidates prior to placement.
5. In partnership with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, provide common programs to orient and train new supervisors and to further the development of experienced supervisors.
6. Maintain effective processes for placement and orientation prior to internship, as well as reflection following internship.
7. Receive and review written supervisor's reports at least twice during an internship.
8. Confer with synodical Candidacy Committees as necessary and provide summary evaluations (Form D) at the conclusion of internships prior to Approval Interviews.
9. Provide guidance and support during the internship in a variety of ways, including site visits.
10. When necessary, terminate an internship after appropriate consultation.

Responsibilities of Synods

The synodical bishop (or designee) shall
1. identify and encourage congregations and pastors to consider applying for an internship through an ELCA seminary,
2. maintain effective communication with seminary field education offices relative to settings and potential supervisors,
3. provide opportunities for ELCA interns in the territory of the synod to participate in the programs and functions of the ELCA and the synod, and
4. offer necessary support for the Horizon Internship program, including adequate synodical funding.

The Candidacy Committee shall
1. advise candidates at non-ELCA seminaries to affiliate with an ELCA seminary during the first year of their academic program in order to meet prerequisites for an eventual ELCA internship,
2. at Endorsement convey any recommendations regarding internship, including international Horizon or specialized ministry sites, to candidates and the appropriate internship directors by means of the Endorsement Decision Form, and
3. receive written evaluations regarding candidates' internship experiences prior to Approval interviews.

Interns

Interns are candidates who are enrolled in or affiliated with an ELCA seminary and approved for internship placement by that seminary in consultation with the Candidacy Committee to serve in a sustained supervised ministry experience.

To assist seminaries in internship placement, candidates will consult with the appropriate Candidacy Committee and the seminary internship director. Interns will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the policies and practices of the ELCA.

Criteria and Standards for Candidates for Internship
1. Apply for internship through the internship office of the appropriate ELCA seminary or, if attending a non- ELCA seminary, through the ELCA seminary of affiliation.
2. In consultation with the Candidacy Committee and seminary faculty, develop broad learning goals for the internship to be used in considering placement.
3. Once placement has been made, develop specific and agreed upon learning goals with the supervisor and internship committee.
4. Develop and maintain sound and effective relationships with the supervisor, other staff, the internship committee, and members of the congregation.
7. Maintain appropriate contacts with the synodical bishop, the Candidacy Committee, and the seminary. While on internship, interns submit reports and evaluations as requested in a timely manner.
8. Engage in personal prayer, study, and theological reflection/discussion on issues related to ministry and be accountable to a Spiritual Director or the internship supervisor.
9. Attend internship cluster meetings, conference meetings, and synodical events and

participate in appropriate community groups and activities.
10. Become familiar with ELCA and seminary policies, programs, and curricula, including official ELCA documents and statements.
11. Inform the seminary internship director in a timely manner of any concerns or difficulties that develop during the internship.

Supervisors

A supervisor is normally an ordained ELCA pastor who has served a minimum of three years in a parish and at least one year in the internship setting. Supervising pastors serve as effective models and guides for interns with regard to faith, spiritual discipline, personal habits, public ministry, and participation in the wider church. They provide-opportunities for interns to participate in all dimensions of pastoral ministry with oversight and reflective feedback. All supervisors participate in training provided by ELCA seminaries.

Supervisors are expected to be committed to internship as an educational component in the preparation of candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry. Each ELCA seminary, in consultation with the synodical bishop and field education colleagues, approves pastors to serve as internship supervisors.

Criteria and Standards for Supervisors
1. Share with and appropriately involve an intern in all aspects of parish ministry.
2. Collaborate and share accountability with an intern to achieve mutually agreed upon learning goals.
3. Through weekly supervisory sessions, reflect with the intern on pastoral ministry and the intern's work and well-being.
4. Guide an intern in developing responsible and effective partnership in ministry with laity.
5. Know and support the polity, policies, and positions of the ELCA, including sacramental practices.
6. Participate in the life of the synod and provide opportunities for an intern to experience and participate in synodical programs and events, as well as in appropriate local ecumenical, interfaith, and community organizations and activities.
7. Participate in continuing education.
8. Support the internship committee and facilitate its functioning (but not a member of the committee).
9. Regularly attend internship cluster meetings.
10. Cooperate with the seminary regarding policies and practices contained in its internship manual.
11. Provide written evaluative reports to the seminary at least twice during the internship that includes perspectives on discerning growth and progress, as well as pertinent concerns, in an intern's ministry.
12. Participate in the placement process as requested by the seminary.

Settings

Settings provide opportunities for interns to be broadly engaged in appropriate ministry practices, including occasions unique to each setting. Such opportunities are an expression of the

setting's commitment to internship as an educational component in the candidate's preparation and formation for rostered leadership in the ELCA.

Criteria and Standards for Internship Settings
1. Internship settings are normally open to any ELCA candidate.
2. After consultation with the synodical bishop, an ELCA seminary chooses and periodically evaluates each internship setting.
3. Normally internship sites are congregations.
4. There need to be written policies for sexual ethics, sick leave, and lifelong learning.
5. Sites apply for internship to only one ELCA seminary.
6. Sites ensure that the necessary resources (e.g. financial, supervisory, etc.) are available.
7. Sites are committed to internship as an educational component in the preparation of candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry.
8. Sites provide opportunities for an intern to be broadly engaged in appropriate ministerial activities.
9. Sites provide adequate support to an intern (and family), including forming a committee of lay members to provide both the intern and the supervisor with feedback and evaluation.
10. In accord with ELCA policies, interns do not preside at baptisms, except in an emergency; nor will an intern preside at the Eucharist without authorization from the synodical bishop, and then only in extraordinary circumstances.
11. An internship site models awareness of and connectedness with the ELCA as a whole with ongoing supportive relationships, including but not limited to mission support.

Appendix G: Candidacy Guidelines for Word and Service Rosters

ELCA candidates preparing for Word and Service rosters as Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers will follow the standards and academic requirements outlined for each roster in this Appendix. A task force appointed by the ELCA Church Council will bring a recommendation to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly for the unification of the 3 existing Word and Service rosters. If approved by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, new standards and academic requirements for the unified Word and Service roster will be assigned to the candidacy team in the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit.

Associate in Ministry

Associates in Ministry are lay people who are called to serve in an officially recognized Word and Service roster in the ELCA. They work in partnership with other laity, pastors, bishops, Diaconal Ministers, and Deaconesses to serve mission and ministry needs through ELCA congregations, agencies, or institutions. Associates in Ministry provide leadership and support for the people of God as they care for, nurture, and equip them for faith and discipleship.

Associates in Ministry candidates, guided by a Candidacy Committee, prepare for service through a formal course of study that includes theological education. Once Approved, they are eligible for a call and serve under a letter of call issued by a congregation, a synod council, or the ELCA Church Council. Having accepted a first call, Associates in Ministry are received onto the roster of the ELCA through a Service of Commissioning. An Approved and commissioned Associate in Ministry has met all ELCA standards for service and enters into a relationship of mutual accountability with the calling body and the synodical and churchwide expressions of this church as set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* (ELCA 7.50 ff).

Steps in Candidacy

Persons seeking to serve as Associates in Ministry are expected to participate fully in all steps of the candidacy process: Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval.

Entrance begins a process of discernment that explores an individual's potential for rostered leadership and readiness to begin a process of theological study and candidacy. One year of active membership in an ELCA congregation is a prerequisite for Entrance. The Entrance process includes the Candidacy Application Form, the Entrance Information Form, the Congregational Registration Form, an Initial Interview (optional), a Background Check, a psychological evaluation, and an Entrance interview. A candidate must be granted Entrance in order to continue in the process of preparation and formation.

Endorsement encourages those who clearly demonstrate gifts and qualities for a specific roster and identifies areas for growth and development. A candidate prepares an Endorsement Essay and participates in an Endorsement interview. The Candidacy Committee identifies an

appropriate time for Endorsement in consultation with a candidate. Typical timing would be the mid-point of the candidacy process. For candidates attending an ELCA seminary, the faculty advisor is included in the Endorsement interview.

Because candidates attending a non- ELCA seminary may not have the same awareness of time lines, the Candidacy Committee should give such candidates direct notification about the timing of the Endorsement interview and the deadline for submitting the essay.

Candidates who have already completed the majority of the educational requirements prior to application and who are granted Entrance may be exempt from Endorsement by decision of the Candidacy Committee.

Approval occurs when a candidate articulates a call to ministry and demonstrates readiness to assume a rostered leadership role in the ELCA. The Approval interview is scheduled near the completion of all academic and practical criteria. If a candidate is studying at an ELCA seminary, a faculty recommendation (Form D) is required. A candidate prepares an Approval Essay and participates in the Approval interview with the Candidacy Committee. Once a Candidacy Committee grants Approval, a candidate participates in the churchwide assignment process and is available for commissioning and first call.

Standards

Persons Approved, commissioned, and rostered as Associates in Ministry shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following basic standards established in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA 7.52.11):

- commitment to Christ,
- acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of the ELCA,
- willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of the church,
- academic and practical qualifications for the position, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships,
- commitment to lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ and to be an example of faithful service and holy living,
- receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, and
- membership in an ELCA congregation.

The ELCA expects Associate in Ministry candidates to demonstrate the following:
1. knowledge of the Bible, church history, the history and doctrinal teachings of the Lutheran church, and the organization and operating principles of the ELCA,
2. an ability to articulate one's calling as a baptized Christian and as an Associate in Ministry,
3. willingness to share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry and to assist others in proclaiming God's love through word and deed,
4. encouragement of persons to discern a capacity for and calling to rostered leadership,
5. an ability to work in partnership to serve the mission and ministry needs of the church,

6. a healthy self-awareness and willingness to engage in regular habits for physical fitness,
7. *commitment to living in accordance with* Vision and Expectations for Word and Service Rosters in the ELCA,
8. competence in the area of one's specialization, and
9. at least one year of satisfactory relationship with a Candidacy Committee.

Academic and Practical Criteria

In preparation to become an Associate in Ministry, a candidate engages in a comprehensive program of preparation, including a bachelor's degree, foundational theological education, field experience, and spiritual formation.

Degree Requirement

A bachelor's degree or a graduate degree in a field appropriate to a specialization is required. If the degree is in an unrelated field of study, significant work or competency in the area of specialization must be demonstrated. In some cases a person not holding a bachelor's degree may be considered for candidacy under the provisions described in "Waiver of Academic Requirement" (see p. 91).

Theological Education

Foundational coursework in theological education shall include a minimum of 20 semester credit hours (or an equivalent), including at least one course in each of the following areas:
1. Biblical Studies – Old Testament
2. Biblical Studies – New Testament
3. Lutheran Theology and Confessional Writings
4. Introductory Systematic Theology
5. Lutheran Church History (including the North American context).

Additional courses may include practical theology appropriate to a specialization (e.g., religious education, pastoral care and counseling, youth ministry, worship, hymnody, etc.) but should not replace foundational courses.

All theological education will be completed through courses taken at an accredited college or seminary approved by the Candidacy Committee or through a course of study approved by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, including courses through an ELCA program such as Fisher's Net/SELECT (see page 90). The basic theological education requirement shall not be met by equivalency or through continuing education courses.

Spiritual and Vocational Formation

All Associate in Ministry candidates follow a regular pattern of worship, prayer, Bible study, and disciplined faith practices while participating in theological education and contextual learning. While formation may follow a variety of patterns, a candidate engages in practices that are communal in scope, draw on well-established traditions of the church, and model Christian living for others.

At Entrance a candidate will be asked to share a plan for how his or her faith life will be sustained

and nurtured during the candidacy process. Such a plan may include spiritual direction, participation in a group discipleship experience, retreats, personal devotions and daily prayer, and regular participation in corporate worship. Plans for offering service to others, personal stewardship, vocational discernment, and healthy self-care will also be discussed.

Throughout the candidacy process, the Candidacy Committee inquires about a candidate's ongoing practices and habits and offers encouragement for lively engagement with various facets of Christian living.

Health and Wellness

The ELCA envisions a church in which those preparing for and serving as rostered leaders, as well as their spouses and families, are encouraged, supported, and motivated to grow in spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, financial, and vocational health and well-being.

Healthy leaders enhance their own lives and the lives of others. To be prepared for the rigor of public ministry candidates need to demonstrate and develop healthy leadership qualities. Candidates are expected to address any health concerns with the Candidacy Committee. Candidates who practice self-care and attend to all aspects of their health enhance the church's faithful witness in the world. Intentional efforts to improve all aspects of wellness will be most effective when supported by families, congregations, synods, seminaries, and communities.

Specialization

The ELCA needs a variety of ministries in congregations and other settings where rostered leaders serve. While forms of ministry may differ, there are common areas of specialization, focus, and need. In the candidacy process, an Associate in Ministry candidate focuses on at least one area of specialization. The list below identifies categories of competency that are indicative descriptive of a variety of areas in which an Associate in Ministry might develop expertise.

Administration	Music and Worship
Campus Ministry	Outdoor Ministry/Camping
Chaplaincy	Parish Nurse/Health
Christian Education	Public Policy/Advocacy
Community Organizing	Senior Ministries
Counseling/Social Work	Spiritual Formation/Direction
Early Childhood Administration	Teaching
Evangelism/Mission	Volunteer Coordination
Interim Ministry	Worship Leadership/Preaching
Ministry in Daily Life	Youth and Family

Candidates are certified, trained, or otherwise deemed competent in a particular specialization with appropriate education and practical preparation. Expertise in a specialization will be demonstrated through one of the following:

1. an undergraduate degree in a specialization, a major/concentration with a particular focus

on a specialization, or equivalent academic credentials or
2. professional licensure or certification, whenever required, or, in exceptional cases, significant recognized work experience in a specialization.

At Endorsement, a candidate declares an area of specialization, which the Candidacy Committee reviews and confirms. While a minimum of one area of specialization is expected, a candidate may be called to serve in a position with a broader position description. For those seeking professional certification in chaplaincy, counseling, and clinical education, ecclesiastical endorsement is expected. Such endorsement is coordinated through the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit following Approval near the time of assignment and first call.

The Candidacy Committee is responsible for evaluating a candidate's readiness to serve as an Associate in Ministry. The committee considers formation in theological education, spirituality, contextual education, and overall readiness in assessing competence for rostered leadership.

Supervised Field Experience
A candidate may satisfactorily complete supervised field experience with a specialization through an internship, a practicum, employment, or some other arrangement approved by the Candidacy Committee. The normal duration for supervised field experience is one year with a minimum of 600 supervised hours. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) may be included as appropriate (see Guidelines for Field Experience).

Commissioning and First Call
Upon successful completion of all requirements and compliance with Vision and Expectations, the Candidacy Committee may grant Approval to a candidate. Following Approval, a candidate participates in the churchwide assignment process. Once an Approved candidate receives and accepts a call, the bishop of the synod of assignment arranges for and conducts a service of commissioning.

Reinstatement
The process for reinstatement to the rosters of the ELCA is explained in Chapter 1 (Page 20).

Fisher's Net/Select Courses
Fisher's Net/Select courses, produced under the direction of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, are approved for use by Associate in Ministry candidates in fulfilling course requirements. They do not qualify for academic credit. Fisher's Net/Select provides courses via both video and print. With a Candidacy Committee's approval, a candidate preparing for service as an Associate in Ministry who is unable to attend a seminary or college may complete some of the course requirements through Fisher's Net/Select. The Candidacy Committee, in conversation with a candidate, determines which courses may satisfy course requirements for an Associate in Ministry. Normally, courses are offered locally and involve a small cohort of people who have signed up for them. To explore Fisher's Net/Select options, go to: http://www.selectlearning.org/

Fisher's Net/Select will issue a certificate of completion to those who successfully complete a course. The process for receiving a certificate of completion through Fisher's Net/Select is as follows:

1. A candidate arranges to take a course with other students (these may be other Associates in Ministry, candidates, pastors, or lay persons).
2. At the conclusion of a course, a candidate prepares a reflection paper (10 to 12 pages). Instructions for preparing papers are given in the Fisher's Net/Select catalog.
3. The paper will be evaluated in one of the following ways:
   a. The Candidacy Committee may designate a person to read and approve the paper. The reader need not be a member of the committee but should be qualified to provide theological and biblical critique. After approving the paper, the reader notifies the Fisher's Net/Select office to indicate the candidate has successfully completed the course and request the issuance of a certificate of completion.
   b. The student may send the paper directly to the Director of Fisher's Net/Select, who will read and approve it. If the essay is approved, a certificate of completion will be issued. Fisher's Net/Select charges a nominal fee for reading each paper.

Waiver of Academic Requirements

Candidates seeking to serve as an Associate in Ministry who have not completed a bachelor's degree may in some cases request a waiver of the degree requirement. A waiver is reserved for candidates who for reasons of prior experience and/or personal circumstances may not find it appropriate or possible to complete a bachelor's degree. Prior experience in a specialization is a primary criterion for consideration of a waiver, not the age of a candidate. A minimum of an associate degree or significant post-secondary education is expected for consideration of a waiver.

Entrance is required for consideration of a waiver. After receiving a recommendation from a Candidacy Committee, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit reviews and evaluates requests for waivers. Consideration of a waiver includes evaluation of non-degree studies, demonstrated work experience comparable to that expected of a person holding a bachelor's degree, and other information. This provision for equivalency applies only to the bachelor's degree requirement and is not applicable to the specific course requirements for an Associate in Ministry.

The following procedure is for candidates requesting consideration of a waiver.

1. The candidate completes all Entrance requirements and is granted Entrance by the Candidacy Committee.
2. The candidate submits a written request and rationale to the Candidacy Committee, which reviews the request and determines whether or not the candidate should proceed under this provision.
3. The Candidacy Committee requests a review by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. Such a request includes the following material:
   a) a letter from the Candidacy Committee that includes the action of the committee to forward the request, a rationale for the request, and confirmation of granting Entrance,
   b) a copy of the Candidacy Application Form, including the Entrance Essay,

c) a copy of a written rationale from the candidate that clearly states reasons for the equivalency request, based on experience, training, and competency,

d) a detailed listing of the candidate's work experience:

    i) the employing organization(s), city, position(s), years in the position(s),

    ii) a description of the range of responsibilities in each position,

    iii) on-the-job training, seminars, and continuing education taken to build and contribute to competencies, including the type and length of training,

    iv) supervisory and project management roles carried out in each position, including the number of persons and the range of tasks for those supervised,

    v) descriptions of independent or team work experiences,

    vi) descriptions of relevant volunteer experience and training that can demonstrate equivalency skills, interpersonal skills, and organizational skills with a description of the organization, responsibilities, numbers and types of relationships with those reported to and those coordinated, and the length of time served,

e) a detailed listing of all education completed, including related continuing education, with available transcripts or certificates, including college, community college, business or trade school, military training and service, on-the-job training, significant work-related seminars, and courses (particularly those that led to increased responsibilities and/or a new position),

f) a current position description (if employed by a church or church-related institution), and

g) three letters of recommendation from persons well acquainted with the candidate's background and work, (such as the candidate's pastor, a congregational leader familiar with the candidate's demonstrated leadership abilities and gifts for ministry, and a person with competence and knowledge consistent with the candidate's area of specialization).

4. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit reviews the request and grants the waiver in a letter to the Candidacy Committee with a copy to the candidate.

5. Following the granting of a waiver, the Candidacy Committee oversees a designated course of study to complete course requirements and an appropriate supervised field experience.

Field Experience

Supervised field experience is essential to preparation for service as an Associate in Ministry, whereby the practice of ministry is combined with supervised reflection and evaluation. Supervised field experience seeks to integrate academic study in an area of specialization and other required course work with the practice of ministry. It also fosters the development of a ministerial identity

Supervised field experience may begin once a candidate has been granted Endorsement and may take place during a period of academic study or following the completion of all required course work. A field experience proposal may be prepared prior to Endorsement in consultation with the Candidacy Committee. The Candidacy Committee works with a candidate to arrange and oversee field experience for candidates who have completed their academic work and for those already in service.

1. **Objectives**
    a. To provide actual experience in a candidate's area of specialization, thereby enabling a candidate to develop increasing competence as a rostered leader.
    b. To offer an opportunity for self-evaluation and spiritual nurture under the guidance of a mentor.
    c. To offer an opportunity for evaluation by others, including the mentor, the onsite field supervisor, and an advisory committee from the congregation or group being served.
    d. To provide a learning context that allows a candidate to experience many aspects of congregational, institutional, or agency life, including participation in the governing and programmatic structures such as council, board of directors, committees, and staff meetings.
    e. To provide opportunity for a candidate to participate in at least one project in an area of specialization from beginning to completion, including planning, implementation, and evaluation.
    f. To assist a candidate in developing regular habits and patterns for theological reflection, spiritual formation, and healthy self-care.
    g. To provide the Candidacy Committee with an assessment regarding a candidate's growth, professional development, and skills in an area of specialization.

2. **Options for Field Experience**
Associate in Ministry candidates enter the candidacy process from a variety of contexts. Some are undergraduates, some are enrolled in seminary, and some are already serving in a ministry setting. Some candidates have years of service in the church either as volunteers or paid staff, while others have no work experience.

In recognition of such diversity, Candidacy Committees, colleges, and seminaries need to exercise creativity and flexibility in approving or arranging field experiences appropriate for the particular needs of a candidate. The normal duration of a supervised field experience is one year, which may be interpreted as 6-12 months with a minimum of 600 contracted supervised hours.

3. **Candidates Enrolled in Academic Degree Programs**
Academic institutions may provide field experience such as
    1. a full-time internship for 6-12 months,
    2. a combined CPE and field experience arrangement,
    3. a part-time position (10-20 hours per week) while a candidate completes required course work during the academic year over a one-or two-year period,
    4. part-time work or practicum during the school year combined with a full-time summer position, or
    5. an approved student-teaching assignment for Christian Day School teachers.

The determination of a structure for field experience will be based on such factors as age, previous work experience, academic setting, graduate or undergraduate status, etc. Candidates may receive a stipend for their field work (strongly encouraged for work exceeding 15 hours per week). Such remuneration should be similar to that granted M.Div. interns. Where structured field experience is part of the academic preparation arranged by a college or seminary, a candidate needs to arrange to have evaluation reports sent to the Candidacy Committee.

B. Candidates Who Have Completed Academic Work
In consultation with a candidate, the Candidacy Committee arranges for field experience and receives evaluations.

If not already employed in a church-related setting, a candidate works with the Candidacy Committee in arranging an appropriate field experience that includes an appropriate stipend whenever possible. Consultation with the bishop is helpful in identifying a location where ministry and supervision needs might be met.

If already employed in a church-related setting, a candidate may, with the approval of the Candidacy Committee, arrange supervised field experience in the place of employment. This option requires assisting both a candidate and a congregation or agency to address the implications and dynamics of a significant role change for an established employee who is in the process of becoming a called and commissioned Associate in Ministry.

C. Candidates with Three or More Consecutive Years Experience in a Church-Related Work Position
The Candidacy Committee may consider a waiver or partial waiver of supervised field experience for candidates who have been serving in church-related employment three consecutive years or longer. Such candidates may submit a written request and rationale for a waiver or partial waiver and document how the goals and objectives for supervised field experience have already been met. Candidates shall also provide three letters of recommendation from persons well acquainted with their work. In a congregational setting, references might come from the pastor, a congregational leader either elected or with leadership responsibility related to the area of specialization, or a person with competence and knowledge consistent with a candidate's area of ministry.

The Candidacy Committee reviews this material and in consultation with the candidate and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, determines whether additional contextual learning goals need to be addressed. The Candidacy Committee makes the decision to grant or deny the request.

In all such cases, candidates work with their congregational leadership support committee, if currently in a position of employment, or with the Candidacy Committee if seeking a position, in reflecting together on issues of changing ministry identity as they move from the role of established leader to that of an Associate in Ministry.

4. **Components of the Field Experience**
   A. Context
   The context should be a setting that represents the anticipated focus of a candidate's future ministry: parish work, parish education, youth ministry, music, etc. If the focus is an administrative or teaching position, a Lutheran elementary, high school, or early childhood education center will be the context. If the focus is counseling or specialized pastoral care, it will be with an appropriate agency or institution and include at least one

unit of CPE. Highly specialized settings are approved only when a candidate demonstrates significant experience in a general ministry setting.

B. Supervising/Mentoring/Advising

A quality field experience for Associate in Ministry candidates requires over-all on-site supervision, mentoring, training specific to the area of specialization, support, and nurture.

Associates in ministry typically serve in multiple-staff ministries and work with a supervisor. Normally, the supervisor is theologically trained and responsible for general oversight in the local situation. Supervised field experience needs to provide training and attend to team-ministry development, as well as the development of individual leadership gifts and skills.

Three critically important roles have been identified for completing the goals and objectives for supervised field experience. Normally, this means the involvement of three parties besides the candidate. In some situations the roles of field supervisor and mentor can be fulfilled by the same person.

1. **The On-Site Field Supervisor** provides administrative structure to the field experience, including a written description of responsibilities, consultation for mutual reflection about supervisory issues, and periodic evaluations. The on-site field supervisor must be an ELCA rostered leader. When the supervisor is an Associate in Ministry or diaconal minister, that person will include the pastor in the process.

2. **The Mentor** is a person from the same area of specialization as a candidate. The mentor shall have at least three years of experience in a candidate's area of specialization. If not on site, the mentor will be identified by the Candidacy Committee or an academic institution in consultation with a candidate. A mentor should be available for at least monthly meetings with a candidate.

   The mentor is responsible for working with a candidate in identifying learning goals, objectives, and activities specific to the area of specialization. The mentor reflects with a candidate on issues related to effective ministry, as well as patterns for spiritual formation and healthy self-care. Hopefully, the mentor can model a relationship that can continue once a candidate has been Approved.

3. **An Advisory Committee** should include persons who have regular exposure to and familiarity with a candidate's work, including leaders and participants in programs. In situations where a candidate is already employed, this function may be provided by the leadership support or mutual ministry committee.

C. Learning Agreement

Field experience is a time when gifts, aptitudes, and skills for ministry can be developed and tested under supervision within a helpful and supportive setting. Each field experience needs to have a focus and specific learning goals. A written learning agreement contributes to the value of the total experience and builds a partnership among a candidate, supervisors, a congregation, college or seminary, and a synod. Candidates in academic programs are encouraged to work initially with faculty advisors in developing learning goals. Those who are not in academic programs should consult with the Candidacy Committee in identifying goals. However formulated, the resulting learning goals must be approved by the Candidacy Committee and the supervisor.

Each area of specialization requires related goals and activities. Each candidate needs to view a specialization within the context of the overall mission and ministry of the site. A candidate gains experience in working with individuals and groups and has opportunities to develop specific skills, such as teaching, counseling, program development, leadership training, musical performance, visitation, administration, or committee work. A candidate, whatever the specialization, gains experience in worship by serving as an assisting minister.

A critical area for all candidates is developing skills for team-ministry in order to work effectively with councils, committees, and other staff. Whenever possible, a candidate participates in retreats with staff, council, or committees and takes advantage of workshops offered in team ministry. A candidate also needs opportunities and financial assistance for participating in synodical and regional events, such as leadership conferences and synod assemblies.

D. Evaluation

Each candidate writes a self-evaluation, and the supervision partners (supervisor, mentor, and advisory committee) each write an evaluation at the mid-way point and at the conclusion of the field experience. (The chairperson of the Advisory Committee represents the committee.) The evaluation provides information (used in assessing successful completion of the requirement) to the academic institution if the candidate is a student and to the Candidacy Committee. A written evaluation that describes experiences and involvements can be used in reflection and evaluation sessions between the supervisor/mentor and a candidate.

5. Field Experience Responsibilities

A. The **Candidate** has responsibility to

1. work cooperatively with the academic institution (college or seminary) and/or the Candidacy Committee in arranging for an appropriate field experience,

2. establish an effective working relationship with all members of the supervisory team,

3. participate in writing the learning agreement,

4. reflect theologically upon experiences,

5. cultivate a personal devotional life and practice self-care, and

6. engage in the evaluative process and prepare the required written reports.

B. The **academic institution and the Candidacy Committee** (when the candidate is not a student) are responsible to

1. work co-operatively with a candidate in arranging an appropriate field experience, including the identification and approval of a supervisor and a mentor,

2. prepare a learning agreement in consultation with a candidate,

3. negotiate a stipend when appropriate,

4. assist in determining whether the field experience should continue in the event of any change or conflict in the supervisory relationship, and

5. receive evaluation reports and determine the successful completion of the field experience requirement.

C. The **supervisor/mentor/advisory committee are responsible to**

1. participate in writing a learning agreement in consultation with a candidate, the academic institution, and/or the Candidacy Committee,

2. provide regularly scheduled opportunities to discuss and reflect on a candidate's growth and development in light of the learning goals,

3. listen to a candidate's concerns, as well as achievements, and provide support and constructive suggestions for growth and learning, and

4. provide written evaluation reports to a candidate, the academic institution, and the Candidacy Committee.

Deaconess

Introduction

The modern deacon/deaconess movement is an outgrowth of a revival of the New Testament diaconate that began in 19th century Germany. The movement came to America later in the same century and had an impact on many predecessor church bodies of the ELCA. The Deaconess Community of the ELCA is one of two Lutheran deaconess communities in North America which continue to be active. Because its predecessor body in the Lutheran Church in America served in both the United States and Canada, the Deaconess Community of the ELCA is incorporated through the ELCA; but it also serves the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The other community is the independent Lutheran Deaconess Association (LDA), headquartered in Valparaiso, Indiana. Women active in the latter may be rostered in the ELCA as either Associates in Ministry or Diaconal Ministers.

"The Deaconess Community has been formed in order that skilled and committed women acting in community may complement the ministry of Word and Sacrament as well as the ministry of the whole people of God. This ministry is exercised within the context of the church's mission to proclaim the Gospel, to relate the Gospel to human need in every situation, and to extend the ministry of the Gospel to all the world" (Bylaws of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, 3.1).

The mission statement of the Deaconess Community is "Compelled by the love of Christ, and

sustained by community, we devote our lives to proclaiming the Gospel through ministries of mercy and servant leadership." The vision of the Deaconess Community is "Empowered by the Holy Spirit for public ministry, we passionately seek to embody our mission, be a Christ-centered community of women, and witness to the Church and the world."

Deaconesses candidates participate in the ELCA candidacy process in partnership with the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission of the Deaconess Community. Following Approval by both a Candidacy Committee and the Deaconess Community, a candidate is consecrated for service upon receipt and acceptance of a letter of call. A deaconess serves under a call from a congregation, a synod, or a churchwide agency (ELCA or ELCIC). She may serve in a non-church agency or a non-stipendiary position if issued a call to do so by a congregation or her synod under the guidelines of the ELCA or the ELCIC.

Steps in Candidacy

For women seeking to serve as deaconesses, candidacy includes participation in both the ELCA candidacy process and the candidacy process of the Deaconess Community. The former begins with Entrance, continues through Endorsement, and culminates with Approval. The Deaconess Community process parallels this but uses Investiture as an intermediate step. Traditionally, Investiture was the point at which a candidate was entitled to wear the optional garb of the Deaconess Community. It is now the point at which a candidate becomes a full member of the Community with all its rights and responsibilities.

Entrance includes discernment, the Candidacy Application Form, the Congregational Registration Form, an Initial Interview (optional), and screening, including a psychological evaluation and a Background Check through a Candidacy Committee. Deaconess candidates must also complete the application packet provided by the Deaconess Community and participate in an interview with the Deaconess Community Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission.

The Candidacy Committee must receive a positive recommendation from the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission of the Deaconess Community prior to granting Entrance to a deaconess candidate. The Candidacy Committee may not grant Entrance to any deaconess candidate denied by the Deaconess Community; however, the Candidacy Committee may Postpone or Deny a woman recommended by the Community. Granting Entrance qualifies a deaconess candidate to begin theological study.

Endorsement/Investiture - A candidate goes through Endorsement with a Candidacy Committee. Concurrently, the Deaconess Community makes a decision for Investiture that parallels Endorsement. Investiture is a decision by the Board of the Deaconess Community upon recommendation from its Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission. The two committees work collaboratively and co-operatively in an atmosphere of mutual respect in discerning a call to diakonia and offering a candidate support and guidance. At Investiture, a candidate participates in a public service of mutual affirmation, which admits her to the

privileges and responsibilities of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA.
Investiture is normally a prerequisite for internship. An onsite supervisor and local committee, supported by the Deaconess Community's Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission, provide supervision for internship. A candidate sends copies of all internship and CPE reports to both committees (synod and the Deaconess Community).

Approval for Consecration and First Call - Approval occurs upon the completion of all academic and practical experience requirements (see below). A deaconess candidate prepares the Approval Essay prior to meeting with both committees and forwards copies of the essay to both.

Neither the Candidacy Committee nor the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission of the Deaconess Community may grant Approval to a candidate who has been denied by the other. Either committee may Postpone or Deny a candidate Approved by the other. When the two committees come to different decisions about a candidate, they must confer with each other until they reach unanimity. The Candidacy Committee makes its decision for Approval. Then the Board of Directors of the Deaconess Community, upon recommendation from the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission, makes its decision for Approval.

Standards for Members of The Deaconess Community

A deaconess must comply with the Basic Standards for all rostered leaders found in the ELCA *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions,* Chapter 7. In addition, the Deaconess Community maintains the following standards for admission and continuance in the Community.

A deaconess is a woman who
1. is an active communing member of an ELCA or ELCIC congregation,
2. affirms being called by God to ministry in the diaconate through the Deaconess Community and has sought and received confirmation of that call by this church,
3. is academically and professionally prepared to function within her chosen occupation,
4. is prepared to reflect theologically upon and articulate a Lutheran understanding of
    a. the Gospel,
    b. the mission and ministry of the church as expressed in the Lutheran Confessions, and
    c. the mission, purpose, and uniqueness of the diaconal call,
5. has been examined for theological competence in her vocation, occupation, and personal life and participates periodically in a formal period of reflection upon these themes,
6. is committed to the continual strengthening of her relationship to and theological understanding of the Triune God through such means as prayer, study of the Holy Scriptures, personal devotional life, and the corporate celebration of Word and Sacrament,
7. is willing to relate and witness to the mission and message of Christ, not only in her occupation but in her total life,
8. pledges to meet the established standards for Deaconess Community

membership spiritually, personally, corporately, financially, and in matters of time,

9. participates in continuing education and periodic evaluation in accordance with the highest recognized standards of her profession and/or occupation, and

10. has a healthy self-awareness and seeks to maintain a balanced life and practice spiritual, vocational, interpersonal, intellectual, physical, and emotional wellness.

Academic and Practical Criteria

Basic Educational Requirements

A deaconess candidate must meet certain requirements established by the ELCA Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit in consultation with the Deaconess Community.

1. She fulfills and completes the academic and professional standards for her chosen specialization, e.g. nurse, social worker, chaplain, parish deaconess, and any licensing or certification requirements of the state or province in which she will serve. Candidates usually earn a bachelor's degree or its equivalent related to the area of specialization.

2. She completes a course of theological studies, as detailed below, which will prepare her to express and reflect on this church's understanding of the Gospel, the ministry of the church as expressed in the historic Lutheran Confessions, the mission, purpose, and uniqueness of the Deaconess Community as an ecumenical diaconal organization, and her own responsibility within the Deaconess Community and the context of her chosen ministry.

3. A unit of Clinical Pastoral Education or other supervised pastoral education is required for all deaconess candidates.

4. An internship, usually for one year, is also required.

Theological Education Requirements

1. Deaconess candidates preparing to serve in an ELCA congregation earn a master's degree in theological studies (M.A.R., M.R.E., M.A., M.T.S., etc.) which may include a major in her area of specialization. Deaconess candidates also confer with the Deaconess Community regarding the selection of an appropriate seminary and the curriculum requirements of the Community (see below).

2. A deaconess candidate preparing for a ministry that does not require a seminary degree will complete a course of theological studies planned in consultation with the community's Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission. This may include courses in the following areas: Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Ethics, Lutheran Confessions, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Systematic Theology, Worship & Liturgy, and Field Education. The Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission is responsible for monitoring the course of study and reporting the successful completion of a course of study to the Candidacy Committee.

Specialization

The ELCA needs a variety of ministries in congregations and other settings where rostered leaders serve. While forms of ministry may be differ, there are common areas of specialization, focus, and need. A call may include varied responsibilities, but a rostered leader should focus on at least one area of specialization during candidacy.

Deaconess candidates are expected to demonstrate ability and experience within one or more areas of specialization. The list below provides categories in which leaders may have strength or demonstrated competence. The list is not exhaustive but rather descriptive of a variety of areas in which a deaconess candidate might develop expertise.

Administration	Music and Worship
Campus Ministry	Outdoor Ministry/Camping
Chaplaincy	Parish Nurse/Health
Christian Education	Public Policy/Advocacy
Community Organizing	Senior Ministries
Counseling/Social Work	Spiritual Formation/Direction
Early Childhood Administration	Teaching
Evangelism/mission	Volunteer Coordination
Interim ministry	Worship Leadership/Preaching
Ministry in Daily Life	Youth and Family

Candidates are certified, trained, or otherwise demonstrate competence in a specialization with the requisite education and practical preparation. Expertise in a specialization will be demonstrated through
1. an undergraduate degree in the field of specialization, a major/concentration with a particular focus, or equivalent academic credentials or
2. professional licensure or certification, whenever required, or, in some cases, significant recognized work experience.

A candidate declares an area of specialization (which must be reviewed and confirmed by the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission) by the time of Investiture. For those seeking professional certification in chaplaincy, counseling, and clinical education, ecclesiastical specialized pastoral care endorsement is normative and expected. The latter may be coordinated through the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the ELCA near the time of assignment and first call.

Both the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission and the Candidacy Committee evaluate a candidate's readiness to serve as a deaconess. While a minimum of one area of specialization is expected, a candidate may be called to serve in a position with a broader position description. The committees will consider formation in theological education, spirituality, contextual education, and overall readiness and competence for serving as a rostered leader.

Deaconess Candidate Formation
Deaconess candidate formation enables a candidate to grow in the understanding of her call to diakonia and the Deaconess Community. A candidate participates in formational events with the following objectives:
1. to discern, through her experience, interactions, and prayer that her call is *diaconal* and also to life within the Deaconess Community,
2. to deepen her relationship with God through prayer, theological preparation, spiritual direction, and community life,

3. to understand the history of the diaconate from biblical times to the present, and
4. to interpret *diakonia* to others.

The Deaconess Community offers a variety of opportunities for candidates to explore both the Community and her personhood from a variety of viewpoints. Retreats, attendance at annual Deaconess Community assemblies, mentoring, and other integrative events are all opportunities for each woman to grow in relationship with the Community and her call.

Health and Wellness
The ELCA envisions a church in which those preparing for and serving in rostered leadership and their spouses and families are encouraged, supported, and motivated to grow in spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and vocational well-being.

Healthy leaders enhance their lives and the lives of others. To be prepared for the rigor of public ministry, candidates need to demonstrate and continue to develop healthy leadership qualities. Candidates who practice self-care and attend to the balance of all aspects of health enhance the church's faithful witness in the world. Candidates are expected to address any health concerns with their Candidacy Committee. Intentional efforts to improve all aspects of wellness will be more effective when supported by families, congregations, synods, seminaries, and the Deaconess Community.

Spiritual and Vocational Formation
All deaconess candidates are expected to follow a regular practice of worship, prayer, Bible study, and spiritual disciplines that sustain and support formal theological education and contextual learning. While such formation may follow a variety of patterns, a candidate is expected to engage in practices that are communal in scope and grounded in well-established traditions of the Church. A deaconess candidate will also model Christian living for others.

At Entrance, a candidate will be asked to share a plan for how she intends to nurture and sustain her faith life during candidacy. Such a plan may include such practices as spiritual direction, participation in a group discipleship experience, retreats, personal devotions and daily prayer, and regular participation in corporate worship. Plans for offering service to others, personal stewardship, vocational discernment, and healthy self-care will also be discussed.

Throughout the candidacy process Candidacy Committees inquire about a candidate's ongoing practices and habits and offer encouragement for lively engagement with all facets of Christian living.

Investiture
Upon completion of all preparatory requirements and endorsement by the Board of Directors of the Deaconess Community, each Entranced candidate publicly participates in a service of mutual affirmation known as Investiture, which admits her to the privileges and responsibilities of the Deaconess Community during the remainder of her candidacy. Investiture by the Board of the Directors of the Deaconess Community shall be reported to the Candidacy Committee.

Internship

1. Having completed her theological education requirements following Investiture, a deaconess candidate normally participates in a one-year internship with a two-fold purpose:
   a. to use and improve professional skills and
   b. to begin to function in her role as a deaconess.
2. A deaconess candidate participates in her own internship placement in consultation with the Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission of the Deaconess Community, bishops whose synods are seeking internship placements, and seminary faculty or contextual education staff (if she is attending seminary). A candidate submits a written plan for the internship prior to its implementation to the Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission for approval by the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission.
3. In preparation for internship, a deaconess candidate receives a copy of the current internship manual from the Deaconess Community. Within two weeks of beginning an internship, she prepares, in consultation with the Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission and the on-site supervisor, an internship contract/covenant to be approved by the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission.
4. The Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission reviews the internship evaluations and monthly reports. Final internship reports shall be sent to the Candidacy Committee and the Committee on Congregational and Synodical Mission.

Consecration and First Call

A deaconess candidate is Approved for consecration upon successful completion of all requirements, compliance with *Vision and Expectations* of the ELCA, and being granted Approval by both the Candidacy Committee and the Board of Directors of the Deaconess Community.

Approved deaconess candidates may participate in the churchwide assignments scheduled two times each year; however, usually they are assigned to a synod through administrative assignment.

The bishop of the synod of assignment and the deaconess candidate inform the Directing Deaconess of the candidate's receipt and acceptance of a letter of call. The Directing Deaconess will relay this information to the Board of Directors of the Deaconess Community and assist the bishop in arranging and conducting a Service of Consecration that includes the Directing Deaconess or her appointee.

Reinstatement

The process for reinstatement to the rosters of the ELCA is explained in Chapter 1 (page 20).

Diaconal Minister

Diaconal ministry is a form of rostered leadership that helps the ELCA fulfill its mission of service in the world. Diaconal Ministers are called to positions that exemplify the servant life and seek to equip and motivate others to live it. Diaconal Ministers seek in a variety of ways to empower, equip, and support the baptized people of God for participating in the mission of God in the world.

Diaconal Ministers manifest the characteristics listed below.

1. **They are Rooted in the Word of God.**
    Diaconal Ministers are committed to Christ and called to be spokespersons in the world for the gospel, the apostolic faith, and the theological emphasis of the ELCA. .
2. **They are Trained to Carry Out a Particular Service.**
    Diaconal Ministers carry out a public ministry of service and witness. With demonstrated competence and expertise in a particular discipline, diaconal ministers may serve both within and outside of congregational settings, in each case bearing responsibility for making linkages between the church and the world. Programmatic ministries within congregational settings should be marked by extension of the witness and service of the Church into the wider community.
3. **They are Committed and Prepared to Equip the Baptized for Ministry in the World and in the Church.**
    Diaconal Ministers, along with other rostered leaders, lead and equip the baptized for ministry through appropriate programmatic ministries and by assisting people in discerning and using their gifts in ministry.
4. **They Serve at the Boundaries between the Church and the World.**
    Diaconal Ministers publicly speak for needs in the world to the church and also proclaim the gospel to the world through word and action.
5. **They Exemplify a Life of Christ-like Service That Addresses All Forms of Human Need.**
    The call to diaconal ministry is a lifelong commitment that supports and complements the ministry of Word and Sacrament by focusing on ministry to the whole person. Such a "diaconal bias" provides the lens and vision for developing the diaconal mission of the church expressed among and through its members.
6. **They are Grounded in Community.**
    Diaconal Ministers need the support and shared vision of a community committed to a common calling. Grounding in a diaconal community serves as a reminder of the need to seek and build community in all ministry contexts.

Steps in Candidacy

Candidates for diaconal ministry participate fully in all steps of the candidacy process: Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval. A candidate is responsible for fulfilling all the expectations and requirements of the candidacy process.

Entrance begins a process of discernment to explore potential for rostered leadership and

readiness to begin candidacy. One year as an active member in an ELCA congregation is a prerequisite for Entrance. The Entrance process includes the Candidacy Application Form, the Congregational Registration Form, an Initial Interview (optional), and screening, including a psychological evaluation and a Background Check. The Candidacy Committee grants Entrance before an applicant continues in a process of diaconal formation and preparation. Entrance is a prerequisite for attending the Diaconal Ministry Formation Event and to beginning field experience.

In consultation with the Candidacy Committee, a candidate makes application to a seminary. Affiliation with an ELCA seminary is required as part of the Entrance process for any candidate attending a non- ELCA seminary. Through affiliation with an ELCA seminary, a candidate receives consultation and guidance regarding diaconal ministry requirements.

Endorsement encourages candidates who clearly demonstrate gifts and qualities for a diaconal ministry, and identifies areas for growth and development. Endorsement occurs at an appropriate time during the candidacy process. At least one full semester/quarter of graduate theological study and the completion of the Diaconal Ministry Formation Event are prerequisites for Endorsement. A candidate submits the Endorsement Essay to both the Candidacy Committee and the seminary. The Candidacy Committee arranges for an Endorsement interview and makes a decision. Once Endorsed, a candidate may begin field experience (see below). At Endorsement, a candidate also prepares and submits for approval a proposal for the diaconal ministry project.

Approval occurs when a candidate articulates a call to ministry and demonstrates readiness for rostered leadership in the ELCA. The Approval interview comes near the satisfactory completion of all academic and practical requirements and affirms a call to public ministry. A candidate prepares the Approval Essay, available from the ELCA website, and submits it to the Candidacy Committee. A seminary faculty from the seminary of enrollment or affiliation makes a recommendation (Form D) to the Candidacy Committee, which arranges for an Approval interview. The Committee grants Approval so that a candidate can be available for assignment and first call.

Standards

Persons Approved, consecrated, and rostered as Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA shall satisfactorily fulfill and maintain the following basic standards established in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA 7.52.11.):*

- commitment to Christ,
- acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of the ELCA,
- willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of the church,
- academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships,
- commitment to lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example of faithful service and holy living,
- receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, and

- membership in an ELCA congregation.

Diaconal Ministers must be fully prepared to meet the following criteria:
1. knowledge and understanding of the Word of God,
2. a Lutheran understanding of the gospel,
3. knowledge and understanding of the Lutheran Confessions,
4. theological reflection on issues of faith and life,
5. personal spiritual formation and ministry identity,
6. communication and planning skills necessary for effective witness, both verbally and in action,
7. specific training and skill in a specialization,
8. willingness to share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry and assist others in proclaiming God's love through word and deed,
9. encouragement of persons to discern a capacity for and calling to rostered leadership, and
10. an ability to work in partnership and serve the mission and ministry needs of the ELCA.

Academic and Practical Criteria

A candidate for diaconal ministry engages in a comprehensive program of preparation, including theological education, training in an area of specialization, formation for ministry, and field experience that includes a diaconal ministry project.

I. **Theological Education**
   Candidates complete a theological degree at the master's level. All ELCA seminaries provide such a degree, as well as-basic Lutheran studies required for diaconal ministry. Each seminary will advise its students regarding core curriculum and field education requirements. The core curriculum for diaconal ministry includes
   A. Old Testament Foundations
   B. New Testament Foundations
   C. Church History Foundations
   D. Church Doctrine/Systematic Theology
   E. Ethics
   F. Lutheran Confessions
   G. Church in Society

   Candidates attending non-ELCA seminaries must affiliate with one of four ELCA seminaries: Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Wartburg Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, or Luther Seminary. The purpose of such affiliation is for consultation and guidance regarding core curriculum requirements, Lutheran studies, and coordination of field experience, supervision, and the diaconal ministry project. The seminary of affiliation also provides a faculty recommendation (Form D) prior to Approval. An affiliated candidate pays a fee to the ELCA seminary for these services. Application for admission is necessary only if academic courses are required.

II. **Spiritual and Vocational Formation**
   All diaconal ministry candidates participate in regular worship, prayer, Bible study, and

other spiritual disciplines that sustain and support involvement in theological education and contextual learning. While formation may follow a variety of patterns, a candidate is expected to engage in practices that are communal in scope, draw on well-established traditions of the Church, and model Christian living for others.

At Entrance, a candidate will share a plan for how his or her faith life will be sustained and nurtured during candidacy. A plan may include such practices as spiritual direction, participation in a group discipleship experience, retreats, personal devotions and daily prayer, and regular participation in corporate worship. Plans for offering service to others, personal stewardship, vocational discernment, and healthy self-care will also be discussed.

Throughout the candidacy process, Candidacy Committees inquire about a candidate's ongoing practices and habits and offer encouragement for lively engagement with all facets of Christian living.

A. **Diaconal Ministry Formation Event**
A Candidacy Committee must grant Entrance before a candidate may participate in the Diaconal Ministry Formation Event. Such participation is a prerequisite for Endorsement.
Purpose: The Diaconal Ministry Formation Event often precedes seminary and provides a diaconal perspective for shaping a course of study and field experience. At the event candidates
1. study and explore the biblical, theological, historical, and ecumenical background for diaconal ministry,
2. examine current diaconal models for ministry in a variety of settings through study and field trips,
3. gain deeper understandings of Lutheran theology as it relates to all forms of ministry, call, and ecclesiology,
4. develop spiritual insights and disciplines for active ministry through worship, prayer, and group processes designed for spiritual formation, development of community, and mutual vision for diaconal ministry, and
5. explore areas for specialization and become oriented to standards, requirements, and procedures for ecclesiastical endorsements and professional certifications or licensure.
Requirements: All applicants for the Diaconal Ministry Formation Event will
1. complete the candidacy application process,
2. be granted Entrance,
3. submit a formation event application and essay,
4. pay the registration fee,
5. complete all assigned readings prior to the formation event,
6. remain in residence throughout the formation event, and
7. have a completed Background Check on file with the Candidacy Committee.
A candidate may request academic credit prior to or at the time of registration for the formation event and will receive credit and upon successful completion of the formation event and other seminary requirements.

B. **Spiritual Direction**

Through required spiritual direction, candidates seek to cultivate regular habits in spiritual practices and consistent patterns for healthy self-care. Candidates arrange for 40 hours of supervised spiritual direction, of which 10 hours are contact hours, and submit a report to the Candidacy Committee when the 40 hours have been completed.

III. Health and Wellness

The ELCA envisions a church in which those preparing for and serving in rostered leadership and their spouses and families are encouraged, supported, and motivated to grow in spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, financial, and vocational well-being.

Healthy leaders enhance both their own lives and the lives of others. To be prepared for the rigor of public ministry, candidates need to demonstrate and continue to develop healthy leadership qualities. Candidates who practice self-care and balance all aspects of their health enhance this church's faithful witness in the world. Candidates will address any health concerns with the Candidacy Committee. Intentional efforts to improve all aspects of wellness will be more effective when supported by families, congregations, synods, seminaries, and communities.

III. Specialization

The ELCA needs a variety of ministries in congregations and other settings. While forms of ministry might differ, there are common areas of specialization, focus, and need. A call might include varied responsibilities, but a Diaconal Minister focuses on at least one area of specialization during candidacy. The list below provides categories in which candidates may demonstrate competence. The list is not exhaustive but rather descriptive of areas in which a Diaconal Minister might develop expertise.

Administration	Music and Worship
Campus Ministry	Outdoor Ministry/Camping
Chaplaincy	Parish Nurse/Health
Christian Education	Public Policy/Advocacy
Community Organizing	Senior Ministries
Counseling/Social Work	Spiritual Formation/Direction
Early Childhood Administration	Teaching
Interim Ministry	Volunteer Coordination
Lay Evangelism/Mission	Worship Leadership/Preaching
Ministry in Daily Life	Youth and Family

Diaconal ministry candidates are certified, trained, or otherwise demonstrate competence in a specialization with the requisite education and practical preparation. Expertise in a specialization will be demonstrated through
1. an undergraduate or graduate degree in a specialization, a major/concentration with a particular focus, equivalent academic credentials or
2. professional licensure or certification whenever normative, or in some cases significant

recognized work experience.

A candidate declares an area of specialization by the time of Endorsement by submitting to the Candidacy Committee a written explanation of the particular diaconal focus for the specialization. The Candidacy Committee reviews and confirms the specialization. For those seeking professional certification in chaplaincy, counseling, clinical education, or specialized pastoral care, ecclesiastical endorsement is normative and expected. The latter is coordinated through the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit near the time of assignment and first call.

The Candidacy Committee is responsible for evaluating a candidate's readiness to serve as a Diaconal Minister. The committee considers formation in theological education, spirituality, contextual education, and overall readiness for rostered leadership.

IV. Field Experience

Supervised field experience is vital in the preparation and formation of diaconal ministry candidates, because diaconal ministry takes place where church and society interface. Regardless of the particular ministry setting in which Diaconal Ministers serve, they need to understand the dynamic relationships within and between congregational and societal systems and provide leadership in connecting these systems. Placements for field experience need to reflect the scope of diaconal ministries and should be appropriate and specific to their distinctive characteristics.

A. Standards

1. 700 hours of supervised field experience at the interface between church and society, of which a minimum of 200 hours are a diaconal ministry project in an ELCA congregation. (Particular areas of specialization may require additional supervised clinical training in accredited programs.)
2. The ability to articulate and demonstrate a vision and understanding of a diaconal ministry as a particular ministry of Word and Service as rooted in the Word of God and witnessing to the gospel.
3. Demonstrated skills in analyzing systemic relationships within and between congregations, societal structures, and institutions and developing strategies or offering ministries at the interface of church and society.
4. Demonstrated competence in planning and implementing a diaconal ministry project designed to engage a congregation in offering ministry in the world. The project will demonstrate an understanding of Lutheran theology and Christian vocation.

B. Field Experience Placement

Field experience should be planned to give a candidate supervision in three integral areas: understanding and working with a congregation in relationship to its context, gaining expertise in an area of specialization, and reflecting theologically and spiritually on the relationship between the ministry context and the area of specialization. Field experience may be arranged sequentially and cumulatively to achieve the required 700 hours. Candidates completing a project concurrent with seminary course work may wish to explore the possibility of independent study as part of the project.
The ELCA seminary granting a candidate's degree is responsible for supervision of the

field experience. For candidates enrolled at non-ELCA seminaries, the ELCA seminary of affiliation provides supervision of the field experience.

C. **Candidates Enrolled in Academic Degree Programs**
Seminaries may structure field experience in a variety of ways that include more than one setting. The structure for field experience is based on such factors as age, previous work experience, and particular contexts available to the seminary. Possible arrangements for supervised field experience may include

1. a full-time (30-40 hours per week) field experience in a congregation or other setting (4-6 months),
2. a part-time position (10-20 hours per week) during the academic year completed over a one- to two-year period,
3. part-time work during the school year combined with a full-time summer position, or
4. a combination of CPE and field experience (a unit of CPE may count for up to 300 hours).

D. **Candidates Who Have Completed Their Academic Degree Program**
In consultation with the Candidacy Committee, a candidate seeks the guidance of the ELCA Center for Diaconal Ministry Preparation at the Lutheran School of Theology at Gettysburg, to arrange an appropriate field experience.

If already employed in a diaconal ministry setting, a candidate may, with the guidance of the ELCA Center for Diaconal Ministry Preparation and in consultation with the Candidacy Committee, arrange to complete supervised field experience in that place, once a the Candidacy Committee has granted Endorsement. Candidates who hold a degree from an ELCA seminary may seek the guidance of that seminary's contextual education office for field education placement and supervision in consultation with the ELCA Center for Diaconal Ministry Preparation and the Candidacy Committee.

E. **The Diaconal Ministry Project**
The purpose of the diaconal ministry project is to provide a candidate with an opportunity to develop and implement a vision for engaging an ELCA congregation in the interface between societal need and Christian ministry. Through planning, executing, and evaluating the project, a candidate can demonstrate competence in the areas of

1. specialization,
2. an understanding of Lutheran theology and Christian vocation, and
3. integrating the specialization and Lutheran theology by engaging an ELCA congregation in a ministry of the baptized in the world.

A candidate develops and implements a project in consultation with the project mentor (appointed by the seminary) and a supervisor. The required 200 hours for the project include direct supervision, theological reflection, meetings with the congregational liaison committee, and planning and executing the project.

F. **Guided Reflection and Supervision**
Supervised field experiences provide opportunity for a candidate to work in an area of specialization while concurrently assigned to an ELCA congregation. There are three key

roles in the supervision of field experience.

1. **Project Mentor.** The project mentor, who is assigned by the seminary, participates in the development of a learning agreement and a diaconal ministry project proposal. The mentor provides guided theological reflection on a candidate's field experience. The mentor also provides a written evaluation and submits it to the seminary field education office and the Candidacy Committee. At the time of Approval, the mentor's evaluation will be incorporated into the Seminary Recommendation Form *(Form D)*.

2. **On-site Supervisor.** The on-site supervisor, who is also assigned by an ELCA seminary, provides administrative structure to the field experience, including a written description of responsibilities, consultation for mutual reflection on supervisory issues, ~~and~~ periodic reviews, and a written final evaluation of a candidate's competence in a designated specialization. The candidate is responsible to see that a copy of the evaluation is submitted to the seminary field education office and the Candidacy Committee. In some cases, the on-site supervisor may serve as the project mentor.

3. **Congregational Component.** While field experience may occur in a variety of settings, the diaconal ministry project must include an ELCA congregational component. A pastor of the congregation designates a congregational liaison committee to assist a candidate in planning and implementing the project. The liaison committee consists of three to five persons, including a rostered staff member and laity with a particular interest in diaconal ministry and a candidate's specialization. The committee serves as a resource to a candidate for understanding the congregational system and its context. The committee also provides assistance in identifying an appropriate project and participates with a candidate in reflecting on and evaluating the project.

Before beginning a project, a candidate submits a one-page project proposal to the pastor and the congregational liaison committee for consideration and discussion.
When the project itself has been completed and the candidate has written the project paper, the liaison committee reviews the project paper and prepares an evaluative commentary to be attached to the project mentor's evaluation.

G. The Project Paper. Upon completion of the diaconal ministry project, a candidate prepares a written paper, which includes the following:
   a. a description/analysis of the assigned congregational context,
   b. a description/analysis of the project's purpose and goals,
   c. reflection on the theological, biblical, historical, and missional underpinnings of the project's goals,
   d. a detailed description of the project and plans for its implementation,
   e. a description of how the candidate guided the congregation's implementation of the project,
   f. an evaluation of the project and its implementation, including strengths and weaknesses, and
   g. reflection on the relationship of the project to the candidate's spiritual development
   Following a written evaluation and response to the paper by the project mentor, a candidate submits the project paper to the appropriate seminary field education office with copies to the Center for Diaconal Ministry Preparation at Gettysburg and the Candidacy Committee.

Consecration and First Call

The Candidacy Committee grants Approval to a diaconal ministry candidate when a candidate has successfully completed all requirements and complies with *Vision and Expectations.* All candidates participate in the churchwide assignment process. Following assignment and the candidate's receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, the bishop of the synod where a first call is issued and accepted arranges for and conducts a service of consecration (*http://www.elca.org/resources/worship* , *under liturgy tab).*

Reinstatement

The process for reinstatement to the rosters of the ELCA is explained in Chapter 1 (page 20).

Summary of ELCA Cash and Investments

	As of	Asset Value	Policy Approved	Approving Body	Date Approved	Next Review Date	Compliance with Policy	1 yr. Fund Peformance as of 9/30/2015	1 Year Benchmark Performance as of 9/30/2015	Target Asset Allocation
Churchwide Organization										
Checking Accounts	9/30/2015	$22,732,524 [1]	Y	CC	April 4, 2014	Spring 2017	N [10]	0.75%	-	Deposit, checking and sweep accounts
Operating Investments (short-term)	9/30/2015	$967,885 [1]	Y	CC	November 7, 2014	Fall 2017	Y	0.71%	0.42%	68% Govt's and agencies/32% corp's
Investments (medium-term)	9/30/2015	$37,998,629 [1]	Y	CC	November 7, 2014	Fall 2017	Y	1.81%	1.69%	100% Govt's and agencies
EDCS - LWM	9/30/2015	$926,216 [2]	N	[2]	-	-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous Cash and Investments	9/30/2015	$4,764,762 [3]	N	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-
Endowment Funds										
Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Checking Account	9/30/2015	$1,736,924 [7]	Y	BOT-EF	October 16, 2015	Fall 2018	Y	0.75%		Checking/sweep account
Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Investments	9/30/2015	$566,790,398 [4]	Y	BOT-EF	Various	Fall 2016	Y	-0.79%	-2.28%	35% Russell 3000, 15% Custom Citigroup Investment Grade Index, 25% MSCI ACWI ex.-U.S. Investable Market Index, 10% Citigroup HIgh Yield Cash-Pay Capped BB/B, 10% of (60% Dow Jones U.S. Real Estate Securities Index/40% Dow Jones Ex-U.S. Real Estate Securities Index), and 5% Citigroup Inflation Linked Securities Index.
Portion that benefits churchwide ministries)	9/30/2015	$217,319,377	Y	BOT-EF	Various		Y			
Endowments Outside Pooled Trust (MIF Certificates)	9/30/2015	$1,240,937	Y	BOT-EF	October 1, 2011	Spring 2016	Y	N/A	-	
Endowments Outside Pooled Trust (real estate, mineral rights and other)	9/30/2015	$689,741	Y	BOT-EF	October 1, 2011	Spring 2016	Y	N/A	-	
Deferred Gift Funds										
Deferred Gift Checking Account	9/30/2015	$2,440,348 [7]	Y	CC	April 4, 2014	Spring 2017	Y	0.75%	-	Checking/sweep account
Charitable Gift Annuities-Required Reserve	9/30/2015	$59,682,355 [4]	Y	CC	November 14, 2009	N/A	Y	4.21%	N/A [8]	Fixed Income securities: 55% Gov'ts, 32% Corp's, 13% MBS
Charitable Gift Annuities-Excess Reserve	9/30/2015	$9,684,877 [4]	Y	CC	November 8, 2014	N/A	Y	-1.35%	-2.01%	Investment Grade Bonds 30.0%, High Yield Bonds 10.0%,US Equity 25.0%, International Equity 10.0%, Alternative Equity 5.0%, Inflation Indexed Bonds 10.0%, Real Assets 10%
Charitable Remainder Trusts and Pooled Income Funds	9/30/2015	$71,222,354 [5]	Y	CC	November 12, 2010	Fall 2015	Y	-3.41%	-2.06% [9]	

[1] Funds Held at Harris Bank
[2] World Hunger Funds Investment Authorized by ALC/LCA in Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society-Microfinance investment carried forward from predecessor bodies. No investment guidelines.
[3] Checking accounts and investments of regions, short-term unit event accounts
[4] Funds Held at Portico Benefit Services
[5] Funds Held at Thrivent, Wells Fargo, Merrill Lynch, Dreyfus, T. Rowe Price and real estate holdings
[6] Not used
[7] Funds Held at Harris Bank
[8] Benchmark for the required reserves are the liabilities
[9] Performance for 60% equity/40% fixed income allocation
[10] Excess cash held to take advantage of high "earnings credit" and to reduce risk of value fluctation

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ELCA Deferred Gifts Program Report
As of: 9/30/2015

Gift Activity

Charitable Gift Annuities	Gifts Goal Amount	Gifts Goal count	Gifts **Actual** Amount	**Actual** Gift Count
Non-CA	$2,919,298	102	$1,189,884	49
CA	$345,411	10	$105,000	3
Total	**$3,264,709**	**112**	**$1,294,884**	**52**

New Charitable Gift Annuities

Legend: No of gifts, amount of gifts

Bar chart values:
- 2012: $2,843,722
- 2013: $2,950,540
- 2014: $2,367,511
- 2015 (YTD): $1,294,884

X-axis: Years

New Gift Annuities By Designation

Legend: ELCA Churchwide, Other Charitable Organizations, Other ELCA Ministries, ELCA Endowments

X-axis: Years (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 (YTD))

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ELCA Deferred Gifts Program Report
As of: 9/30/2015

New Gift Annuities By Region
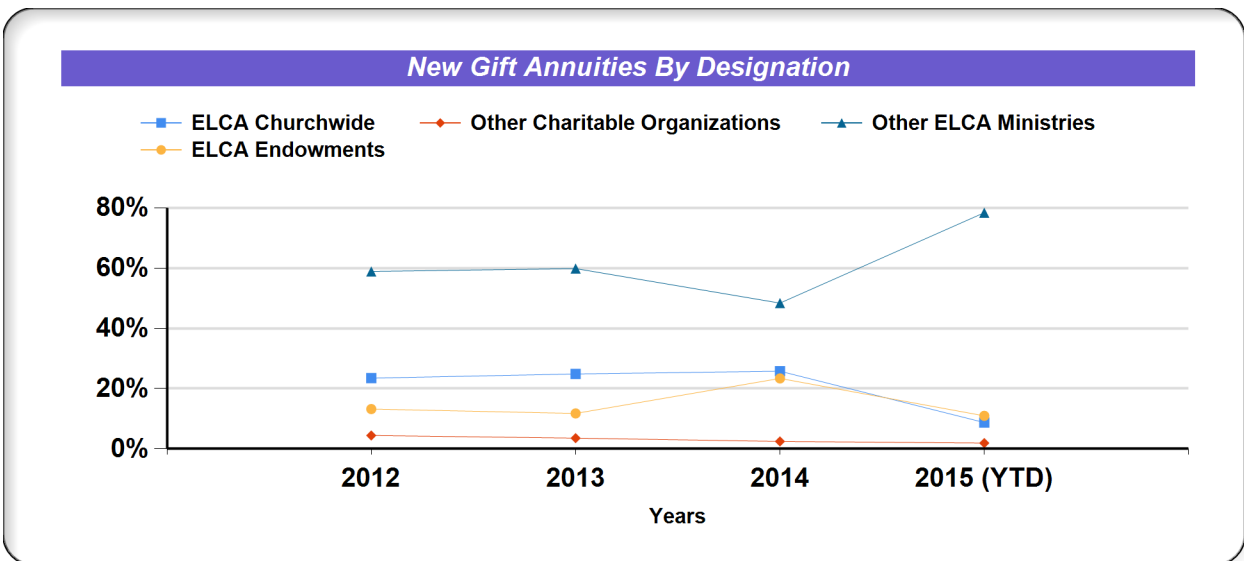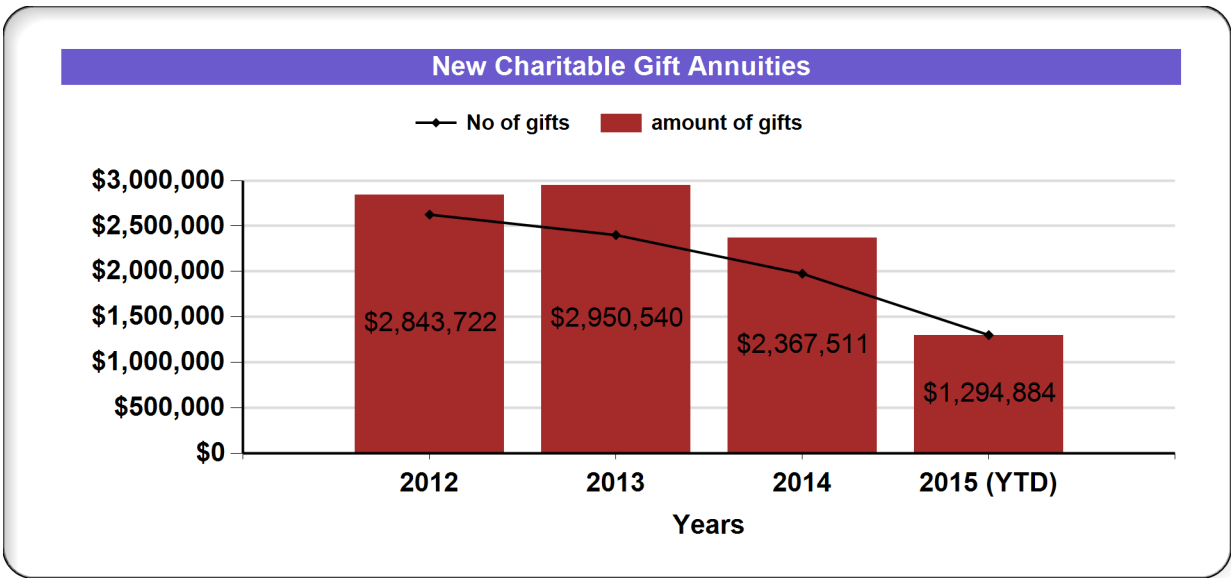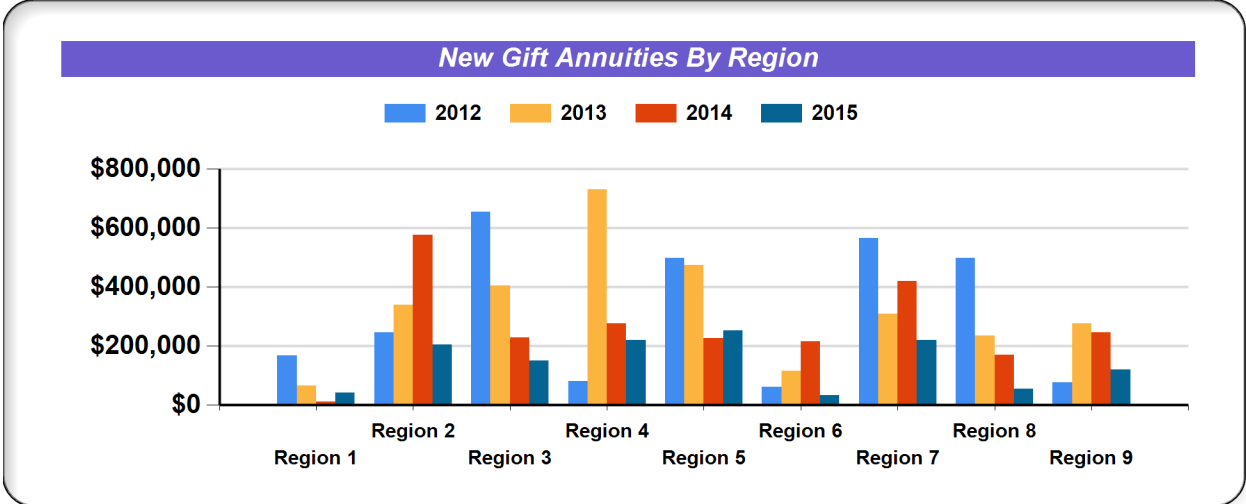
Years	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Region 9
2012	166,900.00	245,000.00	653,720.47	80,000.00	497,784.25	60,213.50	566,490.06	498,613.22	75,000.00
2013	65,000.00	340,000.00	405,000.00	731,843.77	473,858.60	115,886.00	307,555.33	235,210.00	276,185.95
2014	10,000.00	575,527.17	228,674.04	275,911.24	226,850.69	215,396.00	420,152.33	170,000.00	245,000.00
2015	41,424.97	205,000.00	149,720.13	220,000.00	251,144.58	32,594.32	220,000.00	55,000.00	120,000.00

Deferred Gift Maturities

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ELCA Deferred Gifts Program Report
As of: 9/30/2015

New Gifts to Charitable Remainder Trusts *

Legend: amount of gifts ■ / new trusts ◆
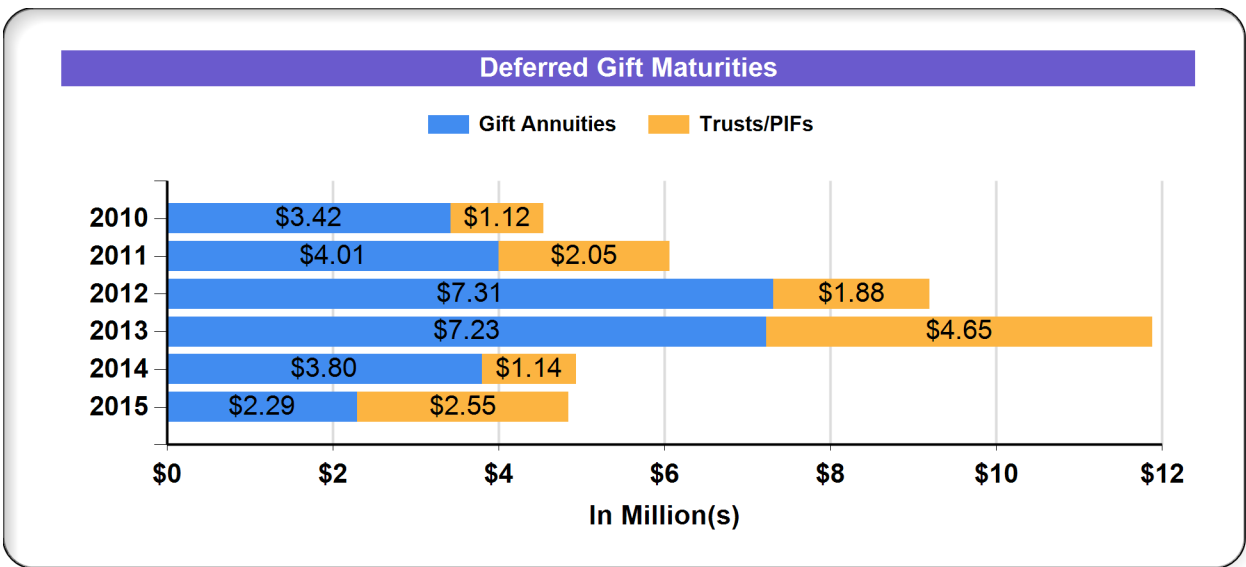
- 2012: $3,790,546
- 2013: $1,116,799
- 2014: $532,297
- 2015 (YTD): $63,435
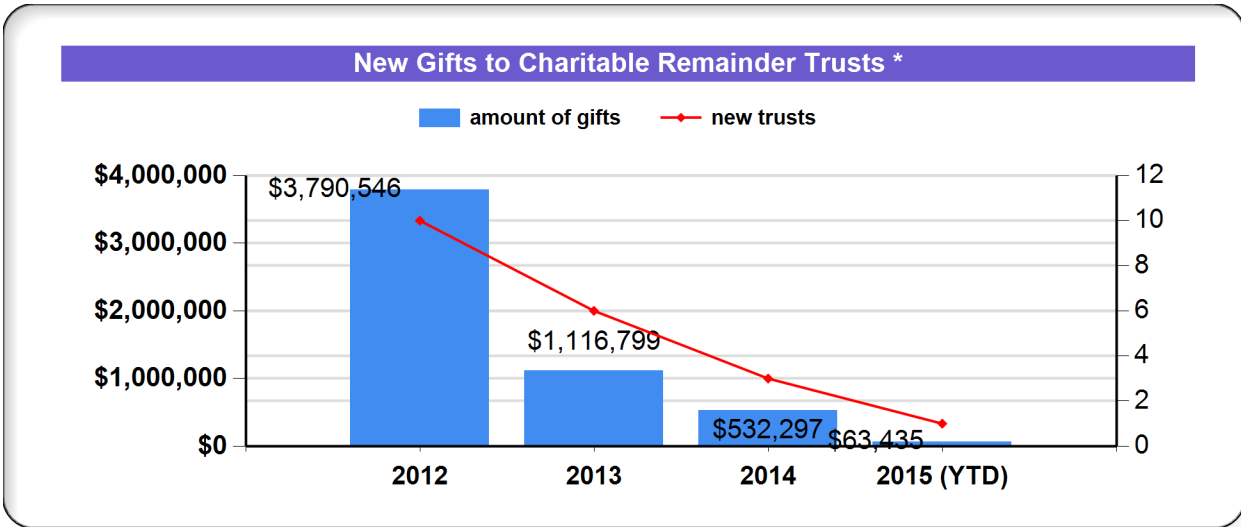
* Above does not include additions. For testamentary trusts, this number includes only the initial disbursement from the estate, with subsequent disbursements treated as additions

Investments

	2015		2014		2013	
	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool
Required Reserve Fund Balance(100% Fixed)	$56,856,061	$2,826,295	$62,087,965	$2,899,295	$64,048,454	$2,787,606
Excess Reserve Fund Balance	$8,422,040	$1,262,838	$8,660,898	$1,298,653	$9,401,931	$1,222,337

	2015		2014		2013	
Yield to Maturity (Required Reserve Fund)	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool	Non-Ca.Pool	Ca.Pool
	2.29%	1.43%	2.4%	1.54%	2.86%	2.08%

CGA CA POOL Required Reserve Cash Flow

Legend: Income ■ / Payments ■

- Q1: $33,188 / $64,656
- Q2: $22,394 / $68,172
- Q3: $33,187 / $70,868
- Q4 (Proj): $597,000 / $66,000
- Total 2015: $685,769 / $66,000

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ELCA Deferred Gifts Program Report
As of: 9/30/2015

CGA Non-Ca. Required Reserve Cash Flow

Income / Payments

	Income	Payments
Q1	$2,992,405	$1,529,593
Q2	$2,154,252	$1,571,583
Q3	$3,011,162	$1,455,151
Q4 (Proj)	$6,517,000	$1,546,000
Total 2015	$14,674,819	$6,102,327

CGA Excess Reserve Fund Performance

Social Purpose40e Fund / Balanced Benchmark

	Fund	Benchmark
Quarter	-4.65%	-4.93%
Year to Date	-2.76%	-3.57%
1 Year	-1.35%	-2.01%
3 years	5.48%	4.71%
Five Years	6.75%	6.73%
Since Inception	7.43%	7.64%

*Net of Investment Management fees. **Benchmark: 30% Russell 3000 Stock Index, 10% MSCI All Country World ex-U.S. Investable Market Index, 30% ELCA Custom Bond Index, 10% Citigroup High-Yield Cash-Pay Capped Index; 10% of(60% Dow Jones U.S. Real Estate Securities Index and 40% Dow Jones Global Ex-U.S. Real Estate Securities Index with net dividends) and 10% Citigroup U.S. Inflation-Linked Securities Index.

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ELCA Deferred Gifts Program Report
As of: 9/30/2015

Wells Fargo CRT Performance
60% Equity 40% Fixed Income

Wells Fargo CRT Performance

Legend: Fixed40 Percent 60 Percent Equity | Blended Index

Quarter: -6.06% / -5.28%
YTD: -5.33% / -3.83%
1 Year: -4.31% / -2.06%
3 Years: 3.60% / 4.99%
5 Years: 4.81% / 6.00%
Since inception: 5.06% / 5.39%
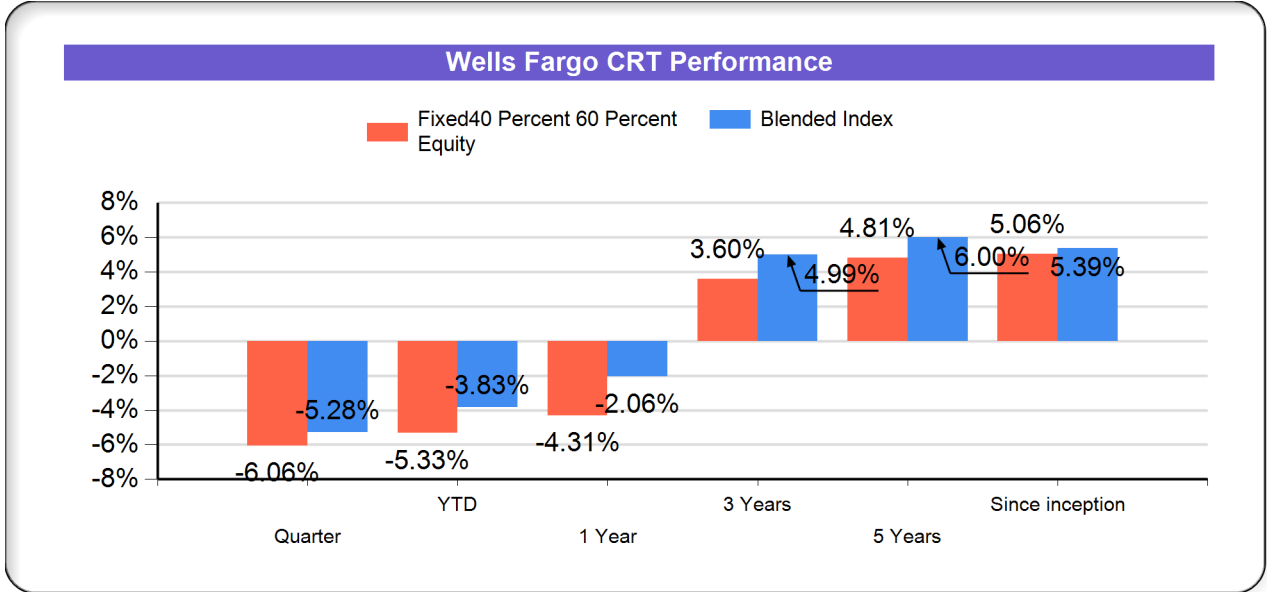
*Blended Index: 26% Intermediate Barclays Govt/Credit Index/11% MSCI EAFE Index,8.5% Russell 1000 Value Index,8.5% S&P 500 Index, 7% FTSE NAREIT All Equity REIT Index, 7% Russell Midcap Index
Approximately 75% of the CRT's are invested in the 60% equity/40% fixed income allocation.

Deferred Gifts Program Responsibility Matrix

Assigned to the Budget and Finance Committee per the Statement of Responsibilites and Authorities:	2015 Spring	2015 Fall	2016 Spring	2016 Fall	2017 Spring	2017 Fall	2018 Spring	2018 Fall	2019 Spring	2019 Fall	2020 Spring	2020 Fall
Investment Results, Strategies and Guidelines												
Receive for Information: Policy Compliance Matrix	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Review: Deferred Gift Statement of Responsibilities and Authorities			X						X			
Review: Deferred Gift Operating Cash Management Policy			X						X			
Review: CGA Risk Management Policy			X						X			
Review: CGA Investment Philosophy and Policy Statement (every 5 years or sooner, if warrented)	X	X									X	
Review: CRT and Pooled Income Fund Asset Allocation (every 3 years or sooner, if warrented)		X			X						X	
Review: CGA Investment Guidelines (every 5 years or sooner, if warrented)	X	X									X	
Review: CRT Investment Guidelines (every 5 years or sooner, if warrented)		X									X	
Review as Submitted by Investment Advisor: Investment Manager Guidelines (as applicable)												
Corporate Social Responsibility												
Receive for Information: Social Criteria List		X		X		X		X		X		X
Evaluation of Service Providers												
Evaluate: CGA Investment Advisor and Custodian (every 3 years, with an ongoing review)			X						X			
Evaluate: CRT Investment Advisor - SSGA (every 3 years, with an ongoing review)							X					
Receive for Information: Sub-Advisor Updates by Investment Advisor (as appropriate)												

REVISED 11/2015

ELCA ENDOWMENT FUND POOLED TRUST
as of September 30, 2015, with comparative totals for 2014
(unaudited)

| | 2015 | | | 2014 |
| | Number of | | | |
	Participants	Accounts	Market Value	Market Value
Funds Held for Others:				
ELCA Congregation	704	948	$ 150,986,928	$ 141,227,760
Synod	45	111	49,580,666	47,832,358
Women of the ELCA	1	48	5,683,181	6,503,816
Campus Ministry Organizations	78	102	6,256,917	6,079,870
Related Organizations	30	37	15,191,104	10,452,700
Other Lutheran Church Body	1	2	911,688	927,608
Outdoor Ministry	24	38	8,927,778	7,585,482
Social Ministry Organization	11	16	3,491,694	3,224,568
ELCA Church Organization	4	5	4,938,626	4,860,169
College or University	2	2	38,819	41,030
Seminary	1	1	520,025	549,054
Miscellaneous	3	3	259,707	262,005
Region	1	1	83,835	85,301
	905	1314	246,870,968	229,631,722
Unrestricted-Board Designated:				
Benefiting ELCA Churchwide Organization		29	28,017,653	28,437,324
Temporarily Restricted Funds:				
		219	47,318,969	50,094,773
Permanently Restricted Funds:				
		728	244,203,065	246,850,230
Total Unrestricted-Board Designated, Temporarily Restricted and Permanently Restricted		976	319,539,687	325,382,327
GRAND TOTAL - ALL ACCOUNTS		2,290	$ 566,410,655	$ 555,014,049

Office of the Treasurer
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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MEMORANDUM

To: Budget and Finance Committee

From: ELCA Staff

Date: November 3, 2015

Subject: 2016 Social Criteria List (SCL)

SUMMARY

Portico's investment staff completed its annual review and the proposed SCL was approved by their investment staff. It was approved by Portico's Trustees on October 31, 2015.

Approval of routine changes to the SCL is a responsibility delegated to Portico staff and reported as information to the Portico Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee (ICSRC). Review and approval of non-routine changes to the SCL is a responsibility of the ICSRC. Non-routine changes for the 2016 SCL include the addition of a private prison screen and expansion of the environment screen to include thermal coal companies.

The Forecast Tracking Estimate (FTE) of the proposed 2016 SCL remained below the maximum in the four public market asset classes identified by the SCL Implementation Guidelines. FTE is the primary risk measure applied to the SCL, and **according to this primary measure no exemptions to the SCL are required**. Levels for FTE currently specified in the SCL Implementation Guidelines are shown below, along with the results of the analysis of the 2016 SCL.

Asset Class	FTE Maximum	FTE Proposed 2016 SCL
US Equities	130	53
Non-US Equities	150	39
Core Bonds	40	3
High Yield Bonds	150	33

OVERVIEW
The preliminary SCL is compiled by MSCI ESG Research, Portico's social criteria consultant. MSCI ESG Research is a provider of in-depth research, ratings and analysis of the environmental, social and governance-related business practices of companies worldwide. They use this expertise to compile a customized social criteria list for Portico. Staff analyzes the list and adds privately-held gaming and tobacco companies that issue publicly traded high-yield securities. Staff then makes recommendations for a Proposed Social Criteria List that balances social objectives with investment performance objectives. The framework for evaluating the companies on the SCL is currently described in the following policy documents:

- Social Purpose Guiding Policies
- Social Criteria List Implementation Guidelines

As described in the SCL Implementation Guidelines, the Forecast Tracking Estimate (FTE) is considered the primary measure for evaluating the impact of the SCL. Secondary measures reflect components of the FTE (e.g. industry exposures and country exposure). Exemptions, if any, to the SCL are made primarily to maintain the FTE below the maximum. In some years exemptions have been made solely to manage risk in one or more of the secondary measures (e.g. industry exposure). While secondary measures do not typically dictate changes to the SCL, minimizing their impact is a secondary objective, and should be minimized to the extent which they negatively impact primary measures.

Companies on the SCL may not be considered for future investments in Social Purpose portfolios. This is different than divestment which is the immediate sale of a company to make a social or political point. Excluded companies fall into one or more of the following areas, which correspond to the ELCA's Social Criteria Investment Screens:

- Harmful Products, which addresses the Alcohol, Tobacco, Gambling, and Pornography Social Criteria Screens.

- Military Weapons Social Criteria Screen, which addresses indiscriminate military weapons, including nuclear, chemical, biological, land mines and cluster bomb weapons.

- Environmental Social Criteria Screen, which includes companies with significant and severe environmental problems. Companies are evaluated on key environmental indicators such as toxic spills and releases, energy and climate change, and water and waste management. **New for 2016, this screen also captures companies with thermal coal reserves**. In some cases (seven for 2016), companies with thermal coal reserves also have significant and severe environmental problems. **The addition of thermal coal companies is in response to the modification of the environment screen language by Church Council in November of 2014 to include certain fossil fuel companies**.

- Private Prisons Social Criteria Screen which addresses private, for-profit prisons including firms involved in prison privatization of the criminal justice screen. **This is a new screen for 2016**.

New Screening of Companies with Thermal Coal Reserves

During 2015, Portico, along with its social criteria consultant conducted research on the potential inclusion of companies with thermal coal reserves. Based on this preliminary research, staff expected the inclusion of thermal coal companies would have very little impact on overall

FTE for the final SCL. The preliminary research proved accurate, as the FTE for all asset classes, with the exception of High Yield, is the same or slightly lower for the 2016 SCL. Even though the FTE for High Yield increased noticeably, it's still well within its FTE Maximum, and while the inclusion of new thermal coal companies played a role in the increased FTE, the increased market volatility as spreads widened in the high yield space likely played a more significant role in the increased FTE.

Furthermore, even though the overall number of companies being screened increased with the expansion of the environment screen to include thermal coal companies, a number of the larger thermal coal companies were already being screened in previous years which lessened the impact of this change. Another factor which kept overall FTEs from increasing noticeably was the market capitalizations of energy companies in general have declined significantly from this time last year, so the overall impact on FTE from energy companies decreased, offsetting some of the increase from new thermal coal companies.

For additional information on this new screen, as well as the new private prison screen, see Appendix A which includes screening language and definitional/background information.

New Screening of Private Prison Companies

As foreshadowed by preliminary research, the number of companies added as a result of the new private prison screen is very small, only two companies. Furthermore, the market capitalization of these companies is modest with the largest around $3.5B and the smallest around $2.2B.

Impact of Screening on Fossil Fuel Companies

The combined impact of the core environment screening, along with the enhancement to add companies with thermal coal reserves, results in the inclusion of a significant number of fossil fuel companies on the SCL. It also reflects the intent of the ELCA environment screen to focus on companies that are the most egregious in terms of damage to human health or the environment which should resonate with those advocating for transitioning to a fossil fuel free economy.

Within US Equity, screening results in the elimination of a little over 40% of the Energy industry (of the 6.38% Russell 3000 benchmark weight, 2.59% is eliminated). Within non-U.S. equity, screening results in the elimination of a little over 30% of the Energy industry (of the 5.98% MSCI All Country World ex-US IMI benchmark weight, 1.44% is eliminated). A number of the world's largest fossil fuel companies are on the SCL. While these represent significant reductions from benchmarks, industry weighting is considered as secondary risk measure, and unlike FTE which is the primary risk measure, is not sufficient on its own to drive exemptions from the SCL.

Appendix A

Thermal Coal Reserves screen:

- This screen identifies companies with thermal coal reserves since coal is the most carbon-intensive ("dirtiest") fossil fuel
- Thermal coal or *steaming coal* is burned to fire power plants that produce steam to run turbines for generating electricity and industrial uses.
  - MSCI includes companies that report coal reserves as thermal coal, steam coal, lignite or sub-bituminous coal. If the coal type is not reported by the company and the company does not fall in the "Steel" GICS sub-industry, the reported coal reserves are considered thermal coal
- Metallurgical coal, or *coking coal,* is primarily used in the process of creating coke necessary for iron and steel-making. While both thermal coal and metallurgical coal have a high carbon content, metallurgical coal has few substitutes.
  - Companies that report coal reserves explicitly and exclusively for metallurgical or coking purpose are not included in the thermal coal reserves screen. Neither are companies where the coal type is not reported by the company, but the company falls in the "Steel" GICS sub-industry
- Additional background on coal:
  - Coal, a fossil fuel, forms when dead plant matter is converted into peat, which in turn is converted (matures) into lignite, then sub-bituminous coal, after that bituminous coal, and lastly anthracite (the hardest coal type). This involves biological and geological processes that take place over a long time period and are influenced by heat and pressure.
  - Metallurgical coal requires coal on the harder end of the spectrum such as bituminous and anthracite which have a higher heating value and contain less water than peat and lignite on the softer end of the spectrum.

Private Prisons screen:

- This screen identifies companies that derive 10% or more of total annual revenues from the operation of private prisons, jails, detention centers or correctional facilities, or from the provision of integral services (e.g. food service or health care) to these types of facilities.

November 2015

**CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY PROGRAM
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
INVESTMENT PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY STATEMENT**

1.   PURPOSE

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is an issuer of Charitable Gift Annuities (CGAs). The purpose of this Investment Philosophy and Policy Statement is to assist the ELCA in effectively supervising, monitoring and evaluating the investment management of its CGA Program.

2.   DEFINITIONS AND PHILOSOPHY

(A) Definitions

Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) – private contract between a donor and a charitable institution. The donor transfers cash or other assets to the institution in exchange for lifetime annuity payments, preserving an estimated future value to be used for charitable purposes. The amount of each annuity payment is determined by the age(s) of the annuitant(s) and the annuity rate(s) at the date of contract. The annuity payment remains fixed for the lifetime of the annuitant(s) and is backed by the full faith and credit of the charitable institution issuing the contract.

American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA) – nonprofit organization which publishes suggested charitable gift annuity rates for use by charitable institutions and their donors. The suggested rates generally assume that, upon maturity of a contract, the charity will receive a future value of approximately half of the original gift. The ELCA follows the gift annuity rates suggested by the ACGA.

Reserve – the amount received as gifts and maintained as segregated assets of the ELCA, including amounts actuarially calculated to meet annuity payments as well as amounts expected to remain for charity at the end of the contracts. In other words, the entire gift amount for each contract is placed in the reserve. Upon maturity of a contract, any remainder in the reserve for that contract is removed from the reserve and used for the purpose intended by the donor. CGA investments are segregated from all other assets of the ELCA. The reserve is held in two segregated accounts: a non-California Reserve fund and a California Reserve fund.

(B) Investment Philosophy and Principles

1. In keeping with a best practice for gift annuity program management, invest the entire gift, not just the annuity portion of the gift, for the life of the contract.

2. Maximize investment return within reasonable and prudent levels of risk.

3. Invest assets in accordance with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.

4. Invest 30 percent of the Reserve in equity securities and 70 percent in core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, and other investments to generate sufficient cash flow to service annuity payments and to maintain its purchasing power and achieve future value targets in line with growth expectations (as presupposed by the terms of the underlying gifts).

(C) Investment Objectives

1. The primary investment objective of the CGA program is to meet the ELCA's contractual obligation to its annuitants. In general, the CGA pool will be invested to maximize returns within reasonable and prudent levels of risk. Investments will be consistent with any applicable state requirements and provide sufficient liquidity to make   the periodic annuity distributions.

2. Invest a portion of the assets to provide for some growth in the principal of the reserves to potentially provide a greater remainder value at the termination of each contract, yet ensure that the required annuity payments are funded by the reserve balance of each contract.

3.   INVESTMENT POLICY

The Reserve will be invested in both equity and fixed income investments. The purpose of the equity asset class is to produce a long-term total return that will grow the real value of the principal over time. Equity investments will be diversified in order to provide reasonable assurance that no single security or class of securities will have a disproportionate impact on the overall equity portfolio. The purpose of the fixed income asset class is to provide income and reduce the volatility of the total CGA portfolio. Investments will be diversified in order to provide reasonable assurance that no single security or class of securities will have a disproportionate impact on the overall fixed income portfolio (U.S. governments excluded). Annuity payments are made on a monthly basis from the Reserve Fund.

The target asset allocation for the Reserve Fund will be:

	Allocation Range
30% Equities	25%-35%
70% Fixed income and real assets	65%-75%

Performance Objective

The benchmark shall be 15 percent of the Russell 3000 Index, 15 percent of the MSCI

All Country World ex-U.S. Investable Market Index (U.S. dollars, with net dividends), 47.5 percent of the Citigroup Custom Bond Index, 7.5 percent of the Citigroup High-Yield BB/B Cash-Pay Capped Index, 7.5 percent of the Liquid Real Asset custom benchmark, and 7.5 percent of the Citigroup U.S. 1-10 Year Inflation-Linked Securities Index.

Investment performance goals should incorporate both active risk maximum and value-added objectives. These parameters should, whenever possible, be compared to a benchmark based on an investable, low-cost, passive investment approach (e.g., for an actively managed portfolio, the benchmark should avoid unnecessary misfit levels with the portfolio manager's style).

Part II of chapter 625 of Florida statutes has specific parameters for investing a statute-defined calculated reserve and 10 percent surplus portion of each Florida annuity. These investment requirements preclude investing the calculated Florida reserve and surplus in pools or funds, similarly to the manner in which the rest of the ELCA's non-California gift annuity reserves are invested. To comply with Florida investment requirements, an amount that, at minimum, covers the Florida calculated reserve plus 10 percent (surplus) will be placed in time deposits and certificates of deposit, to comply with section 625.317 of Florida statutes

4.   RISK TOLERANCES

The ELCA recognizes that some risk must be assumed in order to achieve long-term investment objectives, and that there are uncertainties and complexities associated with investment markets. Interim fluctuations in market value and rates of return are expected within the portfolio in order to achieve long-term objectives.

5.   SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

• Investment objectives should be pursued, to the extent practicable, pursuant to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

• Investment managers should avoid investing in companies with business practices that conflict with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.

• Investment managers should also seek, to the extent practicable, investments that benefit community economic development and the environment.

• Recognize that social purpose funds have a dual objective of achieving financial goals and carrying out the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of this Church

6.   EVALUATION AND REVIEW

ELCA staff shall monitor statutory and regulatory requirements on an ongoing basis to ensure that the investment policy and guidelines of the CGA program are in compliance. In conjunction with investment managers and governing bodies, the ELCA staff shall review the investment philosophy, objectives and guidelines of the CGA Program at least every five years. The projected liability will be calculated on the actuarial data provided by OT staff, on at least an annual basis.

7.   PORTFOLIO REPORTING

ELCA staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth in the CGA program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the ELCA Church Council at least annually.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I – State Reserve and Investment Requirements

State statutes and regulations pertaining to charitable gift annuity reserve calculation and investment requirements may change from time to time. Besides staff review of statutes and regulations, among the ways the ELCA keeps abreast of current requirements is through sponsorship of the American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA)and by reviewing information from planned giving software vendors Crescendo and PG Calc.

States with legal or regulatory gift annuity reserve and/or investment requirements include Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Hawaii, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Washington. Of these states, the following either require or provide the option for investment in accordance with a "prudent investor" standard: Arkansas, Hawaii, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington.

The only states with specific statutory investment restrictions are California and Florida. Those state's requirements apply only to the assets representing annuities issued to donors residing in those states. The rest of the ELCA's gift annuity assets simply need to be managed within the overall context of the "prudent investor" standard and in accordance with the Illinois Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act.

The investment requirements for California and Florida are highly detailed, but for illustrative purposes the following table summarizes requirements related to a few key investment categories.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY PROGRAM

	California	Florida
U.S./State Bonds	Unlimited	Unlimited
Corporate Bonds	Permitted as part of limit for publicly traded securities (or subject to written consent)	Bonds of medium to lower quality limited to 13%, in addition to other limitations, e.g., no more than 10% in any one industry.
Common Stock	50% limit	Combination of common & preferred stock – and stock mutual funds – limited to 50%, plus no more than 10% in stock of any one company or fund.
Preferred Stock	Permitted only as part of limit for publicly traded securities	
Mutual Funds	Permitted as part of limit for publicly traded securities	See above plus no limit for bond funds, aside from no more than 10% in any one fund.
Real Estate	Subject to written consent.	5% limit with no more than 1% in any one property. Only first liens on mortgage loans.
Foreign Investments	Subject to written consent.	5% limit, following certain provisions.

~~August~~November 2015

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY PROGRAM OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA INVESTMENT PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY STATEMENT

1. PURPOSE

    The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is an issuer of Charitable Gift Annuities (CGAs). The purpose of this Investment Philosophy and Policy Statement is to assist the ELCA in effectively supervising, monitoring and evaluating the investment management of its CGA Program.

2. DEFINITIONS AND PHILOSOPHY

    (A) Definitions

    Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) – private contract between a donor and a charitable institution. The donor transfers cash or other assets to the institution in exchange for lifetime annuity payments, preserving an estimated future value to be used for charitable purposes. The amount of each annuity payment is determined by the age(s) of the annuitant(s) and the annuity rate(s) at the date of contract. The annuity payment remains fixed for the lifetime of the annuitant(s) and is backed by the full faith and credit of the charitable institution issuing the contract.

    American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA) – nonprofit organization which publishes suggested charitable gift annuity rates for use by charitable institutions and their donors. The suggested rates generally assume that, upon maturity of a contract, the charity will receive a future value of approximately half of the original gift. The ELCA follows the gift annuity rates suggested by the ACGA.

    Reserve – the amount received as gifts and maintained as segregated assets of the ELCA, including amounts actuarially calculated to meet annuity payments as well as amounts expected to remain for charity at the end of the contracts. In other words, the entire gift amount for each contract is placed in the reserve. Upon maturity of a contract, any remainder in the reserve for that contract is removed from the reserve and used for the purpose intended by the donor. CGA investments are segregated from all other assets of the ELCA. The reserve is held in two segregated accounts: a Non California Reserve fund and a California Reserve fund.

    (B) Investment Philosophy and Principles

    1. In keeping with a best practice for gift annuity program management, invest the entire gift not just the annuity portion of the gift, for the life of the contract.

2. Maximize investment return within reasonable and prudent levels of risk.

3. Invest assets in accordance with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.

4. Invest 30% of the Reserve in equity securities and 70% in core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, and other investments to generate sufficient cash flow to service annuity payments and to maintain its purchasing power and achieve future value targets in line with growth expectations (as presupposed by the terms of the underlying gifts).

(C) Investment Objectives

1. The primary investment objective of the CGA program is to meet the ELCA's contractual obligation to its annuitants. In general, the CGA pool will be invested to maximize returns within reasonable and prudent levels of risk. Investments will be consistent with any applicable state requirements and provide sufficient liquidity to make the periodic annuity distributions.

2. Invest a portion of the assets to provide for some growth in the principal of the reserves to potentially provide a greater remainder value at the termination of each contract, yet ensure that the required annuity payments are funded by the reserve balance of each contract.

3. INVESTMENT POLICY

The Reserve will be invested in both equity and fixed income investments.   The purpose of the equity asset class is to produce a long-term total return that will grow the real value of the principal over time. Equity investments will be diversified in order to provide reasonable assurance that no single security or class of securities will have a disproportionate impact on the overall equity portfolio. The purpose of the fixed income asset class is to provide income and reduce the volatility of the total CGA portfolio. Investments will be diversified in order to provide reasonable assurance that no single security or class of securities will have a disproportionate impact on the overall fixed income portfolio (U.S. governments excluded). Annuity payments are made on a monthly basis from the Reserve Fund.

The target asset allocation for the Reserve Fund will be:

	Allocation Range
30% Equities	25%-35%
70% Fixed income and real assets	65%-75%

Performance Objective

The benchmark shall be 15 percent of the Russell 3000 Index, 15 percent of the MSCI All

Country World ex-U.S. Investable Market Index (U.S. dollars, with net dividends), 47.5 percent of the Citigroup Custom Bond Index, 7.5 percent of the Citigroup High-Yield BB/B Cash-Pay Capped Index, 7.5 percent of the Liquid Real Asset custom benchmark, and 7.5 percent of the Citigroup U.S. 1-10 Year Inflation-Linked Securities Index.

Investment performance goals should incorporate both active risk maximum and value-added objectives. These parameters should, whenever possible, be compared to a benchmark based on an investable, low-cost, passive investment approach (e.g., for an actively managed portfolio, the benchmark should avoid unnecessary misfit levels with the portfolio manager's s t y l e).

Part II of chapter 625 of Florida statutes has specific parameters for investing a statute-defined calculated reserve and 10% surplus portion of each Florida annuity. These investment requirements preclude investing the calculated Florida reserve and surplus in pools or funds, similarly to the manner in which the rest of the ELCA's non-California gift annuity reserves are invested. To comply with Florida investment requirements, an amount that, at minimum, covers the Florida calculated reserve plus 10% (surplus) will be placed in time deposits and certificates of deposit[BW1] , to comply with section 625.317 of Florida statutes.

4.   RISK TOLERANCES

The ELCA recognizes that some risk must be assumed in order to achieve long-term investment objectives, and that there are uncertainties and complexities associated with investment markets. Interim fluctuations in market value and rates of return are expected within the portfolio in order to achieve long-term objectives.

5.   SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

- Investment objectives should be pursued, to the extent practicable, pursuant to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

- Investment managers should avoid investing in companies with business practices that conflict with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.

- Investment managers should also seek, to the extent practicable, investments that benefit community economic development and the environment.

- Recognize that social purpose funds have a dual objective of achieving financial goals and carrying out the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of this Church

6.   EVALUATION AND REVIEW

ELCA staff shall monitor statutory and regulatory requirements on an ongoing basis to

ensure that the investment policy and guidelines of the CGA program are in compliance. In conjunction with investment managers and governing bodies, the ELCA staff shall review the investment philosophy, objectives and guidelines of the CGA Program at least every five years. The projected liability will be calculated on the actuarial data provided by OT staff, on at least an annual basis.

7.   PORTFOLIO REPORTING

ELCA staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth in the CGA program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the ELCA Church Council at least annually.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I – State Reserve and Investment Requirements

State statutes and regulations pertaining to charitable gift annuity reserve calculation and investment requirements may change from time to time. Besides staff review of statutes and regulations, among the ways the ELCA keeps abreast of current requirements is through sponsorship of the American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA)and by reviewing information from planned giving software vendors Crescendo and PG Calc.

States with legal or regulatory gift annuity reserve and/or investment requirements include Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Hawaii, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Washington. Of these states, the following either require or provide the option for investment in accordance with a "prudent investor" standard: Arkansas, Hawaii, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington.

The only states with specific statutory investment restrictions are California and Florida. Those state's requirements apply only to the assets representing annuities issued to donors

residing in those states.   The rest of the ELCA's gift annuity assets simply need to be managed within the overall context of the "prudent investor" standard and in accordance with the Illinois Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act.

The investment requirements for California and Florida are highly detailed, but for illustrative purposes the following table summarizes requirements related to a few key investment categories.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY PROGRAM

	California	Florida
U.S./State Bonds	Unlimited	Unlimited

~~August~~November 2015

Corporate Bonds	Permitted as part of limit for publicly traded securities (or subject to written consent)	Bonds of medium to lower quality limited to 13%, in addition to other limitations, e.g., no more than 10% in any one industry.
Common Stock	50% limit	Combination of common & preferred stock – and stock mutual funds – limited to 50%, plus no more than 10% in stock of any one company or fund.
Preferred Stock	Permitted only as part of limit for publicly traded securities	
Mutual Funds	Permitted as part of limit for publicly traded securities	See above plus no limit for bond funds, aside from no more than 10% in any one fund.
Real Estate	Subject to written consent.	5% limit with no more than 1% in any one property. Only first liens on mortgage loans.
Foreign Investments	Subject to written consent.	5% limit, following certain provisions.

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
RESERVE FUND
(PORTICO'S ELCA SOCIAL PURPOSE 40E BALANCED FUND)

1. INVESTMENT POLICY

(A) Investment Objective

The dual investment objectives of the Fund are to attain a superior long-term, risk-adjusted rate of return prudently achievable from a portfolio of stock, core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, and other investments, and carry out the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of this Church.

The Fund will seek to generate rates of return moderately in excess of the rate of inflation over longer time periods, with a long-term goal of growing the purchasing power of participants in the Fund.

All investments will be subject to the Social Purpose Guiding Policies.

(B) Performance Objective

The benchmark shall be 20 percent of the Russell 3000 Index, 20 percent of the MSCI All Country World ex-U.S. Investable Market Index (U.S. dollars, with net dividends), 30 percent of the Citigroup Custom Bond Index, 10 percent of the Citigroup High-Yield BB/B Cash-Pay Capped Index, 10 percent of Liquid Real Asset custom benchmark, and 10 percent of the Citigroup U.S. 1-10 Year Inflation-Linked Securities Index.

The fund is only to use active management when expectations and confidence levels in the added value (after all expenses) are sufficiently attractive on a risk-adjusted basis. Use passive management as a default.

Active risk is the annualized standard deviation of value-added due to active portfolio management. If active management is used the target active risk policy for the fund (excluding any Social Impact First (SIF) allocation) shall be up to 180 basis points, based on a long-term, typical market environment. During shorter-term, atypical market environments, active risk may be expected to rise and to exceed the policy maximum of 180 basis points. Measurement of active risk for purpose of this policy is:

   - Projected active risk on an annualized basis (if measurable), and
   - Rolling five-year annualized historical active risk.

Information ratio is a measure of value-added net of investment expenses divided by active risk. An information ratio should be compared to an appropriate passive alternative (e.g., a passively managed benchmark net of investment expenses). For active management to be considered, there

should be high confidence that the information ratio over a five-year horizon will be .20 or higher (excluding any SIF allocation).

(C) Special Constraints and Considerations

- Social Criteria- Portico Benefit Services will approve and provide to the portfolio managers a specified set of social criteria lists which will impact the universe of securities available for investment. The securities of companies on these lists will not be eligible for new or additional investment. The portfolio managers will be allowed to divest, during the normal course of portfolio management activities, any securities from the portfolios in which the issuing companies are added to the social criteria lists as a result of revisions. Social criteria lists will not be applied to the universe of securities available for investment by the manager in commingled investment vehicles. The Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee may, in addition, approve particular investment strategies which are expected to make a positive social impact

- Social Impact First (SIF) Investments – the fund may include investments in attractive opportunities for furthering the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of the Church, even if these investments have a less efficient risk/return profile.

- Tax Status - Earnings in the Fund are exempt from taxation. Therefore tax considerations are not a constraint on portfolio management.

- Liquidity Needs – Moderate liquidity levels will be necessary in the Fund. The Fund will adhere to the parameters of the Illiquid Investments Policy of Portico Benefit Services.

- Cash Flow Characteristics – Moderate cash flows into and out of the Fund are expected to occur regularly, and at times could be significant, since participants may transfer funds on a daily basis.

- Trading - There are no requirements for, or restrictions against, realization of net investment gains or losses during any accounting period. Transactions shall be efficiently executed at competitive costs.

2. **INVESTMENT GUIDELINES**

These investment guidelines apply at the time of purchase.

(A) Strategic Asset Allocation

75% of the CGA Reserve Fund will be invested in the SP 40e Fund.

The Fund will be invested in stocks, core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, money-market, and other investments. The maximum allocation to SIF investments is 10%. While there is no Target Allocation for SIF, any allocation to SIF will be offset by a reduction in one or more corresponding major asset categories below.The maximum position allowed in money-market investments is 10 percent. The total Fund will invest in major asset categories as follows:

	Target Allocation
US stocks	17.5%
Non-US stocks	17.5%
Alternative equities	5%
Core fixed income	30%
High yield	10%
Liquid Real Assets	7.5%
Illiquid Real Assets	2.5%
Inflation indexed bonds	10%

Investments and associated rebalancing activities shall be made consistent with the Asset Allocation Strategy Statement.

(B) Types of Securities

(1) The stock components will be invested in diversified portfolios of common stocks that are listed on national securities exchanges. It may also invest in stocks that are traded over-the-counter and in other equity-related securities. The stock component may also invest in non-U.S. stocks or equity-related securities and in less liquid non-traditional alternative equity investments which may be in the form of equity or debt, public or private, instruments. Investments made shall be consistent with the Equity Strategy Statement.

(2) The core fixed income component will be invested in diversified portfolios of publicly-traded fixed income securities. Fixed-income securities of all kinds, including foreign securities and Rule 144A securities, are eligible as long as the borrowers meet the Fund's credit quality standards. Investments may be made in community development fixed income obligations and certificates of deposit; it is anticipated that most of these investments will be private placements; such investments shall be at market rates and meet the Fund's credit quality standards. Investments made shall be consistent with the Fixed Income Strategy Statement.

(3) The real asset component will be invested in diversified portfolios, with potential exposure to core and non-core commercial real estate (office buildings, retail, and industrial properties) and natural resources (timber, oil & gas, etc.). Investments may be relatively liquid (open-end funds, REITs) or illiquid (closed-end funds and limited partnerships). Investments made shall be consistent with the Real Asset Strategy Statement.

(4) The high yield component will be invested in diversified portfolios consisting primarily of instruments rated below the equivalent of Baa/BBB. These instruments may be publicly traded or privately placed. Investments made shall be consistent with the High Yield Strategy Statement.

(5) Money market investments are permitted subject to the limitations noted above.

(6) Social Impact First (SIF) investments are permitted subject to the limitations in the Strategic Asset Allocation section. Because SIF investments are opportunistic in nature, there are no asset class targets or ranges for SIF. Investments should be made consistent with the SIF Strategy Statement.

(7) The inflation indexed bond component will be invested in inflation-indexed obligations of the U.S. Treasury and government sponsored enterprises. Investments made shall be consistent with the Inflation Indexed Bond Strategy Statement.

(8) The Fund may also utilize financial futures and options to assist in controlling risk and enhancing portfolio values in a manner that is prudent and intended to further the purposes of the Fund. Accounts, including margin accounts, may be established with securities dealers to implement such commodity positions. Investments may not be made so as to leverage the total size of the Fund.

(9) Investments shall not be made in real property or other investment vehicles of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its related agencies.

(10) Except for the allocation to alternative equity and private market partnership investments, the Fund may not:

- Invest for the purpose of exercising control of management.
- Invest in commodities or commodity contracts, except for financial futures and options.
- Sell uncovered call options or sell put options.
- Purchase securities on margin.
- Sell securities short.

(C) Investment Strategy

The managers shall provide written notification to Portico's investment staff regarding any significant changes in investment philosophy, style, or strategy.

(D) Diversification and Concentration

The Fund's investments will be appropriately distributed to provide prudent diversification and limit undue concentration of portfolio positions.

(1) Stock components - The maximum holding in an individual issue shall be 5 percent of the stock components, based on market valuation at the time of purchase.

(2) Core fixed income component - The minimum quality rating of an individual holding shall be a BBB rating (except for community development bond investments) at the time of purchase. No more than 25 percent of the core fixed income component shall be invested in securities rated BBB or lower at the time of purchase. At the time of acquisition, the market value (based on the most recent pricing information) of the aggregated holdings in an individual issuer (as represented by its senior unsecured debt) will be limited according to quality rating as follows (as shown by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and Standard & Poor's Corporation ratings):

U.S. Government Bonds	No Limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No Limit
U.S. Government Agency Debentures	10% of Bond Assets
Mortgage-backed Securities	5% of Bond Assets
Guaranteed by U.S. Government Agencies	per tranche or pool
Aaa/AAA rated Securities	5% of Bond Assets

Aa/AA rated Securities	3% of Bond Assets
A/A rated Securities	2% of Bond Assets
Baa/BBB rated Securities	1% of Bond Assets

(3) High yield component-The investments will be appropriately distributed to provide for prudent diversification. The minimum overall credit quality rating shall be the equivalent of single B-. Portfolio market value of a holding in an individual issuer at the time of purchase may not exceed the following limits:

U.S. Government Bonds		No limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No limit	
Securities rated triple B or above		5%
Double B rated securities		4%
Single B rated securities	3%	
Unrated securities		3%
Securities split rated B	2%	
Securities rated CCC or below	1%	

(5) Inflation-indexed bond component—the minimum overall credit quality level shall be that of the benchmark. Individual holdings are limited to U.S. Treasury Inflation Protected Securities and other U.S. Treasury securities.

(6) Real asset components- The investments will be appropriately distributed to provide for prudent diversification. In portfolios of publicly-traded securities, at the time of purchase, the maximum holding in an individual issuer shall be 10 percent of the portfolio market value. Diversification and concentration parameters will be consistent with the Real Asset Strategy Statement.

(7) Except for alternative equity, private real asset investments, and Social Impact First (SIF) investments, the Fund should hold no more than 5 percent of any class of securities of any one issuer except the U.S. Government and its agencies.

3. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

(A) Policy and Guidelines Review

The I-CSRC shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least annually. Given changing economic and capital market conditions, an in-depth evaluation of how existing guidelines are affecting the Fund's ability to meet policy objectives is warranted at least every three years.

(B) Total fund performance should be evaluated at multiple levels. (Evaluations shall be made net of fees and expenses.)

Performance evaluations shall be in accordance with the Equity, Fixed Income, High Yield, Real Asset, Inflation Indexed Bond, Social Impact First, and Asset Allocation Strategy Statements.
• Performance reports should clearly attribute performance to the relevant decisions (e.g., distinguish between returns attributable to market action, investment policy decisions, other I-CSRC decisions, and active manager decisions.)

(C) Individual manager performance evaluation should be based on the specific objectives of the individual manager and be consistent with the Manager Monitoring and Evaluation Program.

The ELCA staff shall review the investment guidelines of the CGA Program at least every five years, or sooner if warranted.

ELCA staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth in the CGA program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the ELCA Church Council at least annually.

(D) Risk Measures and Controls

• Maintain risk exposures of the various asset class components of the Fund at levels similar to the overall asset classes' markets respectively. Allow prudent deviations from asset class targets as market conditions warrant, and be consistent with the asset class rebalancing and short-term deviation policies outlined in Portico's Asset Allocation Strategy Statement.

• A clear set of risk measures and controls for both the total Fund and its asset class components will be used for monitoring the risk exposures of the Fund

• Over time the level of market risk in the asset class pools should be comparable to the level of market risk in the benchmarks.

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
~~EXCESS~~ RESERVE FUND
(PORTICO'S ELCA SOCIAL PURPOSE 40E BALANCED FUND)

1. **INVESTMENT POLICY**

   (A) Investment Objective

   The dual investment objectives of the Fund are to attain a superior long-term, risk-adjusted rate of return prudently achievable from a portfolio of stock, core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, and other investments, and carry out the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of this Church.

   The Fund will seek to generate rates of return moderately in excess of the rate of inflation over longer time periods, with a long-term goal of growing the purchasing power of participants in the Fund.

   All investments will be subject to the Social Purpose Guiding Policies.

   (B) Performance Objective

   The benchmark shall be 20 percent of the Russell 3000 Index, 20 percent of the MSCI All Country World ex-U.S. Investable Market Index (U.S. dollars, with net dividends), 30 percent of the Citigroup Custom Bond Index, 10 percent of the Citigroup High-Yield BB/B Cash-Pay Capped Index, 10 percent of Liquid Real Asset custom benchmark ~~(60% Dow Jones Wilshire Real Estate Securities Index/40% Dow Jones Wilshire ex U.S. Real Estate Securities Index)~~, and 10 percent of the Citigroup U.S. 1-10 Year Inflation-Linked Securities Index.

   The fund is only to use active management when expectations and confidence levels in the added value (after all expenses) are sufficiently attractive on a risk-adjusted basis. Use passive management as a default.

   Active risk is the annualized standard deviation of value-added due to active portfolio management. If active management is used the target active risk policy for the fund (excluding any Social Impact First (SIF) allocation) shall be up to 180 basis points, based on a long-term, typical market environment. During shorter-term, atypical market environments, active risk may be expected to rise and to exceed the policy maximum of 180 basis points. Measurement of active risk for purpose of this policy is:

   - Projected active risk on an annualized basis (if measurable), and

- Rolling five-year annualized historical active risk.

Information ratio is a measure of value-added net of investment expenses divided by active risk. An information ratio should be compared to an appropriate passive alternative (e.g., a passively managed benchmark net of investment expenses). For active management to be considered, there should be high confidence that the information ratio over a five-year horizon will be .20 or higher (excluding any SIF allocation).

(C) Special Constraints and Considerations

- Social Criteria- Portico Benefit Services will approve and provide to the portfolio managers a specified set of social criteria lists which will impact the universe of securities available for investment. The securities of companies on these lists will not be eligible for new or additional investment. The portfolio managers will be allowed to divest, during the normal course of portfolio management activities, any securities from the portfolios in which the issuing companies are added to the social criteria lists as a result of revisions. Social criteria lists will not be applied to the universe of securities available for investment by the manager in commingled investment vehicles. The Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee may, in addition, approve particular investment strategies which are expected to make a positive social impact

- **Social Impact First (SIF) Investments – the fund may include investments in attractive opportunities for furthering the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of the Church, even if these investments have a less efficient risk/return profile.**

- Tax Status - Earnings in the Fund are exempt from taxation. Therefore tax considerations are not a constraint on portfolio management.

- Liquidity Needs – Moderate liquidity levels will be necessary in the Fund. The Fund will adhere to the parameters of the Illiquid Investments Policy of Portico Benefit Services.

- Cash Flow Characteristics – Moderate cash flows into and out of the Fund are expected to occur regularly, and at times could be significant, since ELCA Retirement Plan participants may transfer funds on a daily basis.

- Trading - There are no requirements for, or restrictions against, realization of net investment gains or losses during any accounting period. Transactions shall be efficiently executed at competitive costs.

2. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

(A) Strategic Asset Allocation

These investment guidelines apply at the time of purchase.

75% of the CGA Reserve Fund will be invested in the SP 40e Fund.

The Fund will be invested in stocks, core fixed income, high yield, real asset, inflation-indexed bond, money-market, and other investments. The maximum allocation to SIF investments is 10%. While there is no Target Allocation for SIF, any allocation to SIF will be offset by a reduction in one or more corresponding major asset categories below. The maximum position allowed in money-market investments is 10%. The total Fund will invest in major asset categories as follows:

	Target Allocation	~~Allocation Range~~
US stocks	17.5%	~~12.5% to 22.5%~~
Non-US stocks	17.5%	~~12.5% to 22.5%~~
Alternative equities	5%	~~0% to 10%~~
Core fixed income	30%	~~25% to 35%~~
High yield	10%	~~5% to 15%~~
Liquid Real Assets	~~10~~7.5%	~~5% to 15%~~
Illiquid Real Assets	2.5%	
Inflation indexed bonds	10%	~~5% to 15%~~

Investments and associated rebalancing activities shall be made~~made shall be~~ consistent with the Asset Allocation Strategy Statement.

(B) Types of Securities

(1) The stock components will be invested in diversified portfolios of common stocks that are listed on national securities exchanges. It may also invest in stocks that are traded over-the-counter and in other equity-related securities. The stock component may also invest in non-U.S. stocks or equity-related securities and in less liquid non-traditional alternative equity investments which may be in the form of equity or debt, public or private, instruments. Investments made shall be consistent with the ~~relevant~~ Equity Strategy Statement.

(2) The core fixed income component will be invested in diversified portfolios of publicly-traded fixed income securities. Fixed-income securities of all kinds, including foreign securities and Rule 144A securities, are eligible as long as the borrowers meet the Fund's credit quality standards. Investments may be made in community development fixed income obligations and certificates of deposit; it is anticipated that most of these investments will be private placements; such investments shall be at market rates and meet the Fund's credit quality standards. Investments made shall be consistent with the Fixed Income Strategy Statement.

(3) The real asset component will be invested in diversified portfolios, with potential exposure to core and non-core commercial real estate (office buildings, retail, and

industrial properties) and natural resources (timber, oil & gas, etc.). Investments may be relatively liquid (open-end funds, REITs) or illiquid (closed-end funds and limited partnerships). Investments made shall be consistent with the Real Asset Strategy Statement.

(4) The high yield component will be invested in diversified portfolios consisting primarily of instruments rated below the equivalent of Baa/BBB. These instruments may be publicly traded or privately placed. Investments made shall be consistent with the High Yield Strategy Statement.

(5) Money market investments are permitted subject to the limitations noted above.

(6) Social Impact First (SIF) investments are permitted subject to the limitations in the Strategic Asset Allocation section. Because SIF investments are opportunistic in nature, there are no asset class targets or ranges for SIF. Investments should be made consistent with the SIF Strategy Statement.
~~(4)~~

(5) The inflation indexed bond component will be invested in inflation-indexed obligations of the U.S. Treasury and government sponsored enterprises. Investments made shall be consistent with the Inflation Indexed Bond Strategy Statement.

(6) The Fund may also utilize financial futures and options to assist in controlling risk and enhancing portfolio values in a manner that is prudent and intended to further the purposes of the Fund. Accounts, including margin accounts, may be established with securities dealers to implement such commodity positions. Investments may not be made so as to leverage the total size of the Fund.

(7) Investments shall not be made in real property or other investment vehicles of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its related agencies.

(8) Except for the allocation to alternative equity and private market partnership investments, the Fund may not:

• Invest for the purpose of exercising control of management.

• Invest in commodities or commodity contracts, except for financial futures and options.

• Sell uncovered call options or sell put options.

• Purchase securities on margin.

• Sell securities short.

(C) Investment Strategy ~~Changes~~

The Mmanagers shall provide written notification to Portico's investment staff regarding any significant changes in investment philosophy, style, or strategy.

(D) Diversification and Concentration

The Fund's investments will be appropriately distributed to provide prudent diversification and limit undue concentration of portfolio positions.

(1) Stock components - The maximum holding in an individual issue shall be 5% of the stock components, based on market valuation at the time of purchase.

(2) Core fixed income component - The minimum quality rating of an individual holding shall be a BBB rating (except for community development bond investments) at the time of purchase. No more than 25% of the core fixed income component shall be invested in securities rated BBB or lower at the time of purchase. At the time of acquisition, the market value (based on the most recent pricing information) of the aggregated holdings in an individual issuer (as represented by its senior unsecured debt) will be limited according to quality rating as follows (as shown by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and Standard & Poor's Corporation ratings):

U.S. Government Bonds	No Limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No Limit
U.S. Government Agency Debentures	10% of Bond Assets
Mortgage-backed Securities	5% of Bond Assets
Guaranteed by U.S. Government Agencies	per tranche or pool
Aaa/AAA rated Securities	5% of Bond Assets
Aa/AA rated Securities	3% of Bond Assets
A/A rated Securities	2% of Bond Assets
Baa/BBB rated Securities	1% of Bond Assets

(2) (3)High yield component-The investments will be appropriately distributed to provide for prudent diversification. The minimum overall credit quality rating shall be the equivalent of single B.

Guidelines for active managers may allow for tactical allocations to the following high yield investments:

- Bank loans: Up to 20% at time of purchase
- CCC/below-rated securities: Up to 10% at time of purchase
- Other high yield: Up to 15% at time of purchase

Examples of other high yield are non-U.S. developed and emerging market debt (fully hedged to U.S. dollars); deferred-pay high yield bonds; high yield securities with equity components (bonds with warrants attached; preferred stocks; high yield convertible bonds

(4) Portfolio market value of a holding in an individual issuer at the time of purchase may not exceed the following limits:

U.S. Government Bonds	No limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No limit
Securities rated triple B or above	5%
Double B rated securities	4%
Single B rated securities	3%
Unrated securities	3%
Securities split rated B	2%
Securities rated CCC or below	1%

(54) Inflation-indexed bond component—the minimum overall credit quality level shall be that of the benchmark. Individual holdings are limited to U.S. Treasury Inflation Protected Securities and other U.S. Treasury securities.

(65) Real asset components- The investments will be appropriately distributed to provide for prudent diversification. In portfolios of publicly-traded securities, at the time of purchase, the maximum holding in an individual issuer shall be 10% of the portfolio market value. Diversification and concentration parameters will be consistent with the Real Asset Strategy Statement.

(76) Except for alternative equity, and private real asset investments, and Social Impact First (SIF) investments, the Fund should hold no more than 5% of any class of securities of any one issuer except the U.S. Government and its agencies.

3. **EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

(A) **Policy and Guidelines Review**

The I-CSRC shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least annually. Given changing economic and capital market conditions, an in-depth evaluation of how existing guidelines are affecting the Fund's ability to meet policy objectives is warranted at least every five three years.

(B) **Total fund performance should be evaluated at multiple levels. (Evaluations shall be made net of fees and expenses.)**

Performance evaluations shall be in accordance with the Equity, Fixed Income, High Yield, Real Asset, Inflation Indexed Bond, Social Impact First, and Asset Allocation Strategy Statements.
- Performance reports should clearly attribute performance to the relevant decisions (e.g. distinguish between returns attributable to market action, investment policy decisions, other I-CSRC decisions, and active manager decisions.)

(C) Individual manager performance evaluation should be based on the specific objectives of the individual manager and be consistent with the Manager Monitoring and Evaluation Program.

The ELCA staff shall review the investment guidelines of the CGA Program at least every five years, or sooner if warranted.

ELCA staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth in the CGA program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the ELCA Church Council at least annually.

(D) Risk Measures and Controls

- Maintain risk exposures of the various asset class components of the Fund at levels similar to the overall asset classes' markets respectively. Allow prudent deviations from asset class targets as market conditions warrant, and be consistent with the asset class rebalancing and short-term deviation policies outlined in Portico's Asset Allocation Strategy Statement.

- A clear set of risk measures and controls for both the total Fund and its asset class components will be used for monitoring the risk exposures of the Fund

- Over time the level of market risk in the asset class pools should be comparable to the level of market risk in the benchmarks.

(E) Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBTI)

Investments will be evaluated on the total expected net return for prospective investment taking[BW1] into account the impact of any UBTI, foreign taxes, or other such expenses and will seek mitigate UBTI where appropriate.

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INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

RESERVE FUND (PORTICO'S SOCIAL PURPOSE BOND FUND)

INVESTMENT POLICY

(A) Investment Objective

The dual investment objectives of the Fund are to attain efficient exposure to the investment grade fixed income markets, and carry out the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of this Church. When deemed appropriate, a secondary objective is to seek to deliver value-added returns from active management over longer time periods.

All investments will be subject to the Social Purpose Guiding Policies.
.
(B) Performance Objective
The policy benchmark shall be the Citigroup Custom Bond Index = (25% Treasury/Government-Sponsored Index) + (40% Mortgage Index) + (35% Credit Index).

The program is only to use active management when expectations and confidence levels in the added value (after all expenses) are sufficiently attractive on a risk-adjusted basis. Use passive management as a default.

Active risk is the annualized standard deviation of value-added due to active portfolio management. If active management is used the target active risk policy for the fund (excluding any Social Impact First (SIF) allocation) shall be up to 50 basis points, based on a long-term, typical market environment. During shorter-term, atypical market environments, active risk may be expected to rise and to exceed the policy maximum of 50 basis points. Measurement of active risk for purpose of this policy is:

- Projected active risk on an annualized basis (if measurable), and
- Rolling five-year annualized historical active risk.

Information ratio is a measure of value-added net of investment expenses divided by active risk. An information ratio should be compared to an appropriate passive alternative (e.g., a passively managed benchmark net of investment expenses). For active management to be considered, there should be high confidence that the information ratio over a five-year horizon will be .20 or higher (excluding any SIF allocation).

(C) Special Constraints and Considerations

• Social Criteria – Portico Benefit Services will approve and provide to the portfolio managers a specified set of social criteria lists which will impact the universe of securities available for investment. The securities of companies on these lists will not be eligible for new or additional investment. The portfolio managers will be allowed to divest, during the normal course of portfolio management activities, any securities from the portfolios in which the issuing companies are added to the social criteria lists as a result of revisions. Social criteria lists will not be applied to the universe of securities available for investment by the manager in commingled investment vehicles. The Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee may, in addition, approve particular investment strategies which are expected to make a positive social impact.

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Social Impact First (SIF) Investments – the fund may include investments in attractive opportunities for furthering the mission of the ELCA as reflected in the social teachings and policy documents of the Church, even if these investments have a less efficient risk/return profile.

• Tax Status - Earnings in the Fund are exempt from taxation. Therefore tax considerations are not a constraint on portfolio management.

• Liquidity Needs – Moderate liquidity levels will be necessary in the Fund. The Fund will adhere to the parameters of the Illiquid Investments Policy of Portico.

• Cash Flow Characteristics – Moderate cash flows into and out of the Fund are expected to occur regularly, and at times could be significant, since participants may transfer funds on a daily basis.

• Trading - There are no requirements for, or restrictions against, realization of net investment gains or losses during any accounting period. Transactions shall be efficiently executed at competitive costs.

2. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

These investment guidelines apply at the time of purchase.

(A) Strategic Asset Allocation

25% of the CGA Reserve Fund less the Florida reserves which will be invested in time deposits and certificates of deposits, will be invested in the SP Bond Fund, as defined in the CGA Philosophy and Policy statement.

The Fund will be invested in core fixed income and money-market investments. The maximum allocation to SIF investments is 10%. The Fund will invest in major asset categories as follows:

	Target Allocation
Core fixed income	100%

Investments made shall be consistent with the Fixed Income Strategy Statement.

(B) Types of Securities

The core fixed income component will be invested in diversified portfolios of publicly traded fixed income securities. Fixed-income securities of all kinds, including foreign securities and Rule 144A securities, are eligible as long as the borrowers meet the Fund's credit quality standards. Investments may be made in community development fixed income obligations and certificates of deposit; it is anticipated that most of these investments will be private placements; such investments shall be at market rates and meet the fund's credit quality standards.

Social Impact First (SIF) investments are permitted subject to the limitations in the Strategic Asset Allocation section. Because SIF investments are opportunistic in nature, there are no asset class targets or ranges for SIF. Investments should be made consistent with the SIF Strategy Statement.

The Fund may also utilize financial futures and options to assist in controlling risk and enhancing portfolio

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values in a manner that is prudent and intended to further the purposes of the Fund. Accounts, including margin accounts, may be established with securities dealers to implement such commodity positions. Investments may not be made so as to leverage the total asset size of the Fund.

Investments shall not be made in real property or other investment vehicles of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its related

agencies.

The Fund may not:

• Invest for the purpose of exercising control of management.

• Invest in commodities or commodity contracts, except for financial futures and options.

• Sell uncovered call options or sell put options.

• Purchase securities on margin.

• Sell securities short.

(C) Diversification and Concentration

The Fund's investments will be appropriately distributed to provide prudent diversification and limit undue concentration of portfolio positions.

Core fixed income component - the minimum quality rating of an individual holding shall be a BBB rating (except for community development bond investments) at the time of purchase. No more than 25% of the Fund shall be invested in securities rated BBB or lower at the time of purchase. At the time of acquisition, the market value (based on the most recent pricing information) of the aggregated holdings in an individual issuer (as represented by its senior unsecured debt) will be limited according to quality rating as follows (as shown by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and Standard & Poor's Corporation ratings):

U.S. Government Bonds	No Limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No Limit
U.S. Government Agency Debentures	10% of Bond Assets
Mortgage-backed Securities	5% of Bond Assets
Guaranteed by U.S. Government Agencies	per tranche or pool
Aaa/AAA rated Securities	5% of Bond Assets
Aa/AA rated Securities	3% of Bond Assets
A/A rated Securities	2% of Bond Assets
Baa/BBB rated Securities	1% of Bond Assets

3. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

(A) Policy and Guidelines Review

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The I-CSRC shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least annually. Given changing economic and capital market conditions, an in-depth evaluation of how existing guidelines are affecting the Fund's ability to meet policy objectives is warranted at least every three years.

(B)Total Fund performance should be evaluated at multiple levels. (Evaluations shall be made net of fees and expenses.)

Performance evaluations shall be in accordance with the Fixed Income Strategy Statements and the Social Impact First Strategy Statement.

• Performance reports should clearly attribute performance to the relevant decisions (e.g. distinguish between returns attributable to market action, investment policy decisions, other I-CSRC decisions, and active manager decisions.)

The ELCA staff shall review the investment guidelines of the CGA Program at least every five years, or sooner if warranted.

ELCA staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth in the CGA program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the ELCA Church Council at least annually.

(C)Individual manager performance evaluation should be based on the specific objectives of the individual manager and be consistent with the Manager Monitoring and Evaluation Program.

(D)Risk Measures and Controls

• Maintain risk exposures of the Fund at levels similar to the overall fixed income market. Limit aggressive deviations from market levels.

• A clear set of risk measures and controls will be used for monitoring the risk exposures of the Fund

• Over time the level of market risk in the Fund should be comparable to the level of market risk in the benchmark.

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INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
REQUIRED RESERVE

1. INVESTMENT POLICY

(A) Role of Portfolio

The primary investment objective of the portfolio is to utilize a risk-controlled style of portfolio management to generate cash flows that are consistent with the cash flow needs of the underlying annuity contracts.

Considering its role as an income-oriented vehicle, the income level of the portfolio shall approximate the level of yields available in fixed income securities with characteristics similar to that of the liability pool. In addition, the manager shall not use aggressive interest rate forecasting to achieve performance objectives. The manager shall maintain a long-term view in assessing the impact of changes in the level of interest rates. Security selection shall be in accordance with the social responsibility criteria (see Special Constraints below).

(B) Performance Objective

The primary performance objective of the portfolio is to generate sufficient cash flow to service the underlying annuity contracts on a schedule consistent with that of the liabilities.

(C) Special Constraints and Considerations

1. Tax Status - Earnings in the portfolio are generally exempt from taxation. Any transactions that generate Unrelated Business Taxable Income ("UBTI") in this portfolio are prohibited. Aside from this prohibition, tax considerations are not a constraint on portfolio management.

2. Liquidity Needs –Minimal liquidity will be necessary for this portfolio.

3. Cash Flow Characteristics - Moderate cash flows into and out of the portfolio will occur periodically. The portfolio should be structured to generate cash flows to service the projected annuity payments.

4. Trading - There are no requirements for, or restrictions against, realization of net investment gains or losses during any accounting period. The manager will seek to obtain the best price and execution for its transactions.

5. Portfolio Management Style - An asset/liability style of management will be utilized in the portfolio with the goal of meeting the income needs of the liability portfolio.

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6. Social Criteria - The Board of Pensions will approve and provide to the manager a specified social criteria list based upon advice provided by the ELCA Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility that will impact the universe of securities available for investment by the manager. The securities of companies on the social criteria list will not be eligible for investment in this portfolio. Revisions to the social criteria list will be made periodically and provided to the manager. In cases where the portfolio is holding securities of an issuing company that has been added to the social criteria list, the manager is prohibited from making additional purchases of that security or other securities of the issuing company. The manager will be required to divest, as soon as practicable, consistent with prudent investment management, any portfolio securities issued by companies added to the social criteria list as a result of revisions.

7. California Gift Reserves - Being the required reserves of a single state, the California Gift portfolio will be a small subset of the pooled reserves and as such, will have additional constraints. These relate primarily to diversification and quality; corporate debt needs much greater diversification than governments and the small size of the reserve portfolio makes this difficult to achieve in institutional markets. The portfolio will therefore consist primarily of government securities but if corporate securities are used, a cap of 50% will be maintained.

2. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

(A) Asset Allocation

Dollar denominated investment grade fixed income securities will be the primary asset class of this portfolio. A portion of the fixed income portfolio may be invested in short-term securities managed by the Board of Pensions' short-term fixed income manager.

(B) Types of Securities

The portfolio will be invested in a diversified portfolio of publicly traded fixed-income securities. Dollar-denominated fixed-income securities of all kinds are eligible as long as they meet the fund's credit quality and other guidelines contained in this document.

The portfolio may invest in Rule 144A fixed income securities issued without registration rights to the extent such securities constitute no more than 15% of the total portfolio value at the time of purchase and a market is made by one or more major underwriting firms with operations in the United States.

1. Primary fixed income instruments used in this portfolio will include but are not limited to the following:

   (a) Government securities including direct obligations of the U.S Government, guaranteed obligations and Government Sponsored Agency securities.

   (b) Mortgage-backed securities, consisting primarily of mortgage pass-through certificates, collateralized mortgage obligations and commercial mortgage backed securities.

(c) Corporate Bonds including issues of sovereign foreign governments and supranational entities that meet credit quality and other guidelines. Asset Backed securities will also be considered to be part of this segment for the purposes of these guidelines

(C) The portfolio manager may <u>not</u>:

(a) Invest for the purpose of exercising control of management.

(b) Invest in commodities or commodity contracts, <u>including</u> financial futures.

(c) Sell uncovered call options or sell put options.

(d) Sell securities short.

(e) Invest in non-dollar denominated securities.

(f) Invest in securities not traded in U.S. markets

(g) Invest in mutual funds.

(h) Purchase privately placed securities, except for Rule 144A securities as described above and those deemed to be Community Development investments.

(i) Invest in reverse repurchase agreements.

(j) Invest in inverse floaters, IOs, or first loss tranches of asset-backed securities.

(D) Duration Policy

The long-term policy duration shall target the duration of the liability pool. Short-term deviations in overall portfolio duration of up to plus or minus 20% are permitted. Duration should be measured on an effective, option-adjusted basis.

(E) Sector Allocations

The long-term policy targets and ranges for the major bond market sectors in the portfolio shall be as follows (see (B)1 Types of Securities for a brief description of sub-sectors included in each of the sectors below):

	Target	Ranges
Treasury/Agency Securities	25%	10-100%
Mortgage Backed Securities	25%	0-50%
Corporate Bonds	50%	0-75%

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(F) Quality

In aggregate, the fixed income portfolio should maintain an average quality of AA- or better as measured by one of three nationally recognized statistical rating agencies approved by Board of Pensions' staff. A report detailing the average quality of the portfolio will be available on a quarterly basis.

As an Investment Grade portfolio the minimum quality rating of an individual holding shall be Baa3/BBB-/BBB- by Moody's and Standard & Poors and Fitch respectively at the time of purchase. In the event of single or split ratings, the highest rating, at the time of acquisition, will govern. In the case of non-rated CDB private placements quality should be the equivalent of these ratings.

(G) Diversification and Concentration

Investments will be appropriately distributed to provide prudent diversification. At the time of any purchase, the market value (based on the most recent pricing information) of the aggregated portfolio holdings in an individual issuer (as represented by its senior unsecured debt) will be limited according to quality rating as follows:

U.S. Government Bonds	No Limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No Limit
Mortgage-backed securities guaranteed by U.S. Government Agencies	2% of assets per tranche or pool
U.S. Government Sponsored Agency debentures	10% of assets
Triple-A rated securities	2% of assets
Double A rated securities	1% of assets
Single-A rated securities	.5% of assets
BBB rated securities	.25% of assets

BBB rated securities will be additionally limited in aggregate to a maximum of 15% of portfolio assets at time of purchase.

3.   EVALUATION AND REVIEW

(A) Policy and Guideline Review

Board of Pensions' staff shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least every two years. Given changing economic and capital market conditions, an in-depth evaluation of how existing guidelines are affecting the manager's ability to meet policy objectives is warranted at least every five years.

(B) Risk Measures and Controls

1.   A clear and useable set of risk measures and controls will be used for monitoring the risk exposure of the portfolio.

2.   Over time, the level of market risk in the portfolio should be comparable to that of a AA- portfolio with the duration of the liability pool.

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3. The portfolio shall limit the level of cash flow misfit relative to the liability pool where possible.

4. The manager shall work with ELCA Foundation to determine the effective duration of the liability pool at least every 2 years or whenever cash flows significantly alter the duration profile of the liabilities.

(C) Portfolio Reports

1. The manager shall provide investment reports as requested by ELCA Foundation staff.

2. On a monthly basis, the manager shall provide ELCA Board of Pensions accounting staff reports that are consistent with the Board of Pension's Manager Reconciliation Policy Guidelines.

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
REQUIRED RESERVE

1.   INVESTMENT POLICY

(A) Role of Portfolio

The primary investment objective of the portfolio is to utilize a risk-controlled style of portfolio management to generate cash flows that are consistent with the cash flow needs of the underlying annuity contracts.

Considering its role as an income-oriented vehicle, the income level of the portfolio shall approximate the level of yields available in fixed income securities with characteristics similar to that of the liability pool. In addition, the manager shall not use aggressive interest rate forecasting to achieve performance objectives. The manager shall maintain a long-term view in assessing the impact of changes in the level of interest rates. Security selection shall be in accordance with the social responsibility criteria (see Special Constraints below).

(B) Performance Objective

The primary performance objective of the portfolio is to generate sufficient cash flow to service the underlying annuity contracts on a schedule consistent with that of the liabilities.

(C) Special Constraints and Considerations

1. Tax Status - Earnings in the portfolio are generally exempt from taxation. Any transactions that generate Unrelated Business Taxable Income ("UBTI") in this portfolio are prohibited. Aside from this prohibition, tax considerations are not a constraint on portfolio management.

2. Liquidity Needs –Minimal liquidity will be necessary for this portfolio.

3. Cash Flow Characteristics - Moderate cash flows into and out of the portfolio will occur periodically. The portfolio should be structured to generate cash flows to service the projected annuity payments.

4. Trading - There are no requirements for, or restrictions against, realization of net investment gains or losses during any accounting period. The manager will seek to obtain the best price and execution for its transactions.

5. Portfolio Management Style - An asset/liability style of management will be utilized in the portfolio with the goal of meeting the income needs of the liability portfolio.

6.   Social Criteria - The Board of Pensions will approve and provide to the manager a specified social criteria list based upon advice provided by the ELCA Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility that will impact the universe of securities available for investment by the manager. The securities of companies on the social criteria list will not be eligible for investment in this portfolio. Revisions to the social criteria list will be made periodically and provided to the manager. In cases where the portfolio is holding securities of an issuing company that has been added to the social criteria list, the manager is prohibited from making additional purchases of that security or other securities of the issuing company. The manager will be required to divest, as soon as practicable, consistent with prudent investment management, any portfolio securities issued by companies added to the social criteria list as a result of revisions.

7. California Gift Reserves - Being the required reserves of a single state, the California Gift portfolio will be a small subset of the pooled reserves and as such, will have additional constraints. These relate primarily to diversification and quality; corporate debt needs much greater diversification than governments and the small size of the reserve portfolio makes this difficult to achieve in institutional markets. The portfolio will therefore consist primarily of government securities but if corporate securities are used, a cap of 50% will be maintained.

2.   INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

(A) Asset Allocation

Dollar denominated investment grade fixed income securities will be the primary asset class of this portfolio. A portion of the fixed income portfolio may be invested in short-term securities managed by the Board of Pensions' short-term fixed income manager.

(B) Types of Securities

The portfolio will be invested in a diversified portfolio of publicly traded fixed-income securities. Dollar-denominated fixed-income securities of all kinds are eligible as long as they meet the fund's credit quality and other guidelines contained in this document.

The portfolio may invest in Rule 144A fixed income securities issued without registration rights to the extent such securities constitute no more than 15% of the total portfolio value at the time of purchase and a market is made by one or more major underwriting firms with operations in the United States.

1. Primary fixed income instruments used in this portfolio will include but are not limited to the following:

  (a) Government securities including direct obligations of the U.S Government, guaranteed obligations and Government Sponsored Agency securities.

  (b) Mortgage-backed securities, consisting primarily of mortgage pass-through certificates, collateralized mortgage obligations and commercial mortgage backed securities.

(c) Corporate Bonds including issues of sovereign foreign governments and supranational entities that meet credit quality and other guidelines. Asset Backed securities will also be considered to be part of this segment for the purposes of these guidelines

(C) The portfolio manager may <u>not</u>:

(a) Invest for the purpose of exercising control of management.

(b) Invest in commodities or commodity contracts, <u>including</u> financial futures.

(c) Sell uncovered call options or sell put options.

(d) Sell securities short.

(e) Invest in non-dollar denominated securities.

(f) Invest in securities not traded in U.S. markets

(g) Invest in mutual funds.

(h) Purchase privately placed securities, except for Rule 144A securities as described above and those deemed to be Community Development investments.

(i) Invest in reverse repurchase agreements.

(j) Invest in inverse floaters, IOs, or first loss tranches of asset-backed securities.

(D) Duration Policy

The long-term policy duration shall target the duration of the liability pool. Short-term deviations in overall portfolio duration of up to plus or minus 20% are permitted. Duration should be measured on an effective, option-adjusted basis.

(E) Sector Allocations

The long-term policy targets and ranges for the major bond market sectors in the portfolio shall be as follows (see (B)1 Types of Securities for a brief description of sub-sectors included in each of the sectors below):

	Target	Ranges
Treasury/Agency Securities	25%	10-100%
Mortgage Backed Securities	25%	0-50%
Corporate Bonds	50%	0-75%

(F) Quality

In aggregate, the fixed income portfolio should maintain an average quality of AA- or better as measured by one of three nationally recognized statistical rating agencies approved by Board of Pensions' staff. A report detailing the average quality of the portfolio will be available on a quarterly basis.

As an Investment Grade portfolio the minimum quality rating of an individual holding shall be Baa3/BBB-/BBB- by Moody's and Standard & Poors and Fitch respectively at the time of purchase. In the event of single or split ratings, the highest rating, at the time of acquisition, will govern. In the case of non-rated CDB private placements quality should be the equivalent of these ratings.

(G) Diversification and Concentration

Investments will be appropriately distributed to provide prudent diversification. At the time of any purchase, the market value (based on the most recent pricing information) of the aggregated portfolio holdings in an individual issuer (as represented by its senior unsecured debt) will be limited according to quality rating as follows:

U.S. Government Bonds	No Limit
U.S. Government-guaranteed securities	No Limit
Mortgage-backed securities guaranteed by U.S. Government Agencies	2% of assets per tranche or pool
U.S. Government Sponsored Agency debentures	10% of assets
Triple-A rated securities	2% of assets
Double A rated securities	1% of assets
Single-A rated securities	.5% of assets
BBB rated securities	.25% of assets

BBB rated securities will be additionally limited in aggregate to a maximum of 15% of portfolio assets at time of purchase.

3. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

(A) Policy and Guideline Review

Board of Pensions' staff shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least every two years. Given changing economic and capital market conditions, an in-depth evaluation of how existing guidelines are affecting the manager's ability to meet policy objectives is warranted at least every five years.

(B) Risk Measures and Controls

1. A clear and useable set of risk measures and controls will be used for monitoring the risk exposure of the portfolio.

2. Over time, the level of market risk in the portfolio should be comparable to that of a AA- portfolio with the duration of the liability pool.

3.   The portfolio shall limit the level of cash flow misfit relative to the liability pool where possible.

4.   The manager shall work with ELCA Foundation to determine the effective duration of the liability pool at least every 2 years or whenever cash flows significantly alter the duration profile of the liabilities.

(C) Portfolio Reports

1.   The manager shall provide investment reports as requested by ELCA Foundation staff.

2.   On a monthly basis, the manager shall provide ELCA Board of Pensions accounting staff reports that are consistent with the Board of Pension's Manager Reconciliation Policy Guidelines.

CHARITABLE TRUST AND POOLED INCOME FUND PROGRAMS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT

I. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the Investment Policy Statement is to assist the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in effectively supervising, monitoring and evaluating the investment management of charitable trusts and pooled income funds for which the ELCA serves as trustee. The investment policy seeks to translate the investment objectives of the ELCA into a cohesive, long-term investment framework that is consistent with the overall mission and the management of the planned giving funds.

This statement of investment policies is set forth in order to:

1) Establish and document the investment objectives, philosophy, policies, guidelines, and goals for the Charitable Trusts and Pooled Income Funds of the ELCA.

2) Provide the Budget & Finance Committee of the Church Council (the Committee) of the ELCA with a written document and understanding of said investment objectives, philosophy, policies and goals of ELCA's Charitable Trusts and Pooled Income Funds of the ELCA.

3) Clearly communicate to the Committee, the Administrator and the Investment Manager their roles, duties and responsibilities.

4) Establish the basis for evaluation of the investment performance of ELCA's Charitable Trusts and Pooled Income Funds and of the Investment Manager.

This statement is meant to be sufficiently specific, to be meaningful, but also flexible enough to attain the objectives to be outlined, allowing for changing economic conditions and securities markets.

II. INVESTMENT PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee recognizes that the primary purpose of this portfolio is to provide individual life-income recipients with agreed upon entitlement and the remainder to the ELCA to achieve the charitable goals of the donors. As such, the objective of the portfolio will be income, growth, and preservation of the charitable remainder.

In developing the Investment Policy Statement, the Committee recognizes the following:

1) fluctuating rates of return are a characteristic of the investment markets, and
2) performance cycles cannot be accurately predicted as to their beginning, and or magnitude.

Therefore, the asset allocation decisions set forth in this policy are based on a careful examination of:

1) The mission and goals of the ELCA's planned giving program.
2) Historical review of various asset categories, their risk and return characteristics and correlation coefficient.
3) The various statutory requirements placed on pooled income funds and charitable trusts.

III.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for administering and reviewing the ELCA's investment policies are within the purview of the Church Council. The Church Council will approve all policy guidelines and amendments. The Committee will oversee the investment management of the ELCA's planned giving program and periodically evaluate the performance results and make recommendations as to changes in the management of these funds.

The Office of The Treasurer as administrator of the ELCA's planned giving program may hire external providers to manage investments and administration. These providers will utilize mutual funds, separately managed accounts, common trust funds, exchange traded funds and similar vehicles to manage the underlying trust and pooled income fund investments.

IV.   TYPES OF CHARITABLE TRUSTS

The ELCA serves as trustee for several types of Charitable Trusts and Pooled Income Funds. The investment objectives for the funds will vary from producing current income to maximizing total return consistent with the prudent investment practices depending on the trust agreement.

    A. Charitable Remainder Trust – legal instrument that enables one or more life-income recipients to receive a specified amount of income prior to distributing remaining assets to one or more charitable remainder beneficiaries.
        1. Charitable Remainder Unitrusts
            i. Guaranteed Percentage Income Unitrust - life-income payments are equal to a fixed percent of an annual fair market value of trust assets.
           ii. Net Income Unitrust - life-income payments are equal to a fixed percent of an annual fair market value of trust assets, or the income earned, whichever is less.

      iii. Net Income Plus Make-Up Unitrust - life-income payments are equal to a fixed percent of an annual fair market value of trust assets, or the income earned, whichever is less, with the provision that the payments may exceed the stated percentage, up to, but not exceeding, the amount required to make up any accumulated deficiencies for prior years, that is, years in which the trust earned less than the stated percentage.

      iv. "Flip" Unitrust – The flip trust will pay the lesser of the trust payment amount or the actual trust net income. On January 1 of the year following a specific event the trust "flips" to the regular straight pay method and from then on the trust will be a regular straight pay trust.

2. Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust – type of charitable trust in which life-income payments are equal to a fixed percent of the original gift value. The trust will terminate if assets become insufficient to meet payments.

3. Charitable Lead Trust - legal instrument that enables a charitable beneficiary to receive a specified amount of income for a term of years prior to distributing remaining assets to the donor or other non-charitable beneficiaries upon termination of the trust.

4. Pooled Income Fund - type of charitable trust that allows a charity to manage deferred gifts through a pool of assets in which participants are assigned units and receive their proportional share of income generated by the pooled assets. Upon termination of a donor's units, the associated value is removed from the trust and distributed to the charitable remainder beneficiary.

V. ACCEPTABLE ASSET CLASSES

The specific investment mix for any given portfolio will take into consideration factors such as the type of gift vehicle, the payout requirements, beneficiary income requirements, tax consequences and other considerations. The following asset classes will be considered as acceptable for the portfolios:

- Domestic Equities-large to small capitalization
- International Equities-developed and emerging markets, large to small capitalization
- Real Estate-publicly traded domestic and international
- Fixed Income-domestic, international, government, government agency, corporate and asset backed
- Commodities-through publicly traded investment vehicles
- Cash-including money market accounts

The trust investments will normally be limited to public market fixed income and equity investments, and liquid real estate. With the exclusion of publicly traded securities, the transfer of ownership of any non-cash contributions to the ELCA as trustee or conversion in line with trust powers is subject to approval by the Office of The Treasurer.

Acceptance will be based on guidelines established by the Office of The Treasurer, the intent of which is to identify and clearly document the financial risks and make recommendations for managing those risks. Office of The Treasurer will identify any and all such risks and document how the risk will be managed and or disposed before the investment is added to the portfolio.

VI. ASSET ALLOCATION TARGETS

Charitable trusts and pooled income fund trusts may be invested in a mix of equity and fixed income mutual funds. Each individual trust will be reviewed and, if necessary, allocated based upon its individual parameters such as the age or risk tolerance of the income beneficiaries. In cases where the allocation deviates from policy, the reasons supporting the deviation must be documented in the donor's file. Managers may diversify the portfolios at their discretion based on consultation with the Office of The Treasurer's Manager for Investments.

The ELCA has developed seven asset allocation models for the charitable trust portfolios and two models for the pooled income funds.

Charitable Trusts

5% Payout	5.5% Payout	5-6% Payout	6.5% or more	Use when directed by the ELCA	Use when directed by the ELCA	Use when directed by the ELCA
Income and Growth (30% Equity/70% Fixed)	Income and Growth (15% Equity/ 85% Fixed)	Balanced (60% Equity/40% Fixed)	Income only (100% Fixed)	Growth only (100% Equity)	Growth (70% Equity/30% Fixed)	Income and Growth (50% Equity/50% Fixed)

Pooled Income Funds

Balanced Oriented	60% Equity, 40% Fixed
Income Only	100% Fixed

VII. REBALANCING

The portfolios should be reviewed by the investment managers at least quarterly to confirm the current asset allocation is in the tolerance range of the strategic asset allocation. The standard tolerance policy for rebalancing the charitable trusts and pooled income funds is to reallocate the model portfolio's asset mix back to their strategic allocation when they are out of policy by +/-5%. Prior to making any changes the portfolios should be reviewed for possible short-term gains or losses. Office of The Treasurer and the investment managers may review and make changes to the strategic

asset allocations of the individual trusts based on a change in the trust's investment objectives and in consultation with the donor and the investment advisor.

VIII. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

The portfolios will have various asset allocations to potentially meet their respective objectives. The primary measurement for performance will be benchmark relative returns. The following are the benchmarks used for performance measurement:
- Large Cap Equities-Standard & Poor's 500 Index
- Midcap Equities-Russell Midcap Core Index
- Small Cap Equities-Russell 2000 Index
- Developed International Equities-MSCI-EAFE Index-(Morgan Stanley Capital International, Europe, Australian, and Far East Index)
- Emerging Market Equities-MSCI Emerging Markets
- Commodities-DJ UBS Commodity Index
- Domestic Real Estate-FTSE NAREIT U.S. All REITS Index
- International Real Estate- FTSE EPRANAREIT Dev. Ex U.S. Index
- Investment Grade Bonds-Barclays Capital Gov'tCredit Index
- High Yield Bonds-Barclays Capital High Yield Corporate Bond Index
- International Bonds-JP Morgan Global ex U.S. Index (unhedged)
- Emerging Market Bonds-JP Morgan Emerging Market Bond Index
- Cash Equivalents-Lipper Money Market Index
- Other indices, mutually agreed on by the Committee and the Investment Manager, which provide a better match for the Investment Manager's investment style or strategy.

Each investment strategy will be measured against the benchmark listed above and each portfolio will be measured against a blended benchmark, weighted based on the target asset allocation of each portfolio.

IX. RISK MEASURES AND CONTROLS

- Investment manager will maintain risk exposures of the various asset class components of the Fund at levels similar to the overall asset class's benchmarks. Allow prudent deviations from asset class targets as market conditions warrant, and be consistent with the asset class rebalancing policies.
- OT staff in consultation with the Investment Manager will review the asset allocation risk targets to ensure adherence to ranges.

The ELCA recognizes that some risk must be assumed in order to achieve long-term investment objectives, and that there are uncertainties and complexities associated with investment markets. Interim fluctuations in market value and rates of return are expected

within the Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund investments in order to achieve long-term objectives.

X.   SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

Investment objectives should be pursued, to the extent practicable, pursuant to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

- Investment managers should avoid investing in companies with business practices that conflict with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.

- Investment managers should also seek, to the extent practicable, investments that benefit economic development or the environment.

XI.   EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The ELCA Office of The Treasurer shall review the investment philosophy, objectives and guidelines of the Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund programs at least every three years or more frequently, if necessary.

1) Past Performance should be evaluated at multiple levels. (Evaluations shall be made net of investment management fees.)
2) Sub advisor investment manager performance evaluation is delegated to the Investment Manager and will be reported to OT staff.

XII.   PORTFOLIO REPORTING

ELCA OT staff will report investment results, portfolio mix, and growth of the Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund programs to the Committee at least annually.

XIII.   POLICY ADOPTION

The investment policy was adopted by the Church Council of the ELCA in November 2010.

CHARITABLE TRUST FUND PROGRAM
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
INVESTMENT MANAGER GUIDELINES FOR

THRIVENT FINANCIAL

I.   INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

The primary investment objective of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is to provide for long-term growth of capital while meeting the payout obligations to the beneficiaries of the Charitable Trusts.

The Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council (the Committee) has determined that the primary investment objectives are:

- Provide individual beneficiaries with agreed upon entitlement and the remainder to ELCA to achieve the charitable intent of the donor.
- Growth of the fund corpus while minimizing year-to-year fluctuations in the value of the portfolio.

II.   PERFORMANCE GOALS

The responsibility for administering and reviewing The ELCA's investment policies are within the purview of the Church Council. The Church Council will approve all policy guidelines and amendments. The Committee will oversee the investment management of The ELCA's planned giving programs and periodically evaluate the performance results and make recommendations as to changes in the management of these funds.

The ELCA Office of The Treasurer, as administrator, will meet at least annually with the Investment Manager to review compliance with established guidelines and performance results to be reported to the Committee.

The Committee will measure investment performance over rolling three and five-year periods, during which the performance of the assets should consistently be measured with a composite index comprised of an appropriate mix (associated with The ELCA's portfolios) of the indices noted below:

- Large Cap Equities-Standard & Poor's 500 Index
- Midcap Equities-Russell Midcap Core Index
- Small Cap Equities-Russell 2000 Index
- Developed International Equities-MSCI-EAFE Index-(Morgan Stanley Capital International, Europe, Australian, and Far East Index)
- Emerging Market Equities-MSCI Emerging Markets
- Commodities-DJ UBS Commodity Index
- Domestic Real Estate-FTSE NAREIT U.S. All REITS Index
- International Real Estate- FTSE EPRANAREIT Dev. Ex U.S. Index
- Investment Grade Bonds-Barclays Capital Gov'tCredit Index
- High Yield Bonds-Barclays Capital High Yield Corporate Bond Index
- International Bonds-JP Morgan Global ex U.S. Index (unhedged)
- Emerging Market Bonds-JP Morgan Emerging Market Bond Index
- Cash Equivalents-Lipper Money Market Index
- Other indices, mutually agreed on by the Committee and the Investment Manager, which provide a better match for the Investment Manager's investment style or strategy.

The value-added objective shall be to exceed the total return of the appropriate benchmark by 100 basis points annually, net of investment management expenses, over rolling five-year time periods.

III.   SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

Investment objectives should be pursued, to the extent practicable, pursuant to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

- The Investment Manager should avoid investing in companies with business practices that conflict with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.
- The Investment Manager should also seek, to the extent practicable, investments that benefit economic developments or the environment.

Investments made in comingled/mutual funds are not required to adhere to the social restrictions.

IV.   INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

ASSET ALLOCATION TARGETS

Charitable Trusts may be invested in a mix of equity and fixed income mutual funds. These asset classes may include: core domestic equities, style specific domestic equities, small company equities, whether core or style specific, domestic fixed income securities, global fixed income securities, international equities, REITS, commodities (mutual funds) and cash equivalents. The Investment Manager has the authority to substitute mutual funds without soliciting and receiving approval from the committee.

The asset allocations used for the Thrivent charitable trust investments may be one of the following:

30% Equity/70% Fixed , 15% Equity/ 85% Fixed, 60% Equity/40% Fixed, 100% Fixed, 100% Equity, 70% Equity/30% Fixed, 50% Equity/50% Fixed

The majority of the trusts are invested in a mix of 60% equity/40% fixed income mutual fund allocations that mirror the investments in Thrivent's Moderate Asset Allocation Fund.

Thrivent Moderate Allocation 58% Equity, 40% Fixed Income, 2% Cash	
	Targets
Investment Grade Bonds	35%
High Yield Bonds	5%
Large Cap Stocks	23%
Midcap Stocks	11%
Small Cap Stocks	8%
International Stocks	12%
REITs	4%
Cash Equivalents	2%
	100.00%

V.   GENERAL ASSET ALLOCATION PARAMETERS

Rebalancing
The Committee recognizes that a rigid asset allocation would be both impractical and to some extent, undesirable under various market conditions. Foundation staff will direct Thrivent Bank to rebalance the portfolios when they move away from their target asset allocation by +/-5%. Investment Manager will rebalance the Fund at least annually so that its holdings are within the ranges for the broad asset categories. The Investment manager will seek to accomplish rebalancing as soon as practicable, as it determines is consistent with prudent investment practices under existing market conditions.

Permitted Investments:
1. Cash Equivalents: all cash and equivalent investments shall be made with utmost concern for quality. Therefore, investments will be limited to U.S. Treasury bills, commercial paper rated P-I and insured certificates of deposit. Other securities that reflect similar quality as those described above including, but not limited to, money market mutual funds which meet such parameters, are permissible also.

2. Fixed Income: fixed income securities shall include securities issued by the U .S. government and its agencies and securities issued by U.S. corporations. The average quality of ELCA's fixed income portfolio must be at least "A" rated. Fixed income mutual funds, which meet such parameters, are permissible.

3. Equities: equities shall include common stocks, preferred stocks and bonds convertible into common stock. Adequate diversification shall be maintained within the purchased equity portfolio so that no single security comprises more than 5% of the total value of the equity portfolio. Donated stocks may be exempted from these criteria, at the discretion of the Committee. Commodities may be utilized as a portion of the equity allocation. Mutual funds, which meet the investment parameters, including investment grade quality, are permissible.

Prohibited Investments:
Although the committee cannot dictate policy to pooled/mutual fund investment managers, it is the committee's intent to retain only pooled/mutual funds with policies that are similar to that of the ELCA. The use of margin purchases, short sales, options and futures will not be used to create leverage or for speculative purposes.

All investments of the trusts assets will comply with the Prudent Investors Act and any security expected to generate unrelated business income tax (UBIT) is prohibited.

VI. RISK MEASURES AND CONTROLS

- Maintain risk exposures of the various asset class components at levels similar to the overall asset classes' markets respectively. Allow prudent deviations from asset class targets as market conditions warrant, and be consistent with investment manager's asset class rebalancing and short-term deviation policies.
- Over time the level of market risk in the asset class pools should be comparable to the level of market risk in the benchmarks.

VII. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

At least every three years, the ELCA will perform a formal review of the investment manager which will include a review of the investment guidelines, investment objectives, benchmarks, asset allocation and restrictions for the trust programs. The ELCA will present the results of the review to the Committee as well as investment performance evaluations as occasions to consider whether any elements of the existing policy are either insufficient or inappropriate. In particular, the Committee will review the following:

- ELCA's ongoing ability to tolerate downturns in asset value (function of financial and cash flow considerations)
- Any changes in ELCA's liquidity requirements
- Any changes in ELCA's rate of return objectives
- Changes in ELCA's priorities
- Areas found to be important but not covered by policy
- Any changes to the ELCA asset class risk tolerances

VIII. PORTFOLIO REPORTING

ELCA Foundation staff will report investment results to the Committee at least annually.

**CHARITABLE TRUST AND POOLED INCOME FUND PROGRAMS
OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
INVESTMENT MANAGER GUIDELINES FOR**

WELLS FARGO PRIVATE BANK

I.   INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

The primary investment objective of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is to provide for long-term growth of capital while meeting the payout obligations to the beneficiaries of the Pooled Income Funds and Charitable Trusts.

The Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council (the Committee) of the ELCA has determined that the primary investment objectives are:

- Provide individual beneficiaries with agreed upon entitlement and the remainder to ELCA to achieve the charitable intent of the donor.
- Growth of the fund corpus while minimizing year-to-year fluctuations in the value of the portfolio.

II.   PERFORMANCE GOALS

The responsibility for administering and reviewing the ELCA's investment policies are within the purview of the Church Council. The Church Council will approve all policy guidelines and amendments. The Committee will oversee the investment management of The ELCA's planned giving programs and periodically evaluate the performance results and make recommendations as to changes in the management of these funds.

The ELCA Office of The Treasurer, as Administrator, will meet at least annually with the Investment Manager to review compliance with established guidelines and performance results to be reported to the Committee.

The Committee will measure investment performance over rolling three and five-year periods, during which the performance of the assets should consistently be measured with a composite index comprised of an appropriate mix (associated with the ELCA's portfolios) of the indices noted below:
- Large Cap Equities-Standard & Poor's 500 Index
- Midcap Equities-Russell Midcap Core Index
- Small Cap Equities-Russell 2000 Index
- Developed International Equities-MSCI-EAFE Index-(Morgan Stanley Capital International, Europe, Australian, and Far East Index)
- Emerging Market Equities-MSCI Emerging Markets
- Commodities-DJ UBS Commodity Index
- Domestic Real Estate-FTSE NAREIT U.S. All REITS Index

- International Real Estate- FTSE EPRANAREIT Dev. Ex U.S. Index
- Investment Grade Bonds-Barclays Capital Gov'tCredit Index
- High Yield Bonds-Barclays Capital High Yield Corporate Bond Index
- International Bonds-JP Morgan Global ex U.S. Index (unhedged)
- Emerging Market Bonds-JP Morgan Emerging Market Bond Index
- Cash Equivalents-Lipper Money Market Index
- Other indices, mutually agreed on by the Committee and the Investment Manager, which provide a better match for the Investment Manager's investment style or strategy.

The value-added objective shall be to exceed the total return of the appropriate weighted benchmark by 100 basis points annually, net of investment management expenses, over rolling five-year time periods.

III. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

Investment objectives should be pursued, to the extent practicable, pursuant to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values and programs of the ELCA.

- The Investment Manager should avoid investing in companies with business practices that conflict with socially responsible investing criteria of the ELCA.
- The Investment Manager should also seek, to the extent practicable, investments that benefit economic developments or the environment.

Investments in comingled/mutual funds are not required to adhere to the social restrictions.

IV. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

ASSET ALLOCATION TARGETS- Charitable Trusts and Pooled Income Funds may be invested in a mix of equity and fixed income mutual funds.   The ELCA has developed seven asset allocation models for the charitable trust portfolios and two asset allocation models for the pooled income fund trusts. These asset classes may include: core domestic equities, style specific domestic equities, small company equities, whether core or style specific, domestic fixed income securities, global fixed income securities, international equities, REITS, commodities (mutual funds) and cash equivalents.

The Investment Manager has the authority to substitute mutual funds without soliciting and receiving approval from the committee.

The four charitable trust asset allocation models are:

ELCA 70% Equity, 30% Fixed

	Targets
Investment Grade Bonds	19.00%
High Yield Bonds	5.00%
International Bonds	3.00%
Emerging Market Bonds	3.00%
Large Cap Stocks	21.00%
Midcap Stocks	9.00%
Small Cap Stocks	6.00%
International Stocks	13.00%
Emerging Market Stocks	6.00%
Domestic Real Estate	7.00%
International Real Estate	4.00%
Commodities	2.00%
Cash Equivalents	2.00%
	100.00%

ELCA 60% Equity , 40% Fixed

	Targets
Investment Grade Bonds	26.00%
High Yield Bonds	6.00%
International Bonds	4.00%
Emerging Market Bonds	4.00%
Large Cap Stocks	17.00%
Midcap Stocks	7.00%
Small Cap Stocks	5.00%
International Stocks	11.00%
Emerging Market Stocks	5.00%
Domestic Real Estate	7.00%
International Real Estate	4.00%
Commodities	2.00%
Cash Equivalents	2.00%
	100.00%

ELCA 50% Equity, 50% Fixed

	Targets

Investment Grade Bonds	32.00%
High Yield Bonds	8.00%
International Bonds	5.00%
Emerging Market Bonds	5.00%
Large Cap Stocks	14.00%
Midcap Stocks	6.00%
Small Cap Stocks	3.00%
International Stocks	8.00%
Emerging Market Stocks	4.00%
Domestic Real Estate	7.00%
International Real Estate	4.00%
Commodities	2.00%
Cash Equivalents	2.00%
	100.00%

ELCA 30% Equity, 70% Fixed	
	Targets
Investment Grade Bonds	53.00%
High Yield Bonds	11.00%
International Bonds	6.00%
Large Cap Stocks	8.00%
Small Cap Stocks	2.00%
International Stocks	5.00%
Domestic Real Estate	7.00%
International Real Estate	4.00%
Commodities	2.00%
Cash Equivalents	2.00%
	100.00%

The two pooled income trusts asset allocation models are:

- Balanced Oriented (60% Equity, 40% Fixed)
- Income Oriented (100% Fixed)

V. GENERAL ASSET ALLOCATION PARAMETERS

Rebalancing
The Committee recognizes that a rigid asset allocation would be both impractical and to some extent, undesirable under various market conditions. Therefore, the allocation of each charitable trust and pooled income fund portfolio may vary from time to time within the accepted ranges without being considered an exception to this investment policy. Acceptable range is within 500 basis points of each underlying asset mix of the asset allocation models. In rebalancing, the Investment Manager will allocate assets back to the target allocation per portfolio.   The Investment Manager will seek to accomplish rebalancing as soon as practicable, as it determines is consistent with prudent investment practices under existing market conditions.

Permitted Investments:
1. Cash Equivalents: all cash and equivalent investments shall be made with utmost concern for quality. Therefore, investments will be limited to U.S. Treasury bills, commercial paper rated P-I and insured certificates of deposit. Other securities that reflect similar quality as those described above including, but not limited to, money market mutual funds which meet such parameters, are permissible also.

2. Fixed Income: fixed income securities shall include securities issued by the U .S. government and its agencies and securities issued by U.S. corporations. The average quality of ELCA's investment grade fixed income portfolio must be at least "A" rated. Fixed income mutual funds, which meet such parameters, are permissible.

3. Equities: equities shall include common stocks, preferred stocks and bonds convertible into common stock. Adequate diversification shall be maintained within the purchased equity portfolio so that no single security comprises more than 5% of the total value of the equity portfolio. Donated stocks may be exempted from these criteria, at the discretion of the Committee. Commodities may be utilized as a portion of the equity allocation. Mutual funds, which meet the investment parameters, including investment grade quality, are permissible.

Prohibited Investments:
Although the committee cannot dictate policy to pooled/mutual fund investment managers, it is the committee's intent to retain only pooled/mutual funds with policies that are similar to that of the ELCA.

The use of margin purchases, short sales, options and futures will not be used to create leverage or for speculative purposes.

All investments of the trusts assets will comply with the Prudent Investors Act and any security expected to generate unrelated business income tax (UBIT) is prohibited.

VI.   RISK MEASURES AND CONTROLS

•   Maintain risk exposures of the various asset class components at levels similar to the overall asset classes' markets respectively. Allow prudent deviations from asset class targets as market conditions warrant, and be consistent with the Investment Manager's asset class rebalancing and short-term deviation policies.

•   Over time the level of market risk in the asset class pools should be comparable to the level of market risk in the benchmarks.

VII.   EVALUATION AND REVIEW
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At least every three years, the ELCA will perform a formal review of the investment manager which will include a review of the investment guidelines, investment objectives, benchmarks, asset allocation and restrictions for the trust programs. The ELCA will present the results of the review to the Committee as well as investment performance evaluations as occasions to consider whether any elements of the existing policy are either insufficient or inappropriate.   In particular, the Committee will review the following:

• ELCA's ongoing ability to tolerate downturns in asset value (function of financial and cash flow considerations)
• Any changes in ELCA's liquidity requirements
• Any changes in ELCA's spending requirements
• Any changes in ELCA's rate of return objectives and risk tolerance
• Changes in ELCA's priorities
• Areas found to be important but not covered by policy
• Any changes to the ELCA asset class risk tolerances

VIII. PORTFOLIO REPORTING

ELCA staff will report investment results to the Committee at least annually.

IX.   GUIDELINE ADOPTION
The investment guidelines were adopted by the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council of the ELCA in April 2014.

October 5, 2015

To the ELCA Church Council:

Grace and peace in the name of Christ.

We are at a kairos moment for theological education in the ELCA. We are grateful to have been invited to respond to the TEAC Report.

We are appreciative of the strong openness to imaginative and deep change that the TEAC task force report has generated. We acknowledge the courage of the leadership of our eight seminaries engaging in these conversations. We remain sensitive to the disruptive and necessary change these proposals will bring.

We affirm moving forward in this urgent task. We have overwhelming consensus in our support for TEAC proposal 3A[i] and Baker Tilly model options A and B (Central System and Limited Central System). Model option A has the greatest energy among us; many were open to both options. The Conference of Bishops voted to reject the status quo (model option E).

The Conference of Bishops strongly advocates the necessary reform that best serves the current and future mission of Christ's church for the sake of the world.

In moving toward a more centralized model for the sake of better stewardship we call for innovation, responsiveness, accessibility and flexibility. We pledge ourselves to this work with our partners at our seminaries.

In Christ,

The Conference of Bishops

Endnotes

[i] Recommendation #3

Ensure the mission vibrancy and financial stability of the seminaries of the ELCA as they serve their crucial roles in our theological education network

Proposed actions:

A. To call upon the seminaries of the ELCA in the next three years to form a common theological education enterprise that has the necessary planning structures and appropriate decision-making authority to (a) enable regular strategic sharing of the faculty resources of the seminaries along with other qualified teachers; (b) organize common recruitment and a common application process: (c) generate a common research agenda that serves the flourishing of the church (d) and enable operational efficiencies that free up the resources needed for expanded work and new experiments in theological education.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Core Investment Policy

Applicability

The investments subject to this policy are those related to funds administered by the Office of the Treasurer in excess of short-term operating needs of the churchwide organization and defined as "core" investments. Core investments are defined as those generally not subject to the seasonality of receipts and that represent a level below which the balance of restricted and designated funds are not expected to decrease (approximately $50 million on a long-term basis). This policy does not apply to the investments of the ELCA Foundation.

Investment Objectives

To outperform a benchmark index ("the Index") consisting of 40.0% Bank of America Merrill Lynch 1-5 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above), 40.0% Bank of America Merrill Lynch 1-3 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above) and 20% Russell 1000 Index over an average market cycle giving consideration to both income and capital
appreciation, subject to the following guidelines and consistent with the safety of principal.

An allocation to equity securities is being implemented to provide better diversification, reduce overall portfolio risk and improve overall return.

The performance benchmark for the individual equity allocation shall be: 100% U.S. Large Cap – Russell 1000 Index.

Investment Managers

At least two investment managers and custodians shall be appointed to manage the portfolio in accordance with this Investment Policy when the total value of the investment portfolio is expected to be more than $50 million over an extended period of time. At least one investment manager and custodian are required when the portfolio averages less than $50 million.

Investment Guidelines

I.   Duration and Maturity:

A. The core investment account will have a weighted average duration that normally ranges between 75% and 120% of the average duration of the Index, over an average market cycle, as calculated by the investment manager.

B. Maximum maturity of any specific holding will not exceed 10 years from the date of purchase (i.e., trade date) to put date, maturity, or average life.

    i. For purposes of calculating the maturity of a floating rate instrument, the maturity will be measured to the next reset date, if the underlying index resets on a regular predetermined interval.

    ii. For purposes of the above, securities with put rights exercisable within 10 years will be deemed to have a maturity equal to the put date.

II.   Quality:

A.   Bonds and other fixed-income obligations will be limited to obligations rated, at the time of purchase, equivalent to investment grade "Baa3/BBB rating category" or higher by at least two of the nationally recognized statistical rating organizations.

B.   Commercial paper and other short-term securities will be limited to obligations rated, at the time of purchase, equivalent to second tier (A2,P2,F2) or higher by at least two of the nationally recognized statistical rating organizations.

C.   The average credit quality of the core investment account on a weighted value basis will be equivalent to "AA rating category" or higher based on the rating assigned to each security in the account at the time of purchase.

D.   The aggregate of second tier commercial paper and investment grade "Baa3/BBB rating category" securities will not exceed 20% of the total market value of the portfolio at the time of purchase.

III.   Sector and Security Diversification:

A.   Except for the securities described in Sections IV A and IV I, which may be purchased without limits, no more than 5% of the portfolio market value (10% for mutual funds due to their inherent diversification) at the time of purchase, will be invested in any specific issue.

B.   No more than 65% of the portfolio value, at the time of purchase, will be invested in the aggregate value of security types listed in the eligible security section below, other than those described in Sections IV B, D and I.

C.   Repurchase agreements with any one counterparty may not exceed 20% of the portfolio value.

D.   The Low Volatility equity (Appendix A) portion of the portfolio will not exceed 20% of the market value of the Portfolio at the time of purchase. The Portfolio will be rebalanced when prudent, but at least annually.

E. Target allocations for the Portfolio is as follows and shall be reviewed quarterly and rebalanced within the relevant ranges when prudent, but at least annually.

	Target	Range
Short Duration Bond	80%	70% - 100%
U.S. Low Volatility	20 %	0 % - 25 %

IV.   Eligible Securities:

Subject to any applicable restrictions set forth above, eligible securities will include:

A.   Any security that, at the time of purchase, is a component of the MerrillLynch 1-5 Government/Corporate (BBB rated and above) Index, the Merrill Lynch 1-3 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above) and the Russell 1000 Index.

B.   Direct obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises and repurchase agreements collateralized by such obligations.

C.   Domestic corporate obligations and dollar denominated foreign corporate, foreign government and supranational obligations.

D.   Short-term instruments, including but not limited to adjustable rate preferreds, time deposits, commercial paper, certificates of deposit, bankers acceptances and floating rate notes, provided they meet the above restrictions.

E.   Mortgage-backed securities, (including CMO's - Collateralized Mortgage Obligations - and CMBS - Commercial Mortgage Backed Securities) issued by agencies or sponsored enterprises of the U.S. Government.

F.   Mortgage-backed securities (including CMO's and CMBS) issued by non-agency, private label entities.

G.   Asset-backed securities.

H. Taxable municipal bonds

I.   Money market funds with daily liquidity

J.   Any equity security that is listed on a United States national securities exchange or through a mutual fund or ETF.

Investments may be in the form of individual securities, mutual funds, exchange traded funds, or separately managed accounts.

V.   Constraints and Prohibited Investments.

A. <u>Socially Responsible Investing</u>
The core investment account is required to pursue its investment objectives subject to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values of the ELCA. Each year the social criteria list will be provided to the investment manager for screening. The manager will be required to divest as soon as practical, consistent with prudent investment management, any portfolio securities issued by companies on the social criteria lists. Investments in commingled funds/Exchange Traded Funds/mutual funds are not subject to socially responsible investing.

B.   <u>Prohibited Investments</u>
The core investment account may not: invest in non-U.S. dollar denominated securities; invest in commodities or commodity contracts; invest in sell or put options or uncovered call options; purchase derivatives for speculative purposes - no margin or any speculative devise; sell securities short; or invest directly in real estate.

VI.   Liquidity:

Liquidity requirements for the core investment account will be communicated to the investment managers in writing from time to time by the ELCA.

Approved: November 10, 2006
Reviewed: December, 2010
Reviewed: December, 2011
Reviewed: November 7, 2014
Reviewed: November 13, 2015

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Core Investment Policy

Applicability

The investments subject to this policy are those related to funds administered by the Office of the Treasurer in excess of short-term operating needs of the churchwide organization and defined as "core" investments. Core investments are defined as those generally not subject to the seasonality of receipts and that represent a level below which the balance of restricted and designated funds are not expected to decrease (approximately $50 million on a long-term basis). This policy does not apply to the investments of the ELCA Foundation.

Investment Objectives

To outperform a benchmark index ("the Index") consisting of ~~50~~40% Bank of America Merrill Lynch 1-5 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above)~~, and~~ ~~50~~40% Bank of America Merrill Lynch 1-3 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above) and 20% Russell 1000 Index over an average market cycle giving consideration to both income and capital appreciation, subject to the following guidelines and consistent with the safety of principal.

An allocation to equity securities is being implemented to provide better diversification, reduce overall portfolio risk and improve overall return.

The performance benchmark for the individual equity allocation shall be: 100% U.S. Large cap – Russell 1000 Index.

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Investment Managers

At least two investment managers and custodians shall be appointed to manage the portfolio in accordance with this Investment Policy when the total value of the investment portfolio is expected to be more than $50 million over an extended period of time. At least one investment manager and custodian are required when the portfolio averages less than $50 million.

Investment Guidelines

I. **Duration and Maturity:**

    A. The core investment account will have a weighted average duration that normally ranges between 75% and 120% of the average duration of the Index, over an average market cycle, as calculated by the investment

manager.

B. Maximum maturity of any specific holding will not exceed 10 years from
the date of purchase (i.e., trade date) to put date, maturity, or average life.

    i. For purposes of calculating the maturity of a floating rate instrument, the
maturity will be measured to the next reset date, if the underlying
index resets on a regular predetermined interval.

    ii. For purposes of the above, securities with put rights exercisable within 10
years will be deemed to have a maturity equal to the put date.

II.   Quality:

A.   Bonds and other fixed-income obligations will be limited to obligations
rated, at the time of purchase, equivalent to investment grade Baa3/BBB
rating category" or higher by at least ~~one~~ two of the nationally
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statistical rating organizations.

B.   Commercial paper and other short-term securities will be limited to
obligations rated, at the time of purchase, equivalent to second tier
(A2,P2,F2) or higher by at least ~~one~~ two of the nationally recognized
statistical rating organizations.

C.   The average credit quality of the core investment account on a weighted
value basis will be equivalent to "AA rating category" or higher based on
the rating assigned to each security in the account at the time of
purchase.

D.   The aggregate of second tier commercial paper and investment grade
"Baa3/BBB rating category" securities will not exceed 20% of the total
market value of the portfolio at the time of purchase.

III.   Sector and Security Diversification:

A.   Except for the securities described in Sections IV A and IV I, which may be
purchased without limits, no more than 5% of the portfolio market value
(10% for mutual funds due to their inherent diversification) at the time of
purchase, will be invested in any specific issue.

B.   No more than 65% of the portfolio value, at the time of purchase, will be
invested in the aggregate value of security types listed in the eligible
security section below, other than those described in Sections IV B, D and I.

C.   Repurchase agreements with any one counterparty may not exceed 20% of the portfolio value.

D.   The Low Volatility equity portion (Appendix A) of the portfolio will not exceed 320% of the market value of the Portfolio at the time of purchase. The Portfolio will be rebalanced when prudent, but at least annually.

E.   Target allocations for the Portfolio is as follows and shall be reviewed quarterly and rebalanced within the relevant ranges when prudent, but at least annually.

	Target	Range
Short Duration Bond	80%	70% - 100%
U.S. Low Volatility	20 %	0 % - 3025 %

IV.   Eligible Securities:

Subject to any applicable restrictions set forth above, eligible securities will
include:

A.   Any security that, at the time of purchase, is a component of the Merrill Lynch 1-5 Government/Corporate (BBB rated and above) Index, oror the Merrill Lynch 1-3 Year US Corporate & Government Index (BBB rated and above) and the Russell 1000 Index.

B.   Direct obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises and repurchase agreements collateralized by such obligations.

C.   Domestic corporate obligations and dollar denominated foreign corporate, foreign government and supranational obligations.

D.   Short-term instruments, including but not limited to adjustable rate preferreds, time deposits, commercial paper, certificates of deposit, bankers
acceptances and floating rate notes, provided they meet the above restrictions.

E.   Mortgage-backed securities, (including CMO's - Collateralized Mortgage Obligations - and CMBS - Commercial Mortgage Backed Securities)

issued by agencies or sponsored enterprises of the U.S. Government.

F.   Mortgage-backed securities (including CMO's and CMBS) issued by non-agency, private label entities.

G.   Asset-backed securities.

H.   Taxable municipal bonds

I.   I. Money market funds with daily liquidity
J.   Any equity security that is listed on a United States national securities exchange   or through a mutual fund or ETF.

Investments may be in the form of individual securities, mutual funds, exchange traded funds, or separately managed accounts.

V.   Constraints and Prohibited Investments.

A.   <u>Socially Responsible Investing</u>
The core investment account is required to pursue its investment objectives subject to criteria of social responsibility that are consistent with the values of the ELCA. Each year the social criteria list will be provided to the investment manager for screening. The manager will be required to divest as
soon as practical, consistent with prudent investment management, any portfolio securities issued by companies on the social criteria lists.

Investments in commingled funds/Exchange Traded Funds/mutual funds are not subject to socially responsible investing.

B. Prohibited Investments
The core investment account may not: invest in non-U.S. dollar denominated securities; invest in commodities or commodity contracts; invest in sell or put options or uncovered call options; purchase derivatives for speculative purposes - no margin or any speculative devise; sell
securities short; or invest directly in real estate.

VI.   Liquidity:

Liquidity requirements for the core investment account will be communicated to the investment managers in writing from time to time by the ELCA.

Approved: November 10, 2006
Reviewed: December, 2010
Reviewed: December, 2011
Reviewed: November   7,
2014

Reviewed November 13, 2015

Sept. 11, 2015, draft

Community Economic Development Social Criteria Screen

Authority: The ELCA, as did its predecessors, has a legacy of investing in communities. Our deep concern for those affected adversely by our economy is most clearly articulated in the social statement "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All."

Wording of screen: The ELCA seeks investment in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations that promote national or international economic development of urban and rural communities and neighborhoods characterized by a high proportion of people living in poverty and/or people of color.

Definition of Problem: The field of community economic development or positive social investing continues to grow both domestically and internationally, especially through micro-finance loans. The goal is to maximize the flow of investment capital into projects that otherwise might not obtain sufficient capital to contribute to community economic development.

Recognizing that various investors will implement this along a continuum, such investments might include, but are not limited to: low-income housing, job creation and training, social services, public health, food and agriculture, infrastructure, community entrepreneurship, small business development and financial services.

Social policy and studies:
"Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All." http://www.elca.org/socialstatements/economiclife/ http://www.elca.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Economic-Life?_ga=1.136651063.682366133.1390238070

Field Code Changed

Approved by the ELCA Church Council - November 13, 1988
Updated by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility - May 6, 2008
Approved by the ELCA Church Council - November, 2008
Approved by the ELCA Church Council- xxxx

Sept. 11, 2015, draft

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Social policy and studies: *"Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All,"*
http://www.elca.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Economic-Life?_ga=1.136651063.682366133.1390238070

Approved by the ELCA Church Council – November 13, 1988
Updated by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility - May 6, 2008
Approved by the ELCA Church Council - November 2008
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1   **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2   **Corporate Social Responsibility – ~~Updated~~**
3   **Sept. 11, 2015, draft**
4   **Caring for Creation~~: Global Warming and~~ Climate Change Issue Paper**
5
6   **I. Background**
7   The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and
8   incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face
9   unprecedented threats. Many threats are global: ~~M~~most stem directly from human activity
10 ("Caring for Creation," 2.B-1).[1] As Christians, we understand human beings as fundamentally
11 responsible before God. With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power
12 we employ in new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes
13 the global future itself. Central to that question is the threat posed by ~~global warming and~~ climate
14 change.
15
16 These threats and changes were first summarized in the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel
17 on Climate Change ~~(IPCC)~~ 2001: Synthesis Report[2]~~., which concludes that there is an increasing~~
18 ~~body of observations that gives a collective picture of a warming world and other changes in the~~
19 ~~climate system caused by human emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.~~
20 ~~Examples include rising surface temperatures, snow and ice melts, rising sea levels, and changes~~
21 ~~in weather patterns, such as drought, flooding, and monsoons. This was reinforced in the 2007~~
22 ~~Climate Change Assessment Report and additional special reports from the IPCC.~~ "Warming of
23 the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are
24 unprecedented over decades to millennia. The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts
25 of snow and ice have diminished, and sea level has risen. Human influence on the climate system
26 is clear, and recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history.
27 Recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems." [3]
28
29
30 Ceres is a network of investors, environmental organizations and other public-interest groups
31 working with companies to integrate sustainability into capital markets for the health of the
32 planet and its people. Numerous reports are published by Ceres calling the corporate world to
33 address issues of climate change and sustainability.[4]
34 **II. ELCA Social Policy**
35 "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice" (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
36 this church's vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
37 principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency~~,~~ and sustainability. Specifically this social

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[1] ~~http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Environment.aspx~~
http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation
[2] ~~http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data.htm~~
http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data_reports.shtml

[3] http://ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/
[4] ~~http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=592~~ http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports

| Field Code Changed |

38 statement calls the church to gather information and engage in dialogue with corporations on
39 how to promote justice for creation (5.E.1-1). Dialogues include implementing comprehensive
40 environmental principles, promoting healthy environments, and cooperation between the public
41 and private sector regarding sustainability.
42
43 The 1995 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on Environment – Energy Audits
44 (CA95.05.26b).[5] -The 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)[6] expressed great concern about
45 the destructive practice of mountaintop--removal (MTR) coal mining and urged our church to
46 advocate ending it. The 2001 Churchwide Assembly (CA01.07.57)[7] reaffirmed the commitment
47 of this church to the care of creation, including [climate change]global warming, as part of the
48 web of complex interwoven environmental concerns.
49
50 In 2005 the Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on Caring for Creation (CA05.07.39)[8]
51 encouraging our church to renew the commitment to caring for creation, followed by a 2007
52 Churchwide Assembly memorial on Energy Efficiency (CA07.06.33g) and in 2009 the Genesis
53 Covenant (CA09.03.09).
54
55 **III. Corporate Responses**
56 It has become accepted practice for a company to begin this work by evaluating and reporting on
57 greenhouse gas emissions and its total **"footprint."**. Corporate reporting includes the amount of
58 greenhouse gases from production and use of their products, the delivery process for their
59 products, and their suppliers' emissions. Setting targets for decreasing their emissions and
60 moving toward renewable technologies is often included in reports. In addition, the company can
61 review their probable risk exposure to the financial and competitive consequences of climate
62 change, ensure that they have sufficient expertise to make informed and responsible decisions
63 and set benchmarks. Climate change strategies and strategic alliances can be built into an overall
64 business plan.
65
66 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**
67 A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's
68 activities are evaluated. The environmental social criteria investment screen approved by the
69 ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007 and 2014 responds to this issue.[9]
70

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[5] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=40&ref=hts
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Energy_AuditsSPR95.pdf
[6] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf
http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=67&ref=hys
[7] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=94&ref=hys
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf
[8] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=158&ref=hts
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Caring_For_CreationSPR05.pdf
[9] http://www.elca.org/corporate/environmentalscreen
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen.pdf

V. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA[10]

1. We support reports on greenhouse gas footprints, as well as the establishment of targets for their reduction, including requests that a company complete the Carbon Disclosure Project[11] (CDP) questionnairereporting process.

2. We support disclosure of the economic risks associated with past, present and future emissions and/or impacts ofin climate change.

3. We support reports on the economic benefits of committing to a substantial reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction of product emissions.

4. We support reports on public policies that enable and assist with the achievement of emission targets, including policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures. We support adoption of public policy principles on climate change and reports on how these principles are implemented. Principles may include reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, promoting energy efficiency, investing in clean energy and supporting international action on the issue.

5. We support reports on economic risks associated with a company's exposure to the myriad of pending and adopted legislation from state, regional, and international bodies as it relates to reduction of greenhouse gases and the adequacy of such legislation to protect human health, the environment and the company's reputation.

6. We support reports on increased energy efficiency and conservation.

7. We support requests to adopt quantitative goals to reduce future emissions of carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and heavy metals such as mercury.

8. We support reports and assessments of steps a company is taking to meet new fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for its transportation fleet.

9. We support adoption of policies for safe low-carbon energy research, development and production.

10. We support reports on strategic plans reviewing the scenario of demand for significantly lowering fossil fuel use in the future. Scenarios might include pricing of carbon, preparation for physical impacts of climate change and strategies for reducing the risk of unburnable carbon or stranded assets.[12]

11. We support amendments of a company's greenhouse gas emissions policies to observe a moratorium and/or cease all financing, investment and further involvement in activities that support mountaintop-removal MTR coal mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants that emit carbon dioxide.

11.12. We support reports on a company's exposure to climate change related costs and risks from the use and or production of coal, and steps taken to reduce those risks.

13. We support reports that publicly disclose a company's current and projected water withdrawals at each thermoelectric power plant.

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

[11] https://www.cdproject.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx

[12] http://www.carbontracker.org/resources/

109   14. We support requests to measure, mitigate, disclose and adopt quantitative goals to
110   reduce methane emissions and flaring and reports on such efforts.
111   15. We support requests to reduce all forms of pollution in operations, productions and use
112   of its primary product.
113   16. We support resolutions calling for board candidates with environmental expertise
114   relevant to hydrocarbon exploration and production to be recommended by the
115   nominations committee.
116   17. We support requests that the bBoard's cCompensation cCommittee include metrics for
117   reduction of carbon emissions as one of the metrics for senior executives under the
118   company's executive incentive plan.
119   12.18.   We support reports assessing a financial institution's programs to address
120   greenhouse gas emissions from its lending portfolio and its exposure to climate change
121   risk in its lending, investing and financing activities.
122
123 **VI. Resolution Gguidelines for ELCA – General**
124 We support practices of good governance, specifically:
125   • *a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
126   • *reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
127   direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
128   • *reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
129   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution thatwhich might be
130   deemed political; and
131   • *guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
132   expenditures; and
133   • *reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management. [13]
134
135
136
137
138   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 5, 2003*
139   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct.ober 24, 2003*
140   *Approved by Church Council, November 2003*
141   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 28, 2007*
142   *Approved by Church Council, November 2007*
143   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 10, 2010*
144   *Approved by Church Council, November 2010*
145   *Approved by Church Council xxxxx*

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[13] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

1 **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
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8 incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face
9 unprecedented threats. Many threats are global: Most stem directly from human activity ("Caring
10 for Creation," 2.B-1).[1] As Christians, we understand human beings as fundamentally responsible
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12 new technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global
13 future itself. Central to that question is the threat posed by climate change.
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20 emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history. Recent climate changes have had
21 widespread impacts on human and natural systems." [3]
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23 Ceres is a network of investors, environmental organizations and other public-interest groups
24 working with companies to integrate sustainability into capital markets for the health of the
25 planet and its people. Numerous reports are published by Ceres calling the corporate world to
26 address issues of climate change and sustainability.[4]
27 **II. ELCA Social Policy**
28 "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice" (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
29 this church's vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
30 principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically this social
31 statement calls the church to gather information and engage in dialogue with corporations on
32 how to promote justice for creation (5.E.1-1). Dialogues include implementing comprehensive
33 environmental principles, promoting healthy environments, and cooperation between the public
34 and private sector regarding sustainability.
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36 The 1995 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on Environment – Energy Audits
37 (CA95.05.26b).[5] The 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)[6] expressed great concern about
38 the destructive practice of mountaintop-removal coal mining and urged our church to advocate

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[1] http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation
[2] http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data_reports.shtml
[3] http://ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/
[4] http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports
[5] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Energy_AuditsSPR95.pdf
[6] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf

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48   **III. Responses**
49   It has become accepted practice for a company to begin this work by evaluating and reporting on
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56   and set benchmarks. Climate change strategies and strategic alliances can be built into an overall
57   business plan.
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59   **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**
60   A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's activities are
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64   **V. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA[10]**
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66   1. We support reports on greenhouse gas footprints, as well as the establishment of targets
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69   2. We support disclosure of the economic risks associated with past, present and future
70   emissions and/or impacts on climate change.
71   3. We support reports on the economic benefits of committing to a substantial reduction of
72   greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction of product emissions.
73   4. We support reports on public policies that enable and assist with the achievement of
74   emission targets, including policies and procedures for political contributions and
75   expenditures. We support adoption of public policy principles on climate change and
76   reports on how these principles are implemented. Principles may include reduction of

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[7] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf

[8] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Caring_For_CreationSPR05.pdf

[9] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen.pdf

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

[11] https://www.cdproject.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx

77   greenhouse gas emissions, promoting energy efficiency, investing in clean energy and
78   supporting international action on the issue.
79   5. We support reports on economic risks associated with a company's exposure to the
80   myriad of pending and adopted legislation from state, regional and international bodies
81   as it relates to reduction of greenhouse gases and the adequacy of such legislation to
82   protect human health, the environment and the company's reputation.
83   6. We support reports on increased energy efficiency and conservation.
84   7. We support requests to adopt quantitative goals to reduce future emissions of carbon
85   dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and heavy metals such as mercury.
86   8. We support reports and assessments of steps a company is taking to meet new fuel
87   economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for its transportation fleet.
88   9. We support adoption of policies for safe low-carbon energy research, development and
89   production.
90   10. We support reports on strategic plans reviewing the scenario of demand for
91   significantly lowering fossil fuel use in the future. Scenarios might include pricing of
92   carbon, preparation for physical impacts of climate change and strategies for reducing
93   the risk of unburnable carbon or stranded assets.[12]
94   11. We support amendments of a company's greenhouse gas emissions policies to observe
95   a moratorium and/or cease all financing, investment and further involvement in
96   activities that support mountaintop-removal coal mining or the construction of new
97   coal-burning power plants that emit carbon dioxide.
98   12. We support reports on a company's exposure to climate change related costs and risks
99   from the use and or production of coal and steps taken to reduce those risks.
100   13. We support reports that publicly disclose a company's current and projected water
101   withdrawals at each thermoelectric power plant.
102   14. We support requests to measure, mitigate, disclose and adopt quantitative goals to
103   reduce methane emissions and flaring and reports on such efforts.
104   15. We support requests to reduce all forms of pollution in operations, productions and use
105   of its primary product.
106   16. We support resolutions calling for board candidates with environmental expertise
107   relevant to hydrocarbon exploration and production to be recommended by the
108   nominations committee.
109   17. We support requests that the board's compensation committee include metrics for
110   reduction of carbon emissions as one of the metrics for senior executives under the
111   company's executive incentive plan.
112   18. We support reports assessing a financial institution's programs to address greenhouse
113   gas emissions from its lending portfolio and its exposure to climate change risk in its
114   lending, investing and financing activities.
115
116 **VI. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – General**
117 We support practices of good governance, specifically:
118   • a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;

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[12] http://www.carbontracker.org/resources/

119   •   reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
120   direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
121   •   reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
122   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
123   political;
124   •   guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
125   expenditures; and
126   •   reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.[13]
127
128
129
130
131   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 5, 2003*
132   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003*
133   *Approved by Church Council, November 2003*
134   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 28, 2007*
135   *Approved by Church Council, November 2007*
136   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 10, 2010*
137   *Approved by Church Council, November 2010*
138   *Approved by Church Council xxxxx*

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[13]http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_
Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Corporate Social Responsibility – ~~Updated~~
Draft Aug. 9, 2015

Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper

I. Background

The ELCA social statement "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999)[1] is a benchmark for our role as Christians in economic life. 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 and injustice. 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";
- the means by which life is sustained: "livelihood";
- what is needed: "sufficiency"; and
- long-term perspective: "sustainability" (pg. 3).

"The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates ~~to~~ 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" (pg. 14). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices that~~which~~ 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~~.~~" (pg. 10)_. The multitudes around God's global table are all recognized as neighbors rather than competitors or strangers (pg. 17).

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.[2] In 2009, the Home Affordable Modification program was created in an effort to address the housing crisis related to the recession.[3] The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was begun in 2010 to give consumers information they 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.

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[1] ~~http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Economic-Life.aspx~~
http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm
[2] http://www.federalreserve.gov/dcca/cra/ and
~~http://makinghomeaffordable.gov/about.html~~https://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov/pages/default.aspx
[3] ~~http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/reports/modification_program_guidelines.pdf~~
http://www.consumerfinance.gov/the-bureau/ [4] ~~http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/pred/predlend.cfm~~
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/hcc/OHC_PREDLEND

Field Code Changed

Field Code Changed

38 However, the use of the following practices ~~could be~~ often is an ~~suggest~~ indicator~~s~~ of predatory
39 practices:

41 • ~~f~~Flipping[5] and inappropriate asset-based lending;
42 • ~~e~~Excessive ~~P~~points fees, yield spread premiums, and interest rates;
43 • ~~s~~Steering to subprime loans, when unnecessary;
44 • ~~f~~Forcing credit insurance;
45 • ~~e~~Excessive ~~P~~prepayment penalties; and
46 • ~~r~~Refusing to report good credit.

48 Concerns regarding these abuses as well as the steering of minorities toward the subprime market
49 contribute to the problem today.[6] "Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility," *The Corporate*
50 *Examiner* 31, nos. 4–6 (2001),[7] stipulates that financial services—including micro-financing,
51 discounted loan services, and other fair lending practices—be made available to local communities,
52 including those underserved, on a fair and equitable basis. Most recently the credit crisis has
53 included housing foreclosures, predatory practices in the credit card industry, and lack of access to
54 credit.

56 **II. ELCA Social Policy**
57 "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999): In its social statement, the church
58 delineates principles dedicated to sufficient and sustainable economic life for all people,
59 especially the poor and disenfranchised. It calls for "scrutiny to ensure that new ways of
60 providing low-income people with assistance and services do not sacrifice the most vulnerable
61 for the sake of economic efficiency and profit" (pg. 12).

63 The social statement "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture" (ELCA, 1993) acknowledges
64 economic forces that work against people of color calling for advocacy to address this injustice.

66 **III. ~~Corporate~~ Response~~s~~**
67 Since the inception of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility ~~(ICCR)~~, the faith
68 community has engaged the financial services community. Public information, analyzed through
69 the lens of those living in poverty, serves as a basis for working with financial institutions.
70 Trends in lending to low-income and minority borrowers as well as policies regarding these
71 borrowers are the focus of the work. Dialogues over the last decade have moved from the
72 community reinvestment act to predatory lending to loan servicing and foreclosure.

74 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**
75 A screen is a ~~pre-existing~~ framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's
76 activities are evaluated. ~~None currently apply to this paper.~~ The community development social

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[5] Loans refinanced with high additional fees, rather than working out a loan that is in arrears.
[6] ~~http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/lending/predatory.cfm~~
http://lobby.la.psu.edu/_107th/105_Predatory_Lending/Agency_Activities/HUD/HUD_PredatoryLending.htm
[7] 3rd edition revised and released April 2003, http://www.bench-marks.org

77 criteria investment screen relates to positive investments relating to issues addressed in this
78 paper. [8]

79

80 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue Specific[9]**

81

82 1. We support fair-lending community reinvestment policies.
83 2. We support a general program goal for housing loans to low- and moderate-income people,
84   with the focus on minorities, so that an institution would achieve average industry levels in
85   the market area.
86 3. We support annual reports to shareholders on lending achievements.
87 4. We support oversight by outside committees to ensure that no employee or broker engages in
88   predatory practices.
89 5. We support reports on avoidance of predatory lending practices including instructions to
90   employees on avoidance of predatory lending practices.
91 6. We support higher standards in securitizing loans as well as procedures to ensure loan
92   screening and originator screening for predatory loans.
93 7. We support reports on evaluating overdraft policies and practices and the impact these
94   practices have on borrowers.
95 8. We support reports evaluating a company's credit card marketing, lending and collection
96   practices and the impact these practices have on borrowers.
97 9. We support reports that oversee and report on the development and implementation of a
98   consistent loans-servicing policy and a comprehensive consumer lending policy, including
99   loan modifications. Other issues addressed could include overdraft fees, non-sufficient funds,
100   and direct deposits on advanced loans.
101 10. We support public reporting of both the trades and their value in over-the-counter credit
102   default swaps.
103 11. We support reports of a company's foreclosure policies, home preservation rates and
104   foreclosure statistics and staffing to accomplish this work. This report should disaggregate
105   the data for all racial and ethnic groups, including African-American, Hispanic, as well as
106   Caucasian mortgage borrowers.
107 12. We support reports to (a) develop a standard of suitability for a company's products,; (b)
108   develop internal controls relevant to the implementation of the suitability standard, and (c)
109   create a public reporting standard that assesses the company's success in providing loans that
110   meet the suitability standard.
111 13. We support reports on policies that are in place to safeguard against the provision of any
112   financial services for any corporate or individual client that enables capital flight and results
113   in tax avoidance.
114 13.14. We support reports on the risk management structure, staffing and reporting lines in
115   place to protect the institution, clients, customers and the finanicial system across all

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[8] http://www.elca.org/Resources/Corporate-Responsibility
[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.

116   operations of the company's business lines. This could include timelines for changes needed
117   to implement U.S. financial system reforms.
118
119   **VI. Resolution Gguidelines for ELCA – General**
120
121   We support practices of good governance, specifically:
122   • * a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
123   • * reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
124   direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
125   • * reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
126   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution thatwhich might be
127   deemed political; and
128   • * guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
129   expenditures; and.
130   • * reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper--level management[10].
131
132
133   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 6, 2003*
134   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct.ober 24, 2003*
135   *Approved at Church Council, November 2003*
136   *Amendment recommendation by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, March 11, 2004*
137   *Amendment eEndorsed by the Division for Church in Society Board, Oct.ober 22, 2004*
138   *Amendment aApproved at Church Council, Nov.ember 11, 2004*
139   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 28, 2007*
140   *Approved at Church Council November 2007*
141   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 10, 2010*
142   *Approved at Church Council November 2010*
143   *Approved by Church Council xxxx*

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[10]
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

1   **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2   **Corporate Social Responsibility**
3   **Draft Aug. 9, 2015**
4 **Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All: Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper**
5
6 **I. Background**
7 The ELCA social statement "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999)[1] is a
8 benchmark for our role as Christians in economic life. Because of sin, we have fallen short of our
9 responsibilities to one another in this world, but we live in light of God's promised future that
10 ultimately there will be no hunger and injustice. This promise makes us restless with a world that
11 is less than what God intends. In economic matters, this draws attention to:
12   • the scope of God's concern: "for all";
13   • the means by which life is sustained: "livelihood";
14   • what is needed: "sufficiency"; and
15   • long-term perspective: "sustainability" (pg. 3).
16
17 "The vantage point of the kingdom of God motivates us to focus on more than short-term gains.
18 Humans, called to be stewards of God's creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of the
19 earth and its resources" (pg. 14). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices that will
20 further sustainability. This vantage point also motivates us to seek "fairness in how goods,
21 services, income, and wealth are allocated among people so that they can acquire what they need
22 to live" (pg. 10). The multitudes around God's global table are all recognized as neighbors rather
23 than competitors or strangers (pg. 17).
24
25 As the U.S. domestic economy grew in the latter half of the 20th century, there was a concern
26 that more people be provided opportunities for access to credit. Congress enacted the
27 Community Reinvestment Act, with regulations first issued in 1977 and revised in 1995,
28 encouraging depository institutions to meet the credit needs of all communities in which they
29 operate, including low- and moderate-income communities.[2] In 2009, the Home Affordable
30 Modification program was created in an effort to address the housing crisis related to the
31 recession.[3] The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was begun in 2010 to give consumers
32 information they need to understand agreements with financial institutions for all types of credit.
33 This agency also works to restrict unfair, deceptive or abusive practices in the financial markets.
34
35 Although many institutions and legislatures have addressed practices leading to individual credit
36 crises, and although progress has been made, many people today are still suffering.[4] In and of
37 themselves certain practices are not necessarily predatory in nature, excessive and/or inappropriate.
38 However, the use of the following practices often is an indicator of predatory practices:
39

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[1] http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm
[2] http://www.federalreserve.gov/dcca/cra/ and https://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov/pages/default.aspx
[3] http://www.consumerfinance.gov/the-bureau/
[4] http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/hcc/OHC_PREDLEND

40   •   flipping[5] and inappropriate asset-based lending;
41   •   excessive points fees, yield spread premiums, and interest rates;
42   •   steering to subprime loans, when unnecessary;
43   •   forcing credit insurance;
44   •   excessive prepayment penalties; and
45   •   refusing to report good credit.
46
47 Concerns regarding these abuses as well as the steering of minorities toward the subprime market
48 contribute to the problem today.[6] "Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility," *The Corporate*
49 *Examiner* 31, nos. 4–6 (2001),[7] stipulates that financial services—including micro-financing,
50 discounted loan services, and other fair lending practices—be made available to local communities,
51 including those underserved, on a fair and equitable basis. Most recently the credit crisis has
52 included housing foreclosures, predatory practices in the credit card industry, and lack of access to
53 credit.
54
55 **II. ELCA Social Policy**
56 "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999): In its social statement, the church
57 delineates principles dedicated to sufficient and sustainable economic life for all people,
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59 providing low-income people with assistance and services do not sacrifice the most vulnerable
60 for the sake of economic efficiency and profit" (pg. 12).
61
62 The social statement "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture" (ELCA, 1993) acknowledges
63 economic forces that work against people of color calling for advocacy to address this injustice.
64
65 **III. Responses**
66 Since the inception of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the faith community has
67 engaged the financial services community. Public information, analyzed through the lens of
68 those living in poverty, serves as a basis for working with financial institutions. Trends in
69 lending to low-income and minority borrowers as well as policies regarding these borrowers are
70 the focus of the work. Dialogues over the last decade have moved from the community
71 reinvestment act to predatory lending to loan servicing and foreclosure.
72
73 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**
74 A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's activities are
75 evaluated. The community development social criteria investment screen relates to positive
76 investments relating to issues addressed in this paper. [8]
77
78 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue Specific[9]**

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[5] Loans refinanced with high additional fees, rather than working out a loan that is in arrears.
[6] http://lobby.la.psu.edu/_107th/105_Predatory_Lending/Agency_Activities/HUD/HUD_PredatoryLending.htm
[7] 3rd edition revised and released April 2003, http://www.bench-marks.org
[8] http://www.elca.org/Resources/Corporate-Responsibility

79
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108   meet the suitability standard.
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110   financial services for any corporate or individual client that enables capital flight and results
111   in tax avoidance.
112 14. We support reports on the risk management structure, staffing and reporting lines in place to
113   protect the institution, clients, customers and the financial system across all operations of the
114   company's business lines. This could include timelines for changes needed to implement
115   U.S. financial system reforms.
116
117 **VI. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – General**
118 We support practices of good governance, specifically:

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[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.

119   •   a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
120   •   reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
121   direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
122   •   reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
123   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
124   political;
125   •   guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
126   expenditures; and
127   •   reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management[10].
128
129
130   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 6, 2003*
131   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003*
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133   *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*
135   *Amendment approved at Church Council, Nov. 11, 2004*
136   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 28, 2007*
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[10]http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_
Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

1   **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2   **Corporate Social Responsibility –**
3   **Draft Sept. ,11, 2015**
4   **Caring for Creation: Environmental Topics Issue Paper**
5
6   **I. Background**
7   The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and
8   incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil, and water that support them,
9   face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global: Most stem directly from human activity.
10   ("Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice" [ELCA, 1993], section 2.B-1).[1] As Christians
11   we understand human beings as being fundamentally responsible before God. "The collective
12   effects of these new [technological] powers mean human beings increasingly bear the moral
13   burden for the shape of nature and the very existence of future generations.[2]
14   With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new
15   technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future
16   itself.
17
18   Caring for a global future includes a range of issues from health to environment to
19   biotechnology. Over the past few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to issue
20   statements about their environmental policies and practices. One could even say that a shift has
21   been occurring where companies no longer see environmental stewardship as an externally
22   imposed burden but rather, as a market-driven opportunity that enhances productivity, corporate
23   image, and shareholder value. The key questions for investors then become: 1) whether these
24   policies and practices genuinely result in reducing negative environmental impact, and 2)
25   whether one can glean from a company's report enough meaningful information about the
26   environmental performance and sustainable development strategies.
27
28   The faith-based investment community for many years has been addressing environmental
29   issues. A way of evaluating environmental and sustainability reporting is found in the Global
30   Reporting Initiative's Reporting Framework.[3] These, along with the extensive set of Ceres
31   comparative reports,[4] and reports from the Investor Environmental Health Network [5] set the
32   framework for the environmental dimension of sustainability concerns that an organization's
33   impact has on living and nonliving systems.
34
35   Companies are challenged to analyze their actions with a view toward minimizing local and
36   global environmental damage. Clean-up is sought when damage has occurred, and stakeholder
37   consultation is desirable at every step along the way.
38

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[1] http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Environment.aspx
http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation
[2] http://www.elcaELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics
[3] http://www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework/ReportingFrameworkOverview/
https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx
[4] http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=592 http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports
[5] http://iehn.org/publications.reports.php

39 **II. ELCA Social Policy**
40 "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice" (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
41 the cChurch's vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
42 principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability. Specifically, this social
43 statement calls (section 5.E.1-1) the church to engage in dialogue with corporations on how to
44 promote justice for creation. This includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive
45 environmental principles, healthy environments, and cooperation between the public and private
46 sector regarding sustainability.
47
48 The 2001 Churchwide Assembly (CA01.07.57)[6] reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the
49 care of creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex interwoven
50 environmental concerns. Previously, the 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)[7] expressed
51 great concern about the destructive practice of mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining and
52 urged our church to advocate ending it.
53
54 The social statements,:
55 - "Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor" (ELCA, 2007)[8]; and
56 - "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999)[9]; and
57 - "Genetics, Faith and Responsibility[10]
58 aAs well as social policy resolution:,
59 - "Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply" (CC04.11.57)[11]
60 support this issue paper.
61
62 **III. Corporate Responses**
63 Good corporate environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting.
64 This reporting would include articulating a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing
65 methods and benchmarks to measure environmental performance. Companies must move from
66 being compliance-oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management. In
67 addition, companies can review their probable risk exposure to financial and competitive
68 consequences of environmental changes to ensure they have sufficient additional expertise to in
69 makeing informed decisions and set responsible benchmarks.
70
71 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

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[6] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=94&ref=hys
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf

[7] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=67&ref=hys
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf
[8] http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Health-and-Healthcare.aspx
http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/health-and-healthcare.aspx.htm#read
[9] http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Economic-Life.aspx
http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm
[10] http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics
[11] http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=155&ref=hts
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GMOs_Food_SupplySPR04.pdf

72 A screen is a ~~pre-existing~~ framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's
73 activities are evaluated. The environmental social criteria investment screen approved by the
74 ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007 and in 2014 addresses this issue.[12]

75

76 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue S~~s~~pecific[13]**

77

78 **A. Energy**
79 1. We support reports for the gas and oil industry, including: environmental impact assessments
80   detailing legal, regulatory risks and plans to mitigate these risks; the assumptions made in
81   deciding to proceed; the possible long-term risks to the finances and operations of
82   companies; the financial impact of accidents and spills: and the likely and/or actual impact of
83   hydraulic ~~ ~~fracturing operations, including air, water~~,~~ and soil hazards.
84 2. We support reports that ask for risk assessments and propose measures to reduce ~~the~~ risks of
85   nuclear storage.
86 3. We support reports assessing (a) the impact of mountaintop removal coal ~~MTR~~ mining by a
87   company's clients on the environment and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning future
88   financing of companies engaged in such~~MTR~~ mining or the construction of new coal-
89   burning power plants that emit carbon dioxide.
90 4. We support reports on a company's efforts, above and beyond legal compliance, to reduce
91   environmental and health hazards associated with coal combustion waste ponds,
92   impoundments and mines, and how those efforts reduce the company's financial and
93   operational risks.
94 5. We support requests for reporting on the development of renewable energy sources with
95   quantitative targets.
96 ~~5.~~6. We support reports on ~~water impact from~~ the effects of power generation facilities on water
97   supplies.

98

99 **B. Environmental Reporting**
100 ~~6.~~7. We support proposals asking for endorsement of the Ceres Principles,[14] ~~,~~ the Carbon
101   Disclosure Project water, carbon, forest~~,~~ and supply chain guidelines[15] and their use in
102   preparation of sustainability reports.
103 ~~7.~~8. We support reports identifying environmental hazards, including waste facilities~~,~~ and their
104   impact on the communities as well as reports on the development of a company's policy
105   about such hazards and their work in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, including
106   land procurement.

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[12] ~~http://www.elca.org/corporate/environmentalscreen~~
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen_2014.pdf

[13] 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.

[14] ~~http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=416~~ http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles
[15] ~~https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx~~ https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx

Field Code Changed

107   8.9. We support reports on accident reduction and mitigation, including a company's progress in
108   implementing the reforms required under a settlement with the Environmental Protection
109   Agency (EPA) and the commitments stated in a company's corporate social responsibility
110   CSR report.
111   9.10. We support reports on the effects of a company's marketing on the purchasing practices
112   of people living in poverty and what might be done to mitigate harm.
113   11. We support reports on the policies and procedures that guide a company's assessment of host
114   country laws and regulations with respect to their adequacy to protect human health, the
115   environment and the company's reputation.
116   12. We support reports on chemical footprints [16] of operations and the responsible reduction of
117   pollution, from both their operations and the use of their products.
118   13. We support reports on actions of the company's bBoard of dDirectors nominations
119   committee to ensureassure there is environmental expertise on the company's Bboard of
120   dDirectors, including calling for a director with environmental expertise.]
121   14. We support requests that the board compensation committee, when setting senior executive
122   compensation, include environmental metrics and performance in the executive incentive
123   plans.
124
125
126   **C. Food/Water**
127   10.15. We support reports regarding antibiotic use in the food-supply chain and labeling of
128   such foods treated with antibiotics.
129   16. We support reports regarding long-term sustainability in the growing, procurement and
130   delivery of food, including seafood and organic products. We also support reports on
131   consideration of and reporting on efforts to source 100 percent% certified sustainable palm
132   oil.
133   11.17. We support reports on the company's policies on water stewardship and the human right
134   to water.[17].
135   12.18. We support reports evaluating the impact of a company's operations on land, water
136   usage, water resources and, waste management, including the potential environmental and
137   public health impacts of each of its company-owned plants, those of its affiliates, as well as
138   proposed ventures that extract water from water-scarce areas.
139   13.19. We support reports on the impact of a company's hydraulic fracturing operations,
140   including reduction or elimination of hazards to air, water, and soil quality from such
141   fracturing.
142   14.20. We support reports on policy options to respond to the public concerns regarding bottled
143   water, including, but not limited to, providing additional information to consumers, or further
144   modifying the production, delivery or sale of bottled water products so as to minimize
145   environmental and energy impacts.
146   15.21. We support reports on a company's food product supply chain, including:
147   a) sStrategies to significantly reduce waste, energy and water use throughout the supply
148   chain;

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[16] http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/
[17] As defined by the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Comment 15, para.2).

149 b) rResource conservation programs and pollution prevention measures for the full product
150   life-cycle;
151 c) lLabeling products withfor country of origin and presence and amount of genetically
152   modified ingredients;
153 d) iInternal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically
154   engineered organisms;
155 e) sSafety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from
156   production to consumption; and
157 f) rRespect for and adherence to seed saving rights of traditional agricultural communities;
158   and
159   g)Theg) tThe adequacy of the current monitoring systems concerning genetically
160   modified organismGMO use and plans to provide alternatives should the situation merit.
161
162
163

D. Forests
165 22. We support reports studying ways for a company to take leadership on the environmental
166   aspects of paper procurement, including stronger national paper recovery goals, setting goals
167   for recycled content in its magazines and books, and goals for a majority of its supply chain
168   to adopt strong forest management certification procedures, and the development of a
169   sustainable paper purchasing policy. This might include reports on costs and benefits,
170   greenhouse gas impact, and implementation.
171 16.23. We support reports on a company's and its supply chain's contribution to deforestation
172   and plans to mitigate these impacts.
173

E. Product Safety
175 17.24. We support requests for reports or policies on exposure to, the reduction of and/or
176   elimination of toxins, pesticides, and/or radioactive materials in the environment, including
177   product safety or toxicity.
178 18.25. We support reports on product stewardship policies, including recycling strategies.
179 19.26. We support reports on the implications of a policy for reducing the potential harm and the
180   number of people in danger from potential catastrophic chemical releases by increasing the
181   inherent security of a company's facilities through steps including reducing the use, storage
182   and transportation of extremely hazardous substances, re-engineering processes, and locating
183   facilities outside high-population areas.
184 20.27. We support reports on a company's policies on the use of nanomaterials and
185   neonicotinoids in its product, packaging and product safetyuse. and educational efforts
186   around these issues.
187 28. We support reports on policy options to reduce consumer exposure to and increase consumer
188   awareness of mercury, Biphenyl A (BpA), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and any other
189   toxins contained in a company's compact flourescent products and or packaging. We support
190   reports on a companyie's plan to move to safer alternative substitutes for the presence of
191   toxic chemicals in its products.
192 21.29. We support development of policy and reports asking for mechanisms to recycle
193   electronics safely and prevention the of improper export of hazardous e-waste.

194
195 **VI. Resolution Gguidelines for ELCA – General**
196
197 We support practices of good governance, specifically:
198 • * a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
199 • * reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
200   direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
201 • * reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
202   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution thatwhich might be deemed
203   political; and
204 • * guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
205   expenditures; and
206 • *reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.[18].
207
208
209
210
211   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 5, 2003*
212   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct.ober 24, 2003*
213   *Approved by Church Council November 2003*
214   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 28, 2007*
215   *Approved by Church Council November 2007*
216   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept.ember 10, 2010*
217   *Approved by Church Council November 2010*
218   *Approved by Church Council xxxxx*

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[18]http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_
Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

1   **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2   **Corporate Social Responsibility**
3   **Draft Sept. 11, 2015**
4   **Caring for Creation: Environmental Topics Issue Paper**
5
6   **I. Background**
7   The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and
8   incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil and water that support them, face
9   unprecedented threats. Many threats are global: Most stem directly from human activity.[1] "The
10   collective effects of these new [technological] powers mean human beings increasingly bear the
11   moral burden for the shape of nature and the very existence of future generations.[2]
12   With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new
13   technologies, this responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future
14   itself.
15
16   Caring for a global future includes a range of issues from health to environment to
17   biotechnology. Over the past few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to issue
18   statements about their environmental policies and practices. One could even say that a shift has
19   been occurring where companies no longer see environmental stewardship as an externally
20   imposed burden but rather as a market-driven opportunity that enhances productivity, corporate
21   image and shareholder value. The key questions for investors then become: 1) whether these
22   policies and practices genuinely result in reducing negative environmental impact, and 2)
23   whether one can glean from a company's report enough meaningful information about the
24   environmental performance and sustainable development strategies.
25
26   The faith-based investment community for many years has been addressing environmental
27   issues. A way of evaluating environmental and sustainability reporting is found in the Global
28   Reporting Initiative's Reporting Framework.[3] These, along with the extensive set of Ceres
29   comparative reports[4] and reports from the Investor Environmental Health Network [5] set the
30   framework for the environmental dimension of sustainability concerns that an organization's
31   impact has on living and nonliving systems.
32
33   Companies are challenged to analyze their actions with a view toward minimizing local and
34   global environmental damage. Clean-up is sought when damage has occurred, and stakeholder
35   consultation is desirable at every step along the way.
36
37   **II. ELCA Social Policy**
38   "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice" (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
39   the church's vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
40   principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. Specifically, this social

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[1] http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation
[2] http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics
[3] https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx
[4] http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports
[5] http://iehn.org/publications.reports.php

41 statement calls (section 5.E.1-1) the church to engage in dialogue with corporations on how to
42 promote justice for creation. This includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive
43 environmental principles, healthy environments, and cooperation between the public and private
44 sector regarding sustainability.
45
46 The 2001 Churchwide Assembly (CA01.07.57)[6] reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the
47 care of creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex interwoven
48 environmental concerns. Previously, the 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)[7] expressed
49 great concern about the destructive practice of mountaintop removal coal mining and urged our
50 church to advocate ending it.
51
52 The social statements:
53   • "Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor" (ELCA, 2007)[8];
54   • "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" (ELCA, 1999)[9]; and
55   • "Genetics, Faith and Responsibility[10]
56 as well as social policy resolution:
57   • "Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply" (CC04.11.57)[11]
58 support this issue paper.
59
60 **III. Responses**
61 Good corporate environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting.
62 This reporting would include articulating a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing
63 methods and benchmarks to measure environmental performance. Companies must move from
64 being compliance-oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management. In
65 addition, companies can review their probable risk exposure to financial and competitive
66 consequences of environmental changes to ensure they have sufficient additional expertise to
67 make informed decisions and set responsible benchmarks.
68
69 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**
70 A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's activities are
71 evaluated. The environmental social criteria investment screen approved by the ELCA in 1990
72 and updated in 2007 and in 2014 addresses this issue.[12]
73
74 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue Specific[13]**

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[6] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf
[7] http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf
[8] http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/health-and-healthcare.aspx.htm#read
[9] http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm
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85   company's clients on the environment and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning future
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114   pollution from both their operations and the use of their products.

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[14] http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles
[15] https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx
[16] http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/

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142   chain;
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144   life-cycle;
145   c) labeling products with country of origin;
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147   engineered organisms;
148   e) safety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from
149   production to consumption;
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153

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[17] As defined by the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Comment 15, para.2).

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179   company's plan to move to safer alternative substitutes for the presence of toxic chemicals in
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183
184 **VI. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – General**
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189   • reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
190   organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed
191   political;
192   • guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures;
193   and
194   • reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.[18]
195
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197
198
199   *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 5, 2003*

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[18]http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_
Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820

200   *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, Oct. 24, 2003*
201   *Approved by Church Council November 2003*
202   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 28, 2007*
203   *Approved by Church Council November 2007*
204   *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 10, 2010*
205   *Approved by Church Council November 2010*
206   *Approved by Church Council ==xxxxx==*

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
CSM Report on Staffing Recommendations
November 2015

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) work conducted by the ELCA and facilitated through Congregation and Synodical Mission (CSM) in partnership with Portico Benefit Services is helping the ELCA to make progress in its ongoing commitment to being a socially responsible organization. The staffing recommendation is both responsive to current needs and healthy succession planning moving us into the future. The plan has been discussed and is supported by all partners involved.

Objective:
The CSR position will move over the next several years from a half-time contract position to a half-time churchwide staff position.

Current staffing:
Ms. Pat Zerega will continue to serve as a part-time consultant for the CSR ministry for CSM and Portico and to staff the ELCA CSR churchwide team. The ELCA will continue to fund jointly her work and an appropriate program budget, working with the half-time staff person to begin a transition as she nears retirement and helping the staff person to develop relationships with relevant organizations and tables.

Staffing adjustments:
During the vacancy of the Director for Advocacy, the existing full-time staff position for environmental policy will be modified and assume the supervision for the CSR work. This will allow for overlap between Ms. Zerega, currently serving as a consultant, and the staff person serving in this ministry.

Future Staffing:
At time of transition to a new staff person, the half-time position will be deployed to the ELCA Advocacy office in Washington, D.C. This would strengthen the work in the following ways:

1. Many major corporations have D.C.-based offices and staff, and D.C. is home to many trade associations, allowing for contacts and connections to be made and for face-to-face meetings.
2. CSR work necessarily entails working with the Administration and Members of Congress. As such, proximity to Administration offices and Capitol Hill is a fundamental component to the work of CSR.
3. Coalition work related to CSR and its satellite issues is centered in Washington, D.C. In-person presence at those meetings is important to building relationships.
4. In its current configuration, the CSR portfolio cannot be fully integrated into the broader advocacy portfolio. Moving the position to Washington, D.C. will increase the ELCA's effectiveness and ability to leverage CSR-related advocacy with its other policy areas as well as the ability to integrate ELCA policy priorities and expertise into the CSR work.

Funding
Current funding for the CSR position and program support will continue in partnership with CSM and Portico Benefit Services.

Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry, and Eucharist
Executive Summary

This *Declaration on the Way* is both an expression of the consensus achieved by Lutherans and Catholics on the central topics of church, ministry, and Eucharist and an indication of differences remaining to be resolved. The document consists of five sections:

I.   Introduction
II.   Statement of Agreements on Church, Ministry and Eucharist
III.   Agreements in the Lutheran/Catholic Dialogues—Elaborated and Documented
IV.   Remaining Differences and Reconciling Considerations
V.   Conclusion: Next Steps on the Way

The Introduction explains the inspiration for the document and its purposes. The inspiration comes from Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), who in December 2011 proposed such a declaration "on the way" on these three topics; from the ecumenical leadership of Pope Francis and General Secretary Martin Junge of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF); and from the 2012 document of the International Lutheran—Roman Catholic Commission on Unity titled *From Conflict to Communion.*

Two key points from the conclusion of *From Conflict to Communion* guided the work:

1) Catholics and Lutherans should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced.
2) Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with each other and by mutual witness of faith.

Declaration on the Way seeks reception of the Statement of Agreements from the LWF and the PCPCU and their commitment to address the theological questions that remain. The *Declaration* also seeks from Catholics and Lutherans at local levels a deeper commitment to Christ and greater engagement and collaboration with one another. Thus the *Declaration* makes more visible the unity Catholics and Lutherans share as they approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Section II presents 32 Statements of Agreement drawn from the international and regional dialogues of the last 50 years. This powerful litany of consensus reflects the real, if still incomplete, common affirmation possible in these crucial and inter-related areas. For example:

(1) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth has been assembled by the triune God, who grants to its members their sharing in the triune divine life as God's own people, as the body of the risen Christ, and as the temple of the Holy Spirit, while they are also called to give witness to these gifts so that others may come to share in them.

(14) Catholics and Lutherans agree that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ. For both Catholics and Lutherans, the common priesthood of all the baptized and the special, ordained ministry enhance one another.

(31) Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic Communion, as sacramental participation in the glorified body and blood of Christ, is a pledge that our life in Christ will be eternal, our bodies will rise, and the present world is destined for transformation, in the hope of uniting us in communion with the saints of all ages now with Christ in heaven.

The following section elaborates and documents each of the 32 consensus affirmations that comprise the Statement of Agreements. The longest and most detailed part of the document, this section grounds the Agreements in the work of the international and regional dialogues

Section IV looks to the future. It treats 15 topics that have arisen in dialogue where there are varying degrees of doctrinal difference. A number of them are seen not to be church dividing, and some possible ways forward are sketched. This section is more tentative and not intended to be comprehensive; it shows the "on the way" character of the *Declaration on the Way.*

The concluding section, practical in tone, speaks of next steps. It recommends that the LWF and the PCPCU "together receive, affirm and create a process to implement consequences of the 32 statements." Recognition of these agreements is itself a further step on the way to unity.

This reception and affirmation naturally lead to practices that advance the growing communion between Lutherans and Catholics. Thus the Conclusion also invites the PCPCU and the LWF to create a process and timetable for addressing the remaining issues. It suggests that the expansion of opportunities for Catholics and Lutherans to receive Holy Communion together would be a sign of the agreements already reached and the distance traveled. It also encourages attention to "moral issues that are often deemed to be church dividing" that would be conducted "in the same spirit of mutual respect and commitment to unity characterized by work on justification, church, Eucharist and ministry." Reception of the Statement of Agreements also invites local and regional responses. While much is already being done together, communities may look afresh at their collaboration. The Conclusion offers suggestions for initial, continued or enhanced collaboration at local and regional levels.

This *Declaration on the Way* invites church leaders, church scholars and church members to act in the spirit of Jesus' prayer "That they all may be one" (John 17:21).

Action for the ELCA Conference of Bishops Concerning the
Declaration on the Way: *Church, Ministry and Eucharist*

BACKGROUND

(1) As we observe 50 years of dialogue that was initiated by Vatican II, we have participated in the harvesting of documents that have provided greater unity of Christ's followers.

(2) As we have received and given thanks for the historic agreement between Lutherans and Catholics in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, we have affirmed the importance of building on this foundational agreement for greater unity in Christ.

(3) In response to the invitation of Cardinal Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), to seal in agreements in the areas of the church, ministry, and the Eucharist, the ELCA and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops responded to the invitation by providing scholars to address a Declaration on the Way (to unity).

(4) This task force drew principally on the statements of the international dialogue commissions sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation and the PCPCU, and also on a range of regional dialogues, including those in the United States.

(5) The Statement of Agreements seals in areas of significant consensus and recognizes that on these subjects there are not church-dividing differences.

(6) As Lutherans and Catholics commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, the *Declaration on the Way* is an important contribution to local, regional, and international observances and affirmations of unity.

ACTION

Be it resolved that the ELCA Conference of Bishops

- expresses profound gratitude for the *Declaration on the Way* as another sign of the ELCA's commitment to making visible the unity that is God's gift in Christ (*Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, 1991);

- affirms the 32 Statements of Agreement; and

- requests that the Church Council accept these Statements of Agreement and forward the Declaration on the Way to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly

  o for reception of the 32 Statements of Agreement, acknowledging that "receiving these agreements recognizes that there are no longer church dividing issues with respect to these Statements…" (*Declaration on the Way*); and

  o for commending to the ELCA the *Declaration on the Way*; *From Conflict to Communion*; and the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* as resources for the common life of the church as we approach 2017 and beyond.
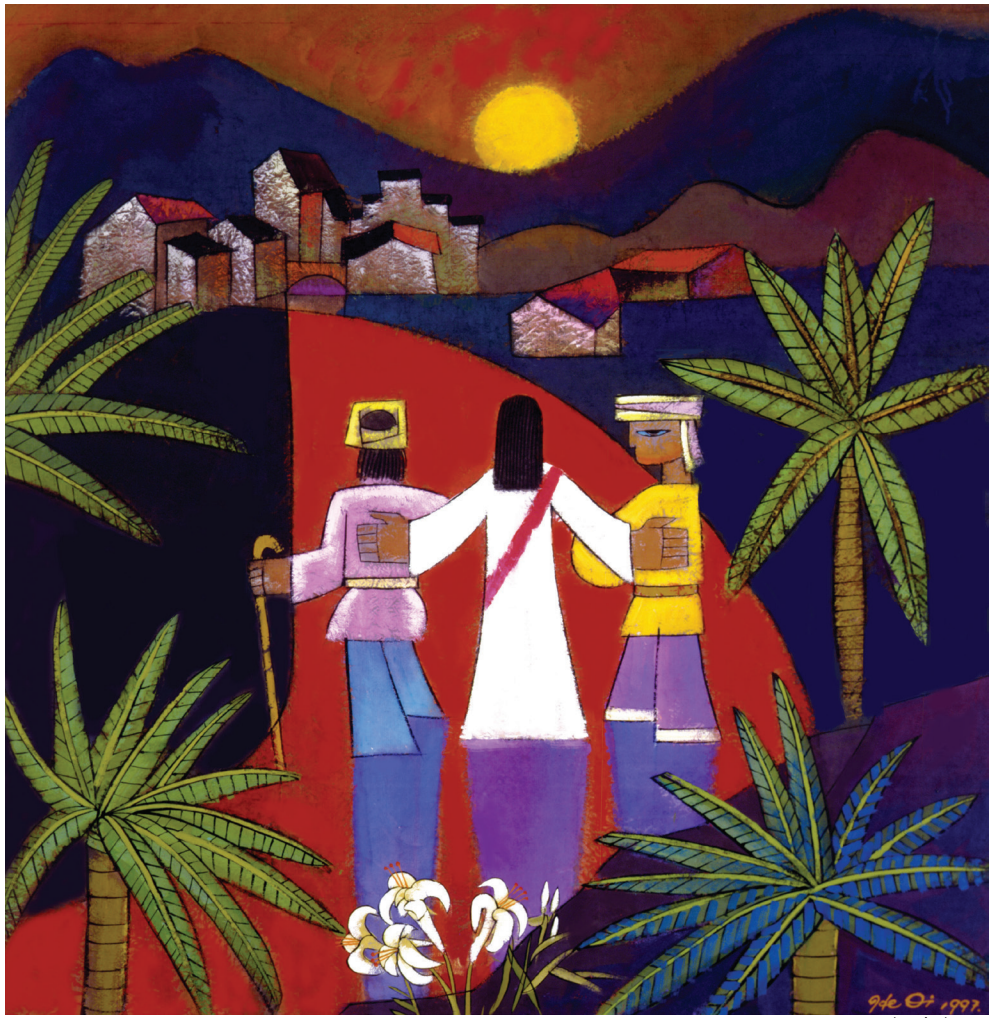
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Declaration on the Way:
Church, Ministry and Eucharist

Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs affirmed the 32 Agreed Statements and commended the *Declaraion on the Way* to Cardinal Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, for further reflection and action. The *Declaration* is not a Statement of the full body of Bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

2015

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DIALOGUES CONSULTED AND ABBREVIATIONS

The members of the Declaration on the Way task force offer gratitude to all who have participated in Catholic-Lutheran dialogues during the last five decades and acknowledge their profound dependence on the work accomplished in these international and regional (national and local) dialogues. This Declaration has especially drawn from the following dialogue reports, which are available in online as well as published versions:

International dialogues and studies

Report of the Joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic Study Commission on "The Gospel and the Church" (1972). Cited as *Malta Report.*

Das Herrenmahl / The Eucharist (1978). Lutheran/Roman Catholic Joint Commission. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Bonifatius-Druckerei Paderborn/Otto Lembeck, 1978; Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1980. Cited as *Eucharist.*

All Under One Christ (1980). Roman Catholic/Lutheran Joint Commission Statement on the Augsburg Confession.

The Ministry in the Church (1981). Roman Catholic/Lutheran Joint Commission. Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1982. Cited as *Ministry.*

Kirche und Rechtfertigung / Church and Justification (1993). Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Bonifatius-Druckerei Paderborn/Otto Lembeck, 1994; Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1994. Cited as *Church and Justification.*

The Apostolicity of the Church: Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (2006). Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2006. Cited as *Apostolicity.*

From Conflict to Communion. Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017 (2013). Report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt and Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2013. Cited as *From Conflict to Communion.*

Regional and national dialogues and studies

The Eucharist as Sacrifice: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue III (1967). Washington, D.C.: Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; New York: U.S.A. National Committee for The Lutheran World Federation, 1967. Cited as *Eucharist as Sacrifice.*

Eucharist and Ministry: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue IV (1970). Washington, D.C.: Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; New York: U.S.A. National Committee for The Lutheran World Federation, 1970. Cited as *Eucharist and Ministry.*

Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VI, eds. Paul C. Empie, T. Austin Murphy, and Joseph A. Burgess. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978.

Kirchengemeinschaft in Wort und Sakrament (1984). Bilateral Working Group of the German National Bishops' Conference and the Church Leadership of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany. Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1984.

Communio Sanctorum: The Church as the Communion of Saints (2000). Bilateral Working Group of the German National Bishops' Conference and the Church Leadership of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany. English translation by Mark W. Jeske, Michael Root, and Daniel R. Smith. Collegeville: 2004. Cited as *Communio Sanctorum.*

The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries (2004). Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; Department for Ecumenical Affairs, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; edited by Randall Lee, Jeffrey Gross. Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005. Cited as *Church as Koinonia of Salvation.*

Justification in the Life of the Church: A Report from the Roman Catholic-Lutheran Dialogue Group for Sweden and Finland (2010). English translation by Sr. Gerd Swenson. Uppsala, Stockholm, and Helsinki: Church of Sweden, Roman-Catholic Diocese of Stockholm, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, Roman-Catholic Diocese of Helsinki, 2010. Cited as *Justification in the Life of the Church.*

Hope of Eternal Life: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue XI (2011). Edited by Lowell G. Almen and Richard J. Sklba. Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2011. Cited as *Hope of Eternal Life.*

Abbreviations

AG   *Ad Gentes.* Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church. Second Vatican Council.

BC   *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

BEM   *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry.* Faith and Order Paper 111. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982.

CA   Augsburg Confession, 1530, in *The Book of Concord.*

CD   *Christus Dominus.* Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church. Second Vatican Council.

DH   *Henrich Denzinger Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, revised, enlarged, and in collaboration with Helmut Hoping, edited by Peter Hünermann for the original bilingual edition and edited by Robert Fastiggi and Anne Englund Nash for the English Edition, 43rd Edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012).

DS   *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum, et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, Henricus Denzinger et Adolphus Schönmetzer, ed. XXXIII (Herder: Barcinone, Friburgi Brisgoviae, et alibi, 1965). References by paragraph number.

DV   *Dei Verbum.* Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation. Second Vatican Council.

JDDJ   *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999) by The Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church.

LG   *Lumen Gentium.* Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Second Vatican Council.

Lund Statement

Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church (2007). The Lutheran World Federation, 2008.

LW *Luther's Works*. Published in 55 volumes by Concordia Publishing House and Fortress Press, St. Louis and Philadelphia, 1958–1986.

LWF The Lutheran World Federation

PCPCU Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

PO *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests. Second Vatican Council.

Tanner *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Norman P. Tanner, S.J., Ed. London/Washington: Sheed and Ward/ Georgetown University Press, 1990.

UR *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Decree on Ecumenism. Second Vatican Council.

VELKD Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands (United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany).

WA "Weimar Ausgabe": *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, Weimar, Germany.

WCC World Council of Churches

PREFACE

This document, *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist*, is a declaration of the consensus achieved by Lutherans and Catholics on the topics of church, ministry and Eucharist as the result of ecumenical dialogue between the two communions since 1965. It is a consensus "on the way" (*in via*), because dialogue has not yet resolved all the church-dividing differences on these topics. Nevertheless, at this time of important benchmarks in the relationship between Lutherans and Catholics, including both the anniversary of 50 years of dialogue in 2015 and also the 500th commemoration of the Reformation in 2017, it is good to review the path traveled together and to enumerate the many points of agreement between Lutherans and Catholics on these subjects. This review can help both communities to affirm the agreements they have reached together. More importantly, it can encourage them to look for the next steps toward Christian unity.

The document consists of an introduction, a "Statement of Agreements" followed by "Agreements in the Lutheran/Roman Catholic Dialogues–Elaborated and Documented," a section titled "Remaining Differences and Reconciling Considerations," and a conclusion. The "Statement of Agreements" consists of consensus statements on the topics church, ministry and Eucharist that Catholics and Lutherans affirm together.

The section "Agreements in the Lutheran/Roman Catholic Dialogues–Elaborated and Documented" is correlated with the preceding "Statement of Agreements" so that each numbered agreement corresponds with the number in the following section that documents and elaborates upon that particular agreement. This section gives references to specific dialogue statements that provide the basis for the agreements in the preceding section.

The section "Remaining Differences and Reconciling Considerations" is not directly correlated to the preceding sections but enumerates a number of topics that have traditionally divided

Lutherans and Catholics regarding church, ministry and Eucharist. Each topic is developed in three parts. The first part, which appears in unbolded italics, states the controverted issue between Catholics and Lutherans. The second part, in ordinary type, develops reconciling considerations that contribute to mitigating or resolving the difference. The third part, in bolded italics, provides possible resolutions or steps forward. In some instances, the difference is determined to be no longer church-dividing, and the document calls for a recognition of this fact by our ecclesial bodies. For other topics, the document recommends further study, clarification and dialogue.

The hope in offering this *Declaration* is that the Lutheran and Catholic communions at all levels will receive and affirm the consensus statements in the section "Agreements on the Church, Ministry and the Eucharist" as the achievement of our ecumenical dialogues on both the international and regional levels since their inception in 1965. The *Declaration* also offers encouragement that together Catholics and Lutherans will find ways to move forward where work remains to be done.

I. INTRODUCTION

"I think then that the one goal of all who are really and truly serving the Lord ought to be to bring back to union the churches which have at different times and in diverse manners divided from one another."

St. Basil the Great (330–379), "Epistle CXIV"

As Catholics and Lutherans, we have not yet achieved the goal of unity that is God's gift in Christ and to which St. Basil calls us. Yet we have come a long distance from the disunity, suspicions and even hostilities that characterized our relationships for generations. This *Declaration on the Way (In Via)* to unity seeks to make more visible the unity we share by gathering together agreements reached on issues of church, Eucharist and ministry. This *Declaration*, a distinctive kind of ecumenical text, is "on the way" because it is neither at the beginning nor the end of the journey toward unity. It identifies 32 statements where Lutherans and Catholics have consensus on matters regarding church, Eucharist and ministry, while recognizing also that not all differences on these doctrines have been reconciled at this time.

This *Declaration on the Way* is not the result of another dialogue on these topics nor yet a declaration of full consensus on them. Rather, it harvests the results of 50 years of international and regional dialogues in the belief that now is the time to claim the unity achieved through these agreements, to establish church practices that reflect this growth into communion and to commit ourselves anew to taking the next steps forward.

The doctrines of church, Eucharist and ministry suggest themselves for this *Declaration* for two principal reasons. Clearly, our differences concerning these doctrines are among the most significant issues we must address in order for us to grow in our real but imperfect communion. Moreover, the three issues are inseparably intertwined with one another. While there is already substantial agreement concerning the Eucharist itself, full

Eucharistic communion depends also upon the mutual recognition of ministry, which is in turn dependent upon the recognition of each ecclesial community as truly apostolic. Thus, the teaching of both Catholics and Lutherans that recognizes imperfect communion between them supports a partial but real recognition of ministry.

This *Declaration* demonstrates that cumulatively the global and regional Lutheran-Catholic dialogues have made significant progress in resolving our differences on these three core doctrines. Therefore, drawing upon the results of these dialogues, this *Declaration* commends 32 agreements on church, ministry, and Eucharist for ecclesial recognition, and supplies supporting documentation for these agreements from ecumenical dialogues. Further, without any pretensions of being exhaustive, it identifies remaining differences and sketches some possible ways forward. Reception of the "Statement of Agreements" by the appropriate bodies of The Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church with a corresponding commitment to address the remaining questions will move us significantly forward on the way to full communion.

Inspirations and Aspirations

The inspirations and aspirations behind this *Declaration on the Way* are many. An important one is the December 2011 speech given by Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Seeking the next steps beyond the work of *Harvesting the Fruits* presented by Cardinal Walter Kasper in 2009,[1] he noted the need to identify and receive the achievements of bi-lateral dialogues and to indicate ways forward for resolving remaining differences.

Another significant inspiration is the 2012 document of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, *From*

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1 Cardinal Walter Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*, (London/New York: Continuum, 2009).

Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017. This *Declaration on the Way* responds to two of the "ecumenical imperatives" with which the report concludes:

1. Catholics and Lutherans should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced.

2. Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with each other and by mutual witness of faith.

The leadership of Pope Francis, who has frequently stressed the importance of ecumenism for the church's mission, also inspires this *Declaration*. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he declared:

> The credibility of the Christian message would be much greater if Christians could overcome their divisions and the Church could realize "the fullness of catholicity proper to her in those of her children who, though joined to her by baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her." We must never forget that we are pilgrims journeying alongside one another. This means that we must have sincere trust in our fellow pilgrims, putting aside all suspicion or mistrust, and turn our gaze to what we are all seeking: the radiant peace of God's face. [2]

Why Now?

Why now? Because among the faithful there is a "holy impatience" as they pray and long for clearer and deeper expressions of our unity in Christ. As The Lutheran World Federation General Secretary Martin Junge has said, the baptized are not only

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2 Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, "Evangelii Gaudium," 24 November 2013, § 244, citing the Second Vatican Council, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 4.

accountable to God for living out the unity given to them but accountable also to one another, "particularly to those who bear the costs of Christian separation."[3] Thus, ecumenical work must hold itself responsible not only for its "theological honesty, rigor and quest for truth but also for its urgency and its love." Why now? Because when political and religious contexts are so often experienced as polarized, fragmented, and fearful of differences at all levels, we have the opportunity to witness the good news that "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away: see everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation ..." (2 Corinthians 5:17–18).

Why now? Because through 50 years of theological dialogues, Catholics and Lutherans have shown repeatedly that we have the resolve and the capacity to address doctrines and practices that have kept us apart. Through our dialogues, we are renewed in our commitment to continue together on the way to full communion, when we will experience our unity in sharing the Eucharist, in the full recognition of each other's ministries and of our being Christ's church.

An outstanding fruit of these dialogues was the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. Here Catholics and Lutherans demonstrated how, through sustained theological dialogues and prayer, a major doctrine once deemed to be church-dividing can become a teaching in which we find our unity through reconciled diversity. The JDDJ provided an ecumenical breakthrough in distinguishing divisive mutual condemnations from diversities in theology and piety which need not divide the church, but which can in fact enrich it. Thus the JDDJ inspires our two communions

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3 Martin Junge, "In Pursuing Christian Unity We Have a Double Accountability," *Lutheran World Information* 11/2011, 3. He mentioned in particular "where Christian families cannot be nourished together at the Lord's Table because church leaders are not yet able to resolve theological differences; where Christians must explain in interfaith contexts why they cannot worship under one roof; where coordinated diaconal response to the needs of the world is undercut by our feuding; where gifts of one part of Christ's Body are withheld or denied in other parts because we have built walls of separation."

to continue further on this road in relation to other issues inhibiting further growth in communion.

Why now? Because in 2017 we will commemorate the 500th anniversary of a reformation movement that began in deep divisions and now calls us to the continued work of reconciliation for the sake of the gospel and our witness and work in the world.

Responding to the convergence of these considerations, the leadership of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops convened a theological task force in 2012 to develop this *Declaration on the Way* on the themes of church, Eucharist and ministry.

Reception of the Statements of Agreement

This *Declaration on the Way* is presented with the prayer that it be affirmed and received into our common life. It is hoped that Catholics and Lutherans at the highest level will receive formally the 32 statements of agreement it contains. It is recommended that together The Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity create a process to implement the *Declaration* of these agreements, confirming that there are no longer church-dividing differences with respect to them.

Our journeying together on the way to full communion will also be sustained and renewed when Catholics and Lutherans strengthen their ties of common action at every level, wherever they gather in local communities for prayer, dialogue and shared service in response to those who live in poverty and on the margins of society.

You are invited to read this *Declaration on the Way* with an open mind and heart as together we seek to discern God's will and to follow it in love.

II. STATEMENT OF AGREEMENTS

A. Agreements on the Church

The Church's Foundation in God's Saving Work
(1) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth has been assembled by the triune God, who grants to its members their sharing in the triune divine life as God's own people, as the body of the risen Christ, and as the temple of the Holy Spirit, while they are also called to give witness to these gifts so that others may come to share in them. (2) They agree as well that the church on earth arose from the whole event of Jesus Christ, who remains its sole foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11). (3) Further, they hold in common that the church on earth is gathered by the proclamation of the gospel of God's saving mercy in Christ, so that the gospel, proclaimed in the Holy Spirit by the apostles, remains the church's normative origin and abiding foundation. (4) An agreement follows that the church on earth is in every age apostolic, because it is founded upon the apostles' witness to the gospel and it continuously professes the apostolic and evangelical faith while living by mandated practices handed on from the apostles. Thus, Lutherans and Catholics recognize in both their ecclesial communities the attribute of apostolicity grounded in their ongoing continuity in apostolic faith, teaching and practices.

The Word, Scripture and Means of Grace
(5) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the church on earth lives from and is ruled by the Word of God, which it encounters in Christ, in the living word of the gospel, and in the inspired and canonical Scriptures. (6) They are one in holding that the church on earth participates in Christ's benefits through the historical and perceptible actions of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the sacraments, as initiated by Christ and handed on by his apostles.

Communion, Visibility and Hiddenness
(7) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is a communion (*koinonia*). It shares in God's gifts offered for us by Christ, which, by being held in common, bring believers into unity and fellowship with each other. (8) Consequently, they agree that the church on earth combines audible and visible elements with profound spiritual realities that remain hidden from empirical investigation and perception.

Preservation of the Church and Union with the Saints
(9) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is indefectible, because it is and will be preserved by the Holy Spirit in all its aspects essential for salvation. They share the certainty of Christian hope that the church, established by Christ and led by his Spirit, will always remain in the truth fulfilling its mission to humanity for the sake of the gospel. (10) They furthermore agree that the church on earth is united with the community of the saints in glory.

Eschatology and Mission
(11) This perspective gives rise to agreement that the church on earth is an anticipatory reality, on pilgrimage and expectant of reaching its final destination in God's ultimate gathering of his people in their entirety, when Christ returns, and when the Holy Spirit completes the work of sanctification. (12) But Catholics and Lutherans agree as well that the church on earth is mandated to carry out a mission in which it participates in God's activity in the world by evangelization, worship, service of humanity and care for creation.

B. Agreements on Ordained Ministry

In "Agreements on the Church," Catholics and Lutherans affirm the ecclesial character of one another's communities. This affirmation is an essential first step toward a mutual recognition of ordained ministry, for mutual recognition of one another's ecclesial character is intertwined with the mutual recognition of one another's ministry.

Ministry in the Church
(13) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the ordained ministry belongs to the essential elements that express the church's apostolic character and that it also contributes, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the church's continuing apostolic faithfulness. (14) Catholics and Lutherans agree that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ. For both Catholics and Lutherans, the common priesthood of all the baptized and the special, ordained ministry enhance one another.

Divine Origin of Ministry
(15) Lutherans and Catholics affirm together that ordained ministry is of divine origin and that it is necessary for the being of the church. Ministry is not simply a delegation "from below," but is instituted by Jesus Christ. (16) We both affirm that all ministry is subordinated to Christ, who in the Holy Spirit is acting in the preaching of the Word of God, in the administration of the sacraments, and in pastoral service. (17) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the proclamation of the gospel is foremost among the various tasks of the ordained ministry. (18) They declare in common that the essential and specific function of the ordained minister is to assemble and build up the Christian community by proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and presiding over the liturgical, missionary and diaconal life of the community.

Authority of Ministry

(19) The authority of the ministry is not to be understood as an individual possession of the minister, but it is rather an authority with the commission to serve in the community and for the community. (20) Catholics and Lutherans also agree that the office of ministry stands over against (*gegenüber*) the community as well as within it and thus is called to exercise authority over the community.

Ordination

(21) Catholics and Lutherans agree that entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry is not by baptism but by ordination. They agree that ministers cannot ordain themselves or claim this office as a matter of right but are called by God and designated in and through the church. (22) Catholics and Lutherans both ordain through prayer invoking the Holy Spirit and with the laying on of hands by another ordained person. Both affirm that the ordinand receives an anointing of the Holy Spirit, who equips that person for ordained ministry. (23) Both Lutherans and Catholics regard ordination as unrepeatable.

One Ministerial Office

(24) Both consider that there is one ordained ministerial office, while also distinguishing a special ministry of *episkope* over presbyters/pastors. (25) They agree that the ministry is exercised both locally in the congregation and regionally. Both accept that the distinction between local and regional offices in the churches is more than the result of purely historical and human developments, or a matter of sociological necessity, but is the action of the Spirit. Furthermore, the differentiation of the ministry into a more local and a more regional office arises of necessity out of the intention and task of ministry to be a ministry of unity in faith.

Ministry Serving Worldwide Unity

(26) Catholics and Lutherans affirm together that all ministry, to the degree that it serves the koinonia of salvation, also serves the unity of the worldwide church and that together we long for a more complete realization of this unity.

C. Agreements on the Eucharist

High Esteem for Eucharistic Union with Christ in Holy Communion

(27) Lutherans and Catholics agree in esteeming highly the spiritual benefits of union with the risen Christ given to them as they receive his body and blood in Holy Communion.

Trinitarian Dimension of Eucharist

(28) Catholics and Lutherans agree that in Eucharistic worship the church participates in a unique way in the life of the Trinity: In the power of the Holy Spirit, called down upon the gifts and the worshiping community, believers have access to the glorified flesh and blood of Christ the Son as our food, and are brought in union with him and with each other to the Father.

Eucharist as Reconciling Sacrifice of Christ and as Sacrifice of the Church's Praise and Thanksgiving

(29) Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic worship is the memorial (anamnesis) of Jesus Christ, present as the one crucified for us and risen, that is, in his sacrificial self-giving for us in his death and in his resurrection (Romans 4:25), to which the church responds with its sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Eucharistic Presence

(30) Lutherans and Catholics agree that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ himself is present: He is present truly, substantially, as a person, and he is present in his entirety, as Son of God and a human being.

Eschatological Dimension of Eucharist

(31) Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic Communion, as sacramental participation in the glorified body and blood of Christ, is a pledge that our life in Christ will be eternal, our bodies will rise, and the present world is destined for transformation, in the hope of uniting us in communion with the saints of all ages now with Christ in heaven.

Eucharist and Church

(32) Lutherans and Catholics agree that sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist is an essential sign of the unity of the church, and that the reality of the church as a community is realized and furthered sacramentally in the Eucharistic celebration. The Eucharist both mirrors and builds the church in its unity.

III. AGREEMENTS IN THE LUTHERAN/ ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUES— ELABORATED AND DOCUMENTED

A. Church

Introduction

The following section sets forth findings of the Lutheran / Roman Catholic dialogues that explain and justify the agreements stated concisely in the previous section, beginning with the 12 agreements on the church.

The possibility of such a presentation on the church was foreseen as early as 1980. When the second phase of the world-level dialogue set forth the ecumenical potentialities of the Augsburg Confession on its 450th anniversary, the agreed statement formulated the following shared Lutheran-Roman Catholic notion of the church:

> A basic if still incomplete accord is also registered today even in our understanding of the church, where there were serious controversies between us in the past. By church we mean the communion of those whom God gathers together through Christ in the Holy Spirit, by the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, and the ministry instituted by him for this purpose. Though it always includes sinners, yet in virtue of the promise and fidelity of God it is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church which continues forever (CA VII and VIII). (*All Under One Christ*, § 16).

From this promising starting point, the present report will now elaborate the particular ecclesiological agreements of this common view. To each of the agreements, already stated previously, the following text adds selected elucidations drawn from the dialogue documents, especially those of 1993 to 2006, in order to add theological density to the positive contents of this "basic if still incomplete accord" on the church, which, however, proves to be far more extensive than was generally thought at the time of the 1980 formulation.

1. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth has been assembled by the triune God, who grants to its members their sharing in the triune divine life as God's own people, as the body of the risen Christ, and as the temple of the Holy Spirit, while they are also called to give witness to these gifts so that others may come to share in them.

The international document, *Church and Justification* (1993), asserts that the church is a divinely created human reality, anchored in the divine life of the triune God. This precludes regarding it merely or even primarily as a human societal reality, for God assembles the church so it may share in the triune divine life (*Church and Justification*, § 49).

The U.S. dialogue on *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries* (2005) affirms a common "*koinonia* ecclesiology," that is, of the church both sharing in salvation, in fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and called to share salvation by evangelization and a transforming mission to the world (*Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, §§ 11–12). The Swedish and Finnish Catholic-Lutheran dialogue of 2010 likewise asserts the church's communion with the triune God (*Justification in the Life of the Church*, §§ 107–112). Together, both Lutherans and Catholics consider the church according to the "master images" by which Scripture relates the church to the triune God, that is, as "pilgrim people," "body of Christ," and "temple of the Holy Spirit" (*Church and Justification*, §§ 48–62).[4]

Lutherans and Catholics acknowledge in faith that the church belongs to a new age of salvation history as God's Pilgrim People drawn from all nations. This is a priestly people that calls upon God in prayer, serves him with all their lives, and witnesses to all

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4   The German study *Communio Sanctorum: The Church as the Communion of Saints* develops the grounding of the communion of saints in the love of the triune God and sees it manifest in the three basic images in its Ch. 3, §§ 23–34. The Faith and Order convergence text, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2103), presents in Ch. II, "The Church of the Triune God," especially in § 13 ("As a divinely established communion, the Church belongs to God and does not exist for itself."), § 16 (the Spirit's bestowal of faith and charisms, with the Church's essential gifts, qualities, and order), and § 21 (the Church as body of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit).

people everywhere. On its journey, the people struggle against powers opposed to God, doing battle with weapons of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:10–16), while confidently following Christ who leads them toward the rest and peace of God's final kingdom (Hebrews 6:20, 12:2; *Church and Justification*, §§ 51–55).

The church by baptism rests on the sacramental reality of its members' real participation in Christ as the crucified and risen Lord and so it is the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12–13:27). In Eucharistic communion, "we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17), which is Christ's body given for us. From Christ the head flow the mutual services of the church's common life for building up the church and its unity (Ephesians 4:10)–by its members living together in love (1 Corinthians 13:13–14:1). Christ's members look forward to being raised by God to eternal life in communion with the risen Lord (*Church and Justification*, §§ 56–58).

The church is as well the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. The international document *The Apostolicity of the Church* states that Catholics and Lutherans are one in confessing that the church is an essential work of the Holy Spirit, who created the church through the gospel of Jesus Christ (*Apostolicity*, § 147). The Holy Spirit awakens faith in those hearing the gospel and thus brings the church to exist and be endowed with manifold gifts. Beyond this, the community of believers owes its communion to the indwelling Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13) and is to grow "into a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians. 2:21). The one Spirit maintains the church in truth (John 14:26), but it will be complete only at the end in the New Jerusalem of which the temple is God Almighty and the Lamb (Revelation 21:22; *Church and Justification*, §§ 59–62).[5]

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5 *Communio Sanctorum* gives in § 28 and §§ 201–12 the eschatological dimensions of the church.

2. Catholics and Lutherans agree as well that the church on earth arose from the whole event of Jesus Christ, who remains its sole foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Church and Justification (1993) affirms the shared Lutheran and Catholic conviction that the church owes its origin not to a single isolated action of institution by Christ but to the totality of the Christ-event, which extends from God sending his Son as redeemer (Galatians 4:4) through his birth and manifestation, his proclaiming of the reign of God in word and merciful deed, his teaching and sharing at table with sinners, his calling and formation of disciples, his institution of the meal that memorializes his atoning death, and especially by his death on the cross and resurrection on the third day, and finally his commissioning of apostles who were empowered by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost to go to all nations to proclaim the gospel of Christ and his saving work (*Church and Justification*, §§ 10–12 and §§ 18–33).[6]

The 1984 document from the German dialogue, *Ecclesial Communion (Kirchengemeinschaft) in Word and Sacrament*, asserts that Lutherans and Catholics share the conviction that the church is the communion *founded by Jesus Christ*, a communion of *life with Christ* in his body as believers who are drawn into his death and rising by baptism and the Lord's Supper, and a communion *in Christ* living under his presence and influence through the Holy Spirit by whom he acts as the one teacher, one high priest and one shepherd (*Kirchengemeinschaft*, §§ 2–4).

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6   Also see *DV* 4.

3. Catholics and Lutherans hold in common that the church on earth is gathered by the proclamation of the gospel of God's saving mercy in Christ, so that the gospel, proclaimed in the Holy Spirit by the apostles, remains the church's normative origin and abiding foundation.

Church and Justification observes that the New Testament books of Acts and the proto-Pauline letters give ample witness to how Christ's apostles proclaimed the gospel of Christ by announcing his saving death and resurrection. When people heard this and accepted it in faith as a message of merciful salvation for themselves, congregations were constituted from Jerusalem as far as Rome and beyond. The primacy of the gospel is a well-known emphasis of the Reformation, expressed by calling the church "a creature of the Gospel" (*creatura Evangelii*) (*Church and Justification*, §§ 34-37).[7] Vatican II manifests as well the conviction that "the gospel ... is for all time the source of life for the Church" and its preaching is "the chief means" of founding the church (*LG* 20; *AG* 6).

In every age the Holy Spirit calls and empowers witnesses to proclaim the gospel, while awakening and sustaining faith in those who hear, leading to their confessing Christ as Lord and moving confidently through him to the Father. Thus, proclaiming the gospel is a fundamental reality permanently defining the church (*Church and Justification*, §§ 41–43).

Apostolicity of the Church asserts that Lutherans and Catholics share, as a foundational conviction of faith, the belief that the apostolic witness is "both a normative origin and an abiding foundation" (*Apostolicity*, § 148). Our dialogues repeatedly expressed and confirmed that the apostolic witness to the gospel is the normative origin of the church, which stands for all time on the foundation of the apostles. The church, amid all historical changes, is ever again referred to its apostolic origin.

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7   See WA 2, 430 and 7, 721.

4. Lutherans and Catholics agree that the church is in every age apostolic, because it is founded upon the apostles' witness to the gospel, and it continuously professes the apostolic and evangelical faith while living by mandated practices handed on from the apostles. Thus, we recognize in both our ecclesial communities the attribute of apostolicity grounded in their ongoing continuity in apostolic faith, teaching and practices.

The New Testament gives testimony that Jesus sent his apostles as authorized witnesses of his resurrection to make disciples in the whole world and to baptize for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 28:1–20). The apostles assembled communities of believers holding to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The New Testament apostolic writings addressed to these communities give further instruction in faith and on ecclesial practices, while inculcating a manner of life worthy of the gospel. The ancient creeds and councils explicated the apostolic faith. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the church has constantly endeavored to remain faithful to the apostolic witness of the gospel, its normative origin and abiding foundation, along with the practices handed on from the apostles.

The Apostolicity of the Church, Part 2, treats the practices coming from the apostles as contributing both to a deeper understanding of apostolicity and to a mutual recognition at a basic level of our churches as apostolic. Luther gave an expansive teaching on the endowments and marks of the church, i.e., the gospel message, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the keys, calling to ministry, and public worship and confession (*Apostolicity*, §§ 94–95).[8] Vatican II treated tradition as a many-sided apostolic patrimony of "doctrine, life and worship," which "comprises everything that serves to make the People of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith" (*Apostolicity*, §§ 114–116; *DV* 8).[9] Both elaborations concern the *shared* "elements of sanctification and truth" recognized by Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

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8   This is based on Luther, *On Councils and the Church* (1539), WA 50, 628–44, LW 41, 148–67, and *Against Hanswurst* (1541), WA 51, 479–87, LW 41, 194–99.

9   Also see *Apostolicity*, § 158.

(*LG* 8), and then set forth in more detail as common endowments operative in the churches in § 15 of the same solemn document. On the practices, see also Agreement 6, below. Regarding apostolic preaching, "In this way the church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes" (*DV* 8).

Our continuity with the apostles' witness by our believing the gospel and professing the apostolic faith is not a human achievement but a gift of the Holy Spirit, who makes and maintains the whole ecclesial body as apostolic, through the apostolic Scriptures, the faithful teachers, the creeds, and the continuity of appointed ministers (*Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, §§ 75–77). The church of every age is "the work of the Holy Spirit who makes present the apostolic gospel and makes effective the sacraments and apostolic instruction which we have been graced to receive" (*Apostolicity*, § 147). The church in our day is called to serve the further transmission of the apostolic gospel.

Drawing on the writings of Luther on the means of grace and marks of the church and on Vatican II regarding tradition, the church, and ecumenism, Lutherans and Catholics today "mutually recognize, at a fundamental level, the presence of apostolicity in our traditions" (*Apostolicity*, §§ 157–60, quoting § 160). Luther contributed to this insight when "he insisted that a manifold Christian substance must be recognized in the Roman Catholic Church" (*Apostolicity*, § 159), for he perceived there "the true Holy Scriptures, true baptism, the true sacrament [of the altar], the true keys for forgiveness of sins, the true office of proclamation, and the true catechism."[10] Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism asserted that "the elements of sanctification and truth" are found in the separated communities, and "the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as a means of salvation" (*UR* 3). Consequently, there is a mutual recognition: "The Catholic Church and the churches and ecclesial communities of the Reformation both participate in the attribute of apostolicity because they are built

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10 Luther, *Concerning Rebaptism* (1528), WA 26, 146f, LW 40, 231f, cited in *Apostolicity of the Church*, § 99.

up and live by many of the same 'elements and endowments' pertaining to the one and multiple apostolic tradition" (*Apostolicity*, § 121).[11]

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5. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth lives from and is ruled by the word of God, which it encounters in Christ, in the living word of the gospel, and in the inspired and canonical Scriptures.

Lutherans and Catholics agree that in human history, through words and deeds, God issued a message of grace and truth, which culminated in the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Easter witnesses testified to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is God's definitive word of grace (*Apostolicity*, § 432). This Easter witness stands in continuity with God's revelation through Moses, the prophets and the Old Testament writings.[12] God's revelation of human salvation in Jesus Christ continues to be announced in the gospel of Christ that the apostles first preached and taught when they gathered communities of believers.

The world-level ecumenical document *Apostolicity of the Church* (2006) asserts:

> The Scriptures are for Lutherans and Catholics the source, rule, guideline, and criterion of correctness and purity of the church's proclamation, of its elaboration of doctrine, and of its sacramental and pastoral practice. For in the

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11   Part 2 of *Apostolicity* notes at the end that the mutual recognition it has set forth is presently "limited on both sides by significant reservations about the doctrine and church life of the partner in dialogue" (§ 161). The reservations concern differences, first, over "ordination to the pastorate, ministry in apostolic succession, and the office of bishop in the church." A second area of reservations concerns the authentic interpretation of Scripture and the structure and function of the teaching office (§ 162). However, Parts 3 and 4 of *Apostolicity* give these two topics ample treatment, which show real progress toward, but not the achievement of, reconciliation of the differences.

12   *Nostra Aetate*, Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions 4, quoted in *Church and Justification* 2.2, § 13.

midst of the first communities formed by Christ's apostles, the New Testament books emerged, under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, through the preaching and teaching of the apostolic gospel. These books, together with the sacred books of Israel in the Old Testament, are to make present for all ages the truth of God's word, so as to form faith and guide believers in a life worthy of the gospel of Christ. By the biblical canon, the church does not constitute, but instead recognizes, the inherent authority of the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures. Consequently, the church's preaching and whole life must be nourished and ruled by the Scriptures constantly heard and studied. True interpretation and application of Scripture maintains church teaching in the truth (*Apostolicity*, § 434).

The church of every age stands under the imperative to preserve in continuous succession God's words of saving truth. Made bold by Christ's promise to be with his disciples always, the church carries out Christ's mandate to announce his gospel in every place from generation to generation (*Apostolicity*, § 433).

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6. Catholics and Lutherans are one in holding that the church on earth participates in Christ's benefits through the historical and perceptible actions of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the sacraments, as initiated by Christ and handed on by his apostles.

World-level (*Apostolicity of the Church*) and national dialogues (*Kirchengemeinschaft in Wort und Sakrament and Communio Sanctorum*) have asserted that Lutherans and Catholics have profound agreement on the essential role of the means of grace in assembling the church and communicating to its members ever anew a share in God's saving gifts.

The proclaimed gospel has a primacy among the mediations of communion in Christ and his benefits, but receiving it in faith entails as well receiving the sacramental practices of baptism,

the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, and absolution from sin—all as administered by those called to the ministry of word and sacrament. By these "means of grace," the message of Christ engages with divine power the whole of human life with the forgiveness of sins, deepened union with Christ, and sanctification through the Holy Spirit. These means are also significant external, public "marks" of the community living in continuity with what Christ and his apostles instituted.[13]

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7. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is a communion (*koinonia*). It shares in God's gifts offered for us by Christ, which, by being held in common, bring believers into unity and fellowship with each other.

In the past, the conceptions of the church held by Lutherans and Catholics developed along diverging paths, but in the 20th century we have together appropriated the biblical notion of *koinonia* and applied it to the church in a process giving us a precious communality.[14] *Church and Justification* (§§ 63–73) describes the church on earth as sharing in a *koinonia* or communion founded in the Trinity. *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries* has shown the wide-ranging fruitfulness of communion ecclesiology for the dialogue on the church and its ministries.

The communion formed from the agreement and common intentions of believers with each other does not constitute the church; rather, the church is formed by the message of Christ

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13 *Kirchengemeinschaft in Wort und Sakrament*, § 7; *Communio Sanctorum*, §§ 35–38, which introduce the ample treatment in Ch. 4 of "The Communion of Saints through Word and Sacrament; *Apostolicity*, §§ 94–95 and §§ 157–60, states the agreement on the practices embodying the saving gospel message. Also see LG 8 "on the many elements of sanctification of truth" which are shared by Christians not withstanding our divisions. These elements are described in greater detail in *LG* 15: sacred Scripture as a rule of faith and life; "the belief in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, the Son of God and the Savior"; baptism; prayer; and spiritual benefits uniting us by the Holy Spirit's sanctifying power.

14 *Communio Sanctorum*, §§ 23–24, indicates the breadth of *communion* thinking in several churches and ecumenical dialogues. *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, introduces basic themes of *koinonia* in §§ 10–14 and relates the steps of its recent adoption by Catholics and Lutherans in §§ 15–20.

proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit awakens faith in the gospel as the good news of redemption, this message is confessed in common by people who thereby come together as sharers in it and its saving power (*Church and Justification*, § 65 and § 67).[15]

Baptism shows the priority of God's action in calling people to be his own as they are consecrated in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit and incorporated into the already existing body of Christ (*Church and Justification*, § 68). At Holy Communion, believers receive from the "cup of blessing" which is their sharing (*koinonia*) in the blood of Christ. The "breaking of the bread" leads to sharing (*koinonia*) in the body of Christ, which makes the many one body in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16–17; *Church and Justification*, §§ 69-70).

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8. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth combines audible and visible elements with profound spiritual realities that remain hidden from empirical investigation and perception.

Previous agreements of this *Declaration* have concerned essential audible realities of the church, such as the proclaimed gospel by which the church is gathered (No. 3) and the church's continuous profession of the apostolic and evangelical faith (No. 4). The latter agreement, echoing also later (in No. 6), affirms as well the central role in both of our churches of practices with perceptible, embodied components, such as baptism, the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, exercising the keys for the forgiveness of sins, and designating and ordaining members for the pastoral office of preaching, sacramental celebration, and pastoral care. A further perceptible element at the very center of the lives of believers and communities in both our churches are the Scriptures that we take to be inspired and canonical (No. 5).

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15   *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* states in § 23 that the church is not merely the sum of individual believers among themselves but "fundamentally a communion in the Triune God and, at the same time, a communion whose members partake together in the mission of God (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4), who as Trinity, is the source and focus of all communion."

Also both our traditions avoid identifying the church exclusively with visible structures and outward manifestations. Although some early Lutheran polemics rejected identifying the church with the ordained hierarchy, Lutherans have always denied that the church is a kind of "Platonic republic." Instead, the church can be seen where an assembly has the visible "marks" of the Word, confession and sacraments (*Church and Justification*, §§ 69-70).[16]

Post-Reformation Catholics were concerned to avoid prioritizing an exclusively spiritual reality of the church and consequently emphasized the church as a visible reality marked by creed, sacramental structure and hierarchical leadership. But Catholics also affirm an indissoluble link between the visible assembly and the mystery of its life shared in communion with God, which is the spiritual and transcendent reality of the church. This and the visible social community relate to each other in a manner analogous to the relation between Christ's divine and human natures, which are inseparable but distinct. In the church, the ecclesial society never fully envelops the "community of salvation" (*Church and Justification*, § 144; *LG* 8 and *UR* 3).

Lutherans and Catholics agree that in this world the profound reality of the church, which is sharing the triune divine life in Christ and with Christ (Nos. 1 and 2, above), is hidden. Only the eye of faith can recognize that an assembly is indeed an assembly of the people of God where God is at work through word and sacrament. The salvation community of believers in Christ, made one body in Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit (No. 1, above), is not recognizable by earthly standards, and furthermore it remains hidden because sin, which is also present in the church, makes ascertaining the community of salvation's membership uncertain (*Church and Justification*, §§ 140–141, and 147).[17]

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16   See WA 40/II, 106, 19; LW 27, 84. *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, 7, 20 (no "Platonic republic") and 7, 3 (the marks). See also *Apostolicity*, §§ 94–95.

17   In agreements to follow, further hidden realities will be matters of agreement, e.g., no. 8 on "divine gifts and conditions of blessings righteousness, and truth," and no. 10 on "the church's communion with the saints in glory."

9. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is indefectible, because it is and will be preserved by the Holy Spirit in all aspects essential for salvation. We share the certainty of Christian hope that the church, established by Christ and led by his Spirit, will always remain in the truth, fulfilling its mission to humanity for the sake of the gospel.

Catholics and Lutherans have taken to heart the risen Christ's promise "to be with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). Accordingly, we believe firmly that with the continued assistance of the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit the church will remain until the end of time (CA VII; LG 20). Its indefectibility includes its perseverance in the truth of the gospel, in its life of faith, and in its mission.

The Common Statement of U.S. dialogue, Round VI, *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church* (1978), asserts: "Lutheran and Catholic traditions share the certainty of Christian hope that the Church, established by Christ and led by his Spirit, will always remain in the truth fulfilling its mission to humanity for the sake of the Gospel" (§ 28). The document identified places of significant convergences related to God's preservation of the church in the truth:

> The context within which the Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility is understood has changed. Lutherans and Catholics now speak in increasingly similar ways about the gospel and its communication, about the authority of Christian truth, and about how to settle disputes concerning the understanding of the Christian message. One can truly speak of a convergence between our two traditions. The following instances of this convergence are significant. Our churches are agreed ... that in accordance with the promises given in the Scriptures and because of the continued assistance of the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit, the Church will remain until the end of time; that this perpetuity of the Church includes its indefectibility, i.e., its perseverance in the truth of the gospel, in its mission, and in its life of faith; that among the means by which Christ preserves the Church in the truth of the gospel, there is the

Ministry of the Word and sacrament, which will never perish from the Church (§ 41).

Among the means by which Christ, the Lord of the church, preserves his church in the truth of the gospel, Lutherans and Catholics attribute great importance to the ministry of word and sacrament, which is charged with faithful transmission of the gospel and teaching of Christian doctrine. This service will never perish from the church.

Indefectible fidelity to the truth necessary for salvation is not an automatic, all-embracing quality of everything that church leaders say or endorse but is the result of the Holy Spirit's guidance (cf. John 16:13), which is recognized by testing the church's faith and life by the standard of the Word of God.

10. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is united with the community of the saints in glory.

Church and Justification asserts:

> The *communio* with God which has already been given and realized on earth through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit is the foundation of Christian hope beyond death and of the *communio* between Christ's saints on earth and Christ's saints who have already died. … We believe in the fundamental indestructibility of the life given us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit even through the judgment and beyond death (§ 295).

A similar conviction is found in the document from the German bilateral dialogue, *Communio Sanctorum: The Church as the Communion of Saints* (2000): "The communion in Christ into which human beings are called endures also in death and judgment. It becomes complete as, through the pain over failure in earthly life, persons come with their love to give the perfect response to God" (§ 228).

The U.S. Dialogue Round XI document, *The Hope of Eternal Life* (2010), asserts:

> "The fellowship of those sanctified, the 'holy ones' or saints, includes believers both living and dead. There is thus a solidarity of the church throughout the world with the church triumphant." This solidarity across the barrier of death is particularly evident in the Eucharist, which is always celebrated in unity with the hosts of heaven. ... Particularly in praise and adoration of God at the Lord's table, the apparent division marked by death melts away (§ 217).[18]

Pope John Paul II's statement *Ut unum sint* (1995) applies to this relationship, for "the communion between our Communities, even if still incomplete, is truly and solidly grounded in the full communion of the Saints–those who, at the end of a life faithful to grace, are in communion with Christ in glory. These Saints come from all the Churches and Ecclesial Communities which gave them entrance into the communion of salvation."[19]

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11. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is an anticipatory reality, on pilgrimage and expectant of reaching its final destination in God's ultimate gathering of his people in their entirety when Christ returns and when the Holy Spirit completes the work of sanctification.

The "master images" by which the church is designated in relation to the three persons of the Trinity (pilgrim people of God, body of Christ, temple of the Holy Spirit) each point to a future consummation of what the church is now in an anticipatory fashion or proleptically. The people of God look

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18   The first two sentences cite the U.S., Round VII, *The One Mediator, the Saints*, and Mary (1990), § 103. *Church and Justification* (1993) had stated in § 296, "The communion of saints, the unity of the pilgrim and heavenly church, is realized especially in worship, in the adoration and praise of the thrice-holy God and the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Revelation 4:2–11; 5:9–14)."

19   John Paul II, *Ut unum sint*, Encyclical Letter on Commitment to Ecumenism, May 25, 1995 (Ascension Thursday), § 84.

forward to completing their pilgrimage in a great gathering of all the redeemed on the final day. The members of Christ's body believe he will return in glory to be manifested as head of the final communion of saints. The Holy Spirit's present sanctification is authentic, while also being "the first fruits" or "down payment" (*arrabōn*: Romans 8:23; 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5; Ephesians 1:14) of holiness in eschatological completion (*Church and Justification*, §§ 72–73).[20]

While the church is already a partaking (*koinonia*) in the saving gifts and conditions deriving from the common life and merciful approach of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it has these in fragmentary and incomplete ways. They now instill hope and joy but also anticipation and longing for them in the manner of their consummation in the final kingdom of God, when the triune God will be "all in all" (1 15: 24–28).[21]

12. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is mandated to carry out a mission in which it participates in God's activity in the world by evangelization, worship, service of humanity and care for creation.

The church's ultimate goal is consummation in God's kingdom, for God will create an eternal reign of righteousness, peace and love. Through grace, God has chosen and established the church *in* this age and *for* this age to proclaim the gospel to all people, worship God, and make Christ known through care and service to others (*Church and Justification*, § 243). *Church and Justification* (1993) identifies major and extensive areas of agreement on the church's mission:

> Catholics and Lutherans are agreed that the mission of the church to proclaim the gospel and serve humanity is a

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20   Also see *Communio Sanctorum*, § 203, and the section "Our Common Hope," in Round XI of the U.S. dialogue, *The Hope of Eternal Life* (2010), §§ 15–19.

21   Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:7–9; LG §§ 7, 48–51.

true–even if limited–sharing in God's activity in the world toward the realization of his plan as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier (§ 256).

Lutherans and Catholics are agreed on the priority of the task of evangelizing the world, on the central significance of proclaiming and celebrating the grace of God in worship, and on the commandment to serve humanity as a whole. They also agree that "*martyria, leitourgia*, and *diakonia* (witness, worship and service to the neighbor) are tasks entrusted to the whole people of God" (§ 277).[22]

The German dialogue study *Communio Sanctorum* (2000) presented the church as sign and instrument of salvation, to which it added common clarifying statements that "the church is in its entire existence a sign of the saving will of God, who desires 'that all people be saved and come to see the truth' (1 Timothy 2:4)," and that "the church remains constantly subject to the Lord, and salvation remains a gift of God, even in the work of the church" (§ 89).

Church and Justification spoke of the missionary imperative, asserting that the gospel message of grace and reconciliation compels those who have heard and accepted it to bring it to those who have not heard it or who have still no proper opportunity to accept it: "We must be alarmed when we think about those who have forgotten or estranged themselves from God's good news. Catholics and Lutherans together must accept their missionary calling as disciples of Jesus Christ. They must in common face the challenges of constant renewal in their churches under the influence of the Holy Spirit, so that they become common instruments for God's saving plan in more authentic ways" (*Church and Justification*, § 248).

Communio Sanctorum, completed in 2000 shortly after the signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, indicated

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22   This quotation incorporates a passage from the earlier world-level dialogue, *The Ministry in the Church* (1982), § 13.

the contemporary urgency of the mission of a common Lutheran-Catholic witness to the message of justification: "The more confusing the variety of religious and pseudo-religious options in our world becomes, the more important it is that our churches publicly bear witness together to the love of God for all people. The more an atmosphere of vanishing trust toward one another spreads throughout our society, the more helpful it will be for many uncertain people seeking support and help if Christians are able to speak with one voice, with personal certainty of faith, about the unchanging and limitless faithfulness of God with regard to his promises of salvation" (*Communio sanctorum*, § 119).

Church and Justification asserted the centrality of worship, for the church on earth is called to join in praise and intercession. In worship we are linked with Christians of every age. In the midst of our worship, faith is induced and nourished through sacramental life and the proclamation of the gospel:

> When we gather together to confess our sins, to hear God's saving word, to remember his great deeds, and to sing hymns and songs, to intercede for a blessing on everyone and to celebrate the eucharistic meal, we are a people of faith in the most pregnant sense. This is our proper task as church, and we accept it as such with a sense of responsibility to offer our Creator and Redeemer adoration and praise in the name of all creatures (*Church and Justification*, § 284).

The church on earth is likewise called to serve humanity and all creation: "As Christians and as communities we are instruments of God in the service of mercy and justice in the world" (*Church and Justification*, § 285). In obedience to Christ, who took the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7), we are called to service by contributing to the world's preservation and well-being:

> By striving in common with all people of good will for healing, protection and promotion of human dignity, for respectful and rational handling of the resources of

creation, for the consolidation of social unity, respect for social diversity and for deepening of the general sense of responsibility, Christians are servants of the Creator's love for the world (*Church and Justification*, § 286).

Christian service to humanity and the world includes championing human dignity and inviolable human rights, providing generous aid in situations of special distress, and working on projects directed toward promoting long-term solutions to overcome misery (*Church and Justification*, §§ 287–288). Christians—in their various callings and spheres of activity—are called to make contributions "in all areas of social life—in politics, education and nurture, health, science, culture and the mass media" to "promote lives in accord with human dignity and reverence toward God" (*Church and Justification*, § 289).[23]

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23   This account in several places echoes *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, especially § 24, on the church serving God's goal of gathering humanity and all of creation under Christ's Lordship, while manifesting God's mercy to human beings, §§ 58–59, on the church intended by God not for its own sake but to serve the divine plan for the transformation of the world by evangelizing and promoting justice and peace, and §§ 64–66, on the church's actions in society.

III. AGREEMENTS IN THE LUTHERAN/ ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUES— ELABORATED AND DOCUMENTED

B. Ministry

Introduction

Lutherans and Catholics find that questions concerning ministry pose especially formidable obstacles in the way toward growth in communion, as they have frequently in ecumenical relationships.[24] Ecclesiological and eucharistic differences often become evident in relationship to ministry. Without movement on these questions, therefore, agreements in other areas cannot fully bear their fruit in shared worship and witness.

Yet it is important to recognize how theological dialogues between Catholics and Lutherans have allowed agreements to be claimed for many questions concerning ministry. What once seemed to be long-standing sharply defined contrasting positions have yielded to insights from shared historical inquiry, theological re-examinations within each tradition, and more accurate knowledge of one another's practices. This ecumenical progress has allowed measured and nuanced understandings to emerge on crucial topics surrounding the mutual recognition of ministry. This trajectory from opposition to growing convergence appeared early in recommendations regarding ministry. Thus, the second phase of international dialogue (1981) focused on questions of ministry identified by the *Malta Report* in 1972, while the U.S. dialogue had moved from *The Eucharist as Sacrifice* (1967) to a substantial and forward-looking examination of *Eucharist and Ministry* in 1979. More recently, the U.S. statement *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* and the international study document *Apostolicity*

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24   For example, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, the 2013 paper on ecclesiology from the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, notes, "Ecumenical dialogue has repeatedly shown that issues relating to ordained ministry constitute challenging obstacles on the path to unity. If [such] differences ... prohibit full unity, it must continue to be an urgent priority for the churches to discover how they can be overcome" (p. 26).

of the Church addressed many questions regarding ministry. Together, these dialogue reports identify a number of ways in which Lutherans and Catholics can take specific steps toward a mutual recognition of ministry.

Agreement between Lutherans and Catholics on the doctrine of justification helped give new impetus for further attention to the dividing issues of ministry. Already the *Malta Report* had indicated how the topics could be linked:

> The question of the office of the ministry in the church, its origin, its position and correct understanding represents one of the most important open questions between Lutherans and Catholics. It is here that the question of the position of the gospel in and over the church becomes concrete. What, in other words, are the consequences of the doctrine of justification for the understanding of the ministerial office (§ 47)?

The 2010 Finnish-Swedish regional report, *Justification in the Life of the Church*, was shaped throughout by the dialogue's guiding question, "What is the place of justification in the life of our respective churches?" Thus, the church's ministry was considered as it is "in the service of justification." To see it in this way was a response to the final paragraph of the *Joint Declaration*:

> Our consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification must come to influence the life and teachings of our churches. Here it must prove itself. In this respect, there are still questions of varying importance which need further clarification ... [including] ministry ... . We are convinced that the consensus we have reached offers a solid basis for this clarification. The Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church will continue to strive together to deepen this common understanding of justification and to make it bear fruit in the life and teaching of the churches (§ 43).

The connection between the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* and the topic of ministry includes first, the

applicability of the ecumenical method of differentiating consensus to ministry, and, second, the intrinsic relationship between the doctrine of justification and ministry. Regarding ecumenical method, the international dialogue report *The Apostolicity of the Church* already had indicated several ways forward. It directly appealed to how the ecumenical method of differentiating consensus might be extended to questions of ministry. While also recognizing the distinctiveness of this topic, because it involves ecclesial practice as well as doctrine, the dialogue commission said, "One has to ask whether a differentiated consensus is not possible as well in the doctrine of the ministry or ministries." Indeed, the dialogue invites Lutherans and Catholics to consider whether the differentiating consensus achieved for the doctrine of justification could be paralleled by "an approach to the differing forms of ministry, in which one discovers so much common ground that reciprocal recognition of ministries would be possible" (§ 292).

With respect to the intrinsic relationship between the doctrine of justification and ministry, the report explained:

> For apostolic succession, succession in faith is the essential aspect ... . But now, the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* has ascertained ... between the Catholic Church and Lutheran churches ... a high degree of agreement in faith, that is, in that which represents the heart of apostolic succession ... . **The Catholic view of the ministry of the Lutheran churches, along with the Lutheran view of ministry in the Roman Catholic Church, cannot remain untouched by the *Joint Declaration*.** For, even if preserving correct doctrine is not the task of the ordained ministry alone, it is still its specific task to teach and proclaim the gospel publicly. The signing of the *Joint Declaration* therefore implies the acknowledgement that the ordained ministry in both churches has by the power of the Holy Spirit fulfilled its service of maintaining fidelity to the apostolic gospel regarding the central question of faith set forth in the Declaration (*Apostolicity* 288; emphasis added).

13. Lutherans and Catholics agree that the ordained ministry belongs to the essential elements that express the church's apostolic character and that also contribute, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the church's continuing apostolic faithfulness (cf. *Apostolicity*, § 271).

The comprehensive examination of apostolicity presented by the fourth phase of world-level dialogue examined "the 'elements' which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, contribute to building up the church 'upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone' (Ephesians 2:20). Among these elements are the Holy Scriptures, the communication of God's word in proclamation, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, the office of the keys, catechesis as transmission of the apostolic tradition, the Creeds, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments." These elements, which are truly "institutions and enactments of the communication of the word of God in which the content of the apostolic gospel becomes present to bring salvation to human beings," can play their parts in maintaining the apostolicity of the church only by involving human beings. Thus, *Apostolicity* asserts, "There is no testimony without a witness, no sermon without a preacher, no administration of the sacraments without a minister, but also no testimony and no sermon without people who listen, no celebration of the sacraments without people who receive them" (§ 165).

14. Catholics and Lutherans agree that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ. For both Catholics and Lutherans, the common priesthood of all the baptized and the special, ordained ministry enhance one another.

The Ministry in the Church affirmed that "*martyria, leiturgia* and *diakonia* (witness, worship and service to the neighbor) are tasks entrusted to the whole people of God. ... Through baptism all

constitute the one priestly people of God (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10). While consciousness of the calling of the whole people of God had sometimes been neglected "in both our churches," recent discussions have restored its prominence for ecclesiology and for the theology of ministry. Thus, it is possible to affirm that "the doctrine of the common priesthood of all the baptized and of the serving character of the ministries in the church and for the church represents in our day a joint starting point for Lutherans and Catholics" (§ 15).

For both Catholics and Lutherans, there can be no competition between these two dimensions of the church's life. "Instead, the special ministry is precisely service to the common priesthood of all ... so that the faithful can, each in his or her own place, be priests in the sense of the universal priesthood and fulfill the mission of the church in that place" (*Apostolicity*, § 275). Properly understood, then, "there is a differentiated referential relationship between the specific tasks of the general priesthood of all the baptized and of the ordained ministry" § 254).

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15. Lutherans and Catholics affirm together that ministry is of divine origin and that it is necessary for the being of the church. Ministry is not simply a delegation "from below" but is instituted by Jesus Christ.

Referring to the "ministry of leadership" already evident from New Testament times, the 1981 international dialogue said, "In continuous relation to the normative apostolic tradition, it [the ministry] makes present the mission of Jesus Christ. The presence of this ministry in the community 'signifies the priority of divine initiative and authority in the Church's existence.' Consequently, this ministry is not simply a delegation 'from below,' but is instituted by Jesus Christ" (*Ministry*, § 20; the quotation is from *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*, § 14.)

Similarly, *The Apostolicity of the Church* declared, "Catholics and Lutherans affirm together that God instituted the ministry and that

it is necessary for the being of the Church, since the word of God and its public proclamation in word and sacrament are necessary for faith in Jesus Christ to arise and be preserved and together with this for the church to come into being and be preserved as believers who make up the body of Christ in the unity of faith" (§ 276; also found in *From Conflict to Communion*, § 178).

According to contemporary understanding, to say that ministry is "instituted by Jesus Christ" generally does not point to a single act of Jesus or to one scriptural text but rather affirms that the ministry of the church reflects God's will and carries out the mission of Christ. (cf. *Apostolicity*, § 281.)

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16. We both affirm that all ministry is subordinated to Christ, who in the Holy Spirit is acting in the preaching of the Word of God, in the administration of the sacraments, and in pastoral service.

The Ministry in the Church declares of ecclesial life, "Within this priestly people of God, Christ, acting through the Holy Spirit, confers manifold ministries: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ' (Ephesians 4:11f.). Called into the ministry of reconciliation, and as those being entrusted the word of reconciliation, they are 'ambassadors in Christ's stead' (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:18–20); yet they are not lords over the faith but ministers of joy (2 Corinthians 1:24)" (§ 14).

Thus, Lutherans and Catholics can both affirm that all ministry is subordinated to Christ, who "in the Holy Spirit, is acting in the preaching of the Word of God, in the administration of the sacraments, and in the pastoral service. Jesus Christ, acting in the present, takes the minister into his service; the minister is only his tool and instrument. Jesus Christ is the one and only high priest of the New Covenant" (*Ministry*, § 21, *Apostolicity*, § 274).

17. Lutherans and Catholics agree that the proclamation of the gospel is foremost among the various tasks of the ordained ministry.

Already the *Malta Report* reported increased mutual appreciation on this subject:

> The Second Vatican Council has emphasized in a new way that the basic task of priests is the proclamation of the gospel. Further, it is stressed in the administration of the sacraments that these sacraments are of the faith which are born from the word and nourished by the word. According to the Lutheran Confessions, it is the task of the ministerial office to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments in accordance with the gospel so that in this way faith is awakened and strengthened. Over against an earlier one-sided emphasis on proclamation, the sacraments in the Lutheran churches are currently coming to have a more important place in the spiritual life of the congregations (§ 61; the references are to Vatican II's Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *PO* § 4 and to the Augsburg Confession V, VII).

Apostolicity of the Church reiterated this point: "[F]or both Catholics and Lutherans the fundamental duty and intention of the ordained ministry is public service of the Word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ, which the Triune God has commissioned the church to proclaim to all the world. Every office and every office-holder must be measured against this obligation" (§ 274).

18. We declare in common that the essential and specific function of the ordained minister is to assemble and build up the Christian community by proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and presiding over the liturgical, missionary and diaconal life of the community.

After surveying historical differences in "starting points" and emphasis in understanding ordained ministry, *The Ministry*

in the Church was able to conclude, "Our churches are thus able today to declare *in common* that the essential and specific function of the ordained minister is to assemble and build up the Christian community by proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and presiding over the liturgical, missionary, and diaconal life of the community" (§ 31). The echo here of the language in the document from the World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*, is striking: "The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry" (*Ministry*, § 13).

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19. The authority of the ministry is not to be understood as an individual possession of the minister, but it is rather an authority with the commission to serve in the community and for the community.

Referring to all ministries, the international dialogue commission said in 1981, "They render their service in the midst of the whole people and for the people of God which, as a whole, is the 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church'" (*Ministry*, § 14). Referring to ordained ministry in particular, this dialogue specified that its authority is "not to be understood as an individual possession of the minister, but it is rather an authority with the commission to serve in the community and for the community. Therefore, the exercise of the authority of the ministry should involve the participation of the whole community. This applies also to the appointment of the ministers." The ordained minister "manifests and exercises the authority of Christ in the way Christ himself revealed God's authority to the world: in and through communion. For this reason the ministry must not suppress Christian freedom and fraternity but should rather promote them. The Christian freedom, fraternity, and responsibility of the whole church and of all its members must find its expression in the conciliar, collegial and synodical structures of the church" (*Ministry*, § 23).

20. We also agree that the office of ministry stands over against (*gegenüber*) the community as well as within it and thus is called to exercise authority over the community.

The language of "over against" appears already in the *Malta Report*: "The correct determination of the relationship between this ministry assigned to the entire church and a special office in the church is a problem for Lutherans and Catholics alike. Both agree that the office of the ministry stands over against the community as well as within the community. Further they agree that the ministerial office represents Christ and his over-againstness to the community only insofar as it gives expression to the gospel. Both must examine themselves as to how effectively the critical superiority of the gospel is maintained in practice" (§ 50).

Citing this affirmation, *The Ministry in the Church* expanded the point: "For Lutherans and Catholics it is fundamental to a proper understanding of the ministerial office that 'the office of the ministry stands over against the community as well as within the community.' Inasmuch as the ministry is exercised on behalf of Jesus Christ and makes him present, it has authority over against the community. 'He who hears you hears me' (Luke 10:16). The authority of the ministry must therefore not be understood as delegated by the community" (§ 22).

21. Both Lutherans and Catholics affirm that entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry is by ordination, that ministers cannot ordain themselves or claim this office as a matter of right but are called by God and designated in and through the church.

The language of this Agreement is from the U.S. dialogue Eucharist and Ministry, § 18. The affirmation recognizes both the divine initiative and the ecclesial setting of ordained ministry. *The Apostolicity of the Church* elaborated these points: "Christ himself acts in the human rite of ordination," which is "essentially induction into the ministry of the whole church, even though the

present divisions of the churches prevent this from being fully realized through their call and commission. The ordained are claimed for lifelong service of the gospel" (§ 277).

22. Catholics and Lutherans both ordain through prayer invoking the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands by another ordained person. Both affirm that the ordinand receives an anointing of the Holy Spirit, who equips that person for ordained ministry.

The Ministry in the Church described the common "understanding and practice of ordination," which provides the basis for "substantial convergence" between Lutheran and Catholic churches:

> Since apostolic times the calling to special ministry in the church has taken place through the laying on of hands and through prayer in the midst of the congregation assembled for worship. In this way the ordained person is received into the apostolic ministry of the church and into the community of ordained ministers. At the same time, through the laying on of hands and through prayer (*epiclesis*), the gift of the Holy Spirit is offered and conveyed for the exercise of ministry (§ 32).

23. Both Lutherans and Catholics regard ordination as unrepeatable.

"By means of ordination Christ calls the ordained person once and for all into the ministry in his church. Both in the Catholic and in the Lutheran understanding, therefore, ordination can be received only once and cannot be repeated" (*Ministry*, § 36). For this international dialogue, convergence on this central point, a "uniqueness which cannot be given up," grounded a consensus on the reality of ordination (§ 39).

Catholics have used language of *character indelebilis* for what is received at ordination. This language links ordination to baptism and confirmation, also sacraments which "impress a sign" that orders a person's position in the church. As *Ministry* explained, [i]n contemporary Catholic doctrinal statements, the *character indelebilis* is again understood more in terms of the promise and mission which permanently mark the ordained and claim them for the service of Christ" (§ 37). For Lutherans, who have often avoided what they saw as ontological and metaphysical claims in the language of *character indelebilis*, still "ordination to the ministry of the church on behalf of Christ, conferred in the power of the Holy Spirit, is for life and not subject to temporal limitations" (§ 38; see also *Eucharist and Ministry*, § 17).

24. Both Lutherans and Catholics consider that there is one ministerial office, while also distinguishing a special ministry of episkope over presbyters/pastors.

For Catholics, the one sacrament of order has been apportioned among three ministries or major orders: deacon, priest (presbyter), and bishop. Even though this structure evolved during the apostolic age or later, Catholics understand this basic structure to be irreversible and belonging to the fullness of the nature of the church (*Apostolicity*, § 281). For Catholics, priests are "sharers in a special way in Christ's priesthood and, by carrying out sacred functions, act as ministers of him who through his Spirit continually exercises his priesthood role for our benefit in the liturgy" (*PO* 5, cited in *Apostolicity*, § 274).

Catholics hold that the fullness of ordained ministry is conferred through episcopal consecration (*LG* 21). The bishop exercises *episkope* at the regional level, the diocese, while most often, a priest is the pastor of a local parish. In the present life of the church, only bishops can ordain to the episcopacy, the presbyterate, and the diaconate. The apostolic succession of bishops manifests and serves the apostolic tradition of the church. The episcopal college is a successor of the college of

the apostles (*LG* 19). Since Vatican II, the episcopate is "the basic form of ministry and the point of departure for the theological interpretation of church ministry" (*Apostolicity*, § 241).

Nevertheless, for Catholic theology, there is one sacrament of order. As *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* said, "Both bishops and presbyters are priests; priests are associated with their bishop in one presbyterium. What these ministries share is much greater than that which distinguishes them" (*The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 94).

The Lutheran tradition has one order of ordained ministers, usually called pastors, which can combine features that Catholics divide between the episcopate and the presbyterate. The pastor who has received this ministry possesses the fullness of that which ordination confers (*Eucharist and Ministry* § 21). Yet Lutherans do not reject the division of the one office into different ministries which has developed in the history of the church. The Augsburg Confession affirms the desire of the Lutheran reformers to preserve, if possible, the episcopal polity that they had inherited from the past for the sake of ordering the church (*Confessio Augustana*, 28; *Apology*, 14.1). In contemporary practice some Lutheran churches have "one three-fold ministry," while others do not ("Episcopal Ministry," § 39). Questions of order remain intensely discussed, but without the expectation of a single proper form: "This cannot be construed on the basis of a principle, for the experiences the church has undergone play a decisive role" (*Apostolicity*, § 265).

25. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the ministry is exercised both locally in the congregation and regionally. Both accept that the distinction between local and regional offices in the churches is more than the result of purely historical and human developments, or a matter of sociological necessity, but is the action of the Spirit. Furthermore, the differentiation of the ministry into a more local and a more regional office arises of necessity out of the intention and task of ministry to be a ministry of unity in faith.

In 1981, the second phase of international Lutheran-Catholic dialogue concluded its examination of the distinction between bishop and pastor with a cautious statement: "*If* both churches acknowledge that for faith this historical development of the one apostolic ministry into a more local and a more regional ministry has taken place with the help of the Holy Spirit and to this degree constitutes something essential for the church, then a *high degree* of agreement has been reached" (*Ministry*, § 49; emphasis original). In 2006, the fourth phase cited this statement to show the advance that its own work had helped to achieve: "When one considers what has been shown above about the objective necessity of a differentiation within ministerial office, which is effectively present in the Lutheran churches and is recognized as such, then the hypothetical wording of this sentence can be changed into an affirmation" (*Apostolicity*, § 280; see also *Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 88, which includes the same quotation). Now "Catholics and Lutherans say together that the *episkope* of ministry must be exercised at two different levels, that is, both locally in the congregation and regionally" (*Apostolicity*, § 280).

The fittingness and necessity of this differentiation is described by *Apostolicity* when it speaks of it as "arising out of the intention and task of the ministry to be a ministry of unity in faith." In "the congregation gathered for worship is the place where human beings hear and receive the word of God by word and sacrament. ... But there are many such congregations ... . In order that they may be one in faith in the one gospel and have

communion with each other, there must be a ministry which takes responsibility for this unity" (§ 279; cf. *Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 94).

In contemporary understanding, the practice of early Lutherans needs to be interpreted within its historical context, which was a time when the reformers "could not perceive or experience the office of bishop as an office of unity in faith." Furthermore, the fact that the early Lutherans practiced presbyteral ordination does not mean that they were without episkope or oversight. Their resort to presbyteral ordination, practiced "precisely because they held ministerial office to be essential for the existence of the church," did not remove their desire to maintain, as far as possible, their continuity with the practices of the whole church (*Apostolicity*, § 282; cf. CA 28). In practice, "Lutheran churches too have always been episcopally ordered in the sense of having a ministry which bears responsibility for the communion in faith of individual congregations." While almost always recognizing a ministry of oversight, Lutherans nevertheless express this ministry through a variety of structures; "the supra-local ministry of oversight in Lutheran churches today is carried out both by individuals and by synods in which both the ordained and non-ordained work together" (*Apostolicity*, § 279).

Lutherans continue to discuss the structure and roles of ministries of oversight. Some Lutheran churches have always maintained a historic episcopate. Thus, in Sweden, for example, the Catholic and Lutheran Dialogue Group has been able to make a common statement, "Concerning the Office of Bishop" (*Justification in the Life of the Church*, § 300). In the United States, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America committed itself in 1999 to share with the Episcopal Church "an episcopal succession that is both evangelical and historic" (*Called to Common Mission*,

§ 12).[25] Other Lutheran churches use other designations for those exercising *episkope* (ephorus, synodal pastor, church president, etc.). It is important in Lutheran tradition to allow room for some diversity in the structures of *episkope*. Thus, the 2006 LWF *Lund Statement* says that it is "consistent with Lutheran understandings of the church" to develop "various synodical and collegial structures, which include the participation of both lay and ordained persons, and in which the episcopal ministry has a clearly defined role" (§50). Yet this document also affirmed that "the presence and exercise of a special ministry of oversight is consistent with the confessional character of Lutheran churches" and commended consideration of its "personal, collegial, and communal dimensions" (§ 2, 4). In all the work of oversight, there is "particular responsibility to care for the apostolic faithfulness and the unity of the church at large." This responsibility for unity calls for "substantial collegial relations with colleagues in the episkopé of other churches, particularly in the same region of the world" and for "cooperation with the wider Christian community" (*Episcopal Ministry*, § 46-9).

26. Catholics and Lutherans affirm together that all ministry, to the degree that it serves the koinonia of salvation, also serves the unity of the worldwide church, and together we long for more complete realization of this unity.

In affirming that "all ordained ministers are commissioned to serve the unity and catholicity of the church," Lutherans have described the unity for which they yearn: "The communion that we seek ecumenically is made visible in shared forms of proclamation, which include participation in the one baptism and the one eucharist, and which is upheld by a mutually reconciled

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25   Lutheran conversations with Anglicans have produced a number of agreements on the theology and practice of episcopal ministry, beginning with the 1987 Niagara Report and continuing with the 1993 *Porvoo Common Statement by the British and Irish Anglican Churches and Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches* and the 2001 *Waterloo Declaration by the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada*. For the reliance of this discussion on the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, especially on Ministry, for understanding apostolic succession, see the Niagara Report §3.

ministry. This communion in the means of grace witnesses to the healing and uniting power of the Triune God amidst the divisions of humankind, and represents the global communion of the universal church" (*Lund Statement* § 54).

For Catholics, the bishop of Rome, successor of Peter, has a unique responsibility as pastor and teacher to this universal church (*Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 70). He bears the responsibility for ensuring the unity of all the churches (John Paul II, *Ut unum sint*, § 94).

The Lutheran legacy includes an openness to a rightly exercised primacy (*Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 73). Lutherans have expressed a number of cautions about how the need for such an office is described and how it is to be exercised. Nevertheless, as *The Ministry in the Church* declared, "the possibility begins to emerge that the Petrine office of the bishop of Rome need not be excluded by Lutherans as a visible sign of the unity of the church as a whole, 'insofar as [this office] is subordinated to the primacy of the gospel by theological reinterpretation and practical restructuring'" (*Ministry*, § 73 citing *Malta Report*, § 66).

III. AGREEMENTS IN THE LUTHERAN/ ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUES— ELABORATED AND DOCUMENTED

C. Eucharist

Introduction

As stated above in this *Declaration*, in No. 6, Lutherans and Catholics agree on the mediating role of the "means of grace" by which God communicates to believers the benefits of Christ's redemptive and renewing work. By the gospel word and the sacraments, God's own power and influence envelop the believer's whole life through forgiveness of sins, union with the risen Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

Among the sacraments, the Eucharist or Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20) is unique both in its benefits and in the various dimensions of its celebration: as memorial of Christ's death for our salvation, as encounter with him graciously giving forgiveness and nourishment, and as the pledge received of resurrection and glory to come.[26] Sadly, however, differences and even polemics over the eucharistic gift and event have divided Lutherans and Catholics both in their doctrine concerning this sacrament and, more painfully, in their separation, rather than communion, in celebrating and receiving this central blessing of God.

However, the past half-century of our dialogues has brought to light hitherto unsuspected agreements between Lutherans and Catholics regarding the Lord's Supper or Eucharist. The following six agreements begin with our long-standing catechetical insistence on the spiritual benefits of Eucharistic communion

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26   St. Thomas Aquinas introduces the sacraments as involving "three times," that is, as commemorative signs of Christ's saving passion, as demonstrative signs of grace given by his passion, and as anticipatory signs of glory to come (*signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, praenuntiativum*). *Summa theologiae*, III, 60, 3. In his *Small Catechism*, Martin Luther instructs one to attend especially to the present gift of grace: "The words 'given for you' and 'shed for you for the forgiveness of sins' show us that forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament through these words, because where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation" (BC, 362).

with Christ by reception of his body and blood (1). Then follow accounts of shared convictions gained by Catholics and Lutherans from 20th century liturgical and theological study, such as the Trinitarian matrix and dynamic of celebrating the Lord's Supper (2); the memorial (*anamnesis*) of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice in which he offered himself unto death for our salvation (3); the special mode, among other ways of Christ's presence, in which his body and blood are present and shared sacramentally (4); the future orientation of our celebration toward our Lord's return, with Holy Communion's promise of the risen life and heavenly banquet to come (5); and, finally, the personal and ecclesial communion (*koinonia*) realized among those who share in the body and blood of Christ, for "we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17) (6).

27. Lutherans and Catholics agree in esteeming highly the spiritual benefits of union with the risen Christ given to them as they receive his body and blood in Holy Communion.

Catholics and Lutherans agree that when we receive the Lord's Supper we are personally united with Christ. Receiving this gift is a source of great blessings for those who receive it in faith.

In explaining the Lord's Supper in the *Large Catechism* (1529), Martin Luther taught a doctrine that became deeply formative of Lutheran faith and piety, that is, when he treated the "power and benefit, for which purpose the sacrament was really instituted ... . This is clear and easily understood from the words . ...: 'This is my body and blood, given and poured out FOR YOU for the forgiveness of sins.' That is to say, in brief, that we go to the sacrament because there we receive a great treasure, through and in which we obtain the forgiveness of sins. Why? Because the words are there, and they impart it to us! For this reason he bids me eat and drink, that it may be mine and do me good as a sure pledge and sign—indeed as the very gift he has provided

for me against my sins, death, and all evils. Therefore it is appropriately called food of the soul ... for it nourishes and strengthens the new creature."[27]

Less than 40 years later, the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* differed from Luther by assuming that communicants have received forgiveness of serious sins by confession and sacramental absolution, but it also taught, with comparable emphasis, the exalted benefits of receiving Christ the Lord in Holy Communion. The Eucharist is "the fountain of all graces, containing as it does, in an admirable manner, the fountain itself of heavenly gifts and graces ... Christ our Lord." On the imparting of grace: "If then, 'grace and truth came through Jesus Christ' (John 1:17), they must surely be poured into the soul which receives with purity and holiness him who said of himself, 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them' (John 6:56)." Eucharistic communion, furthermore, cancels lesser faults, strengthens one against temptation, and, while giving peace of conscience in this life, also invigorates believers for their passage into unfading glory and beatitude with God.[28]

In our era, the world-level Lutheran-Catholic dialogue on the Eucharist gave an agreed account of the sacrament's benefits, as believers are brought in a special way to be "in Christ": "Under the signs of bread and wine the Lord offers as nourishment his body and blood, that is himself, which he has given for all. He thus shows himself to be the 'living bread that came down from heaven' (John 6:51). When a believer receives this food in faith, he will be taken into a communion with Christ which is akin to the communion of the Son and the Father: 'Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me' (John 6:57). Christ wills to be in us, and we are

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27   BC, 468–69. Another Lutheran confession, *The Smalkald Articles*, places the Sacrament of the Altar among the main forms in which the gospel is enunciated to believers–to be believed! Part III, Art. 4, "Concerning the Gospel" (BC, 319).

28   *Catechism of the Council of Trent* for Parish Priests, trans. John A. McHugh & Charles J. Callan, 16th printing (New York: Joseph F. Wagner & London: B. Herder, 1934), 242–44. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) updates this instruction on "The Fruits of Holy Communion," in § §1391–95 and §1416 ("In Brief").

enabled to be in Christ: 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them' (John 6:56). This communion is rooted in eternity and reaches out again beyond time into eternity. 'The one who eats this bread will live forever'" (John 6:58).[29]

In 2010 the Roman Catholic-Lutheran Dialogue in Sweden and Finland related Holy Communion to baptism and then expressed the churches' high estimation of the Eucharist by stating, "There is a particularly close link between baptism and the Eucharist, the Holy Mass, or Holy Communion. Both the individual person and the church gain their spiritual life and strength from the Eucharist. Participation in Mass is the basic format for living as a Christian. Baptism incorporates the person who is baptized into the body of Christ and the Eucharist helps him or her to mature and grow therein. ... Catholics and Lutherans profess together that Jesus Christ is really present in Holy Communion in bread and wine and that he forgives the faithful baptized their sins. Communion unites us with Christ, gives us the grace of God, and strengthens our faith."[30]

The Lutheran-Catholic conversation on the Eucharist thus takes as its starting-point our shared high regard for the treasure of spiritual riches given to believers by their reception of the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion. In the Reformation

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29   Lutheran / Roman Catholic Joint Commission, *The Eucharist* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1980; in German as *Das Herrenmahl*, 1978), §19. Among "supplementary studies," *The Eucharist* includes Harding Meyer's account of how Luther took the words of consecration as proclaiming salvation, even as *summa et compendium evangelii*, by which members of the congregation receive in faith the spiritual food offered them. In spite of this appendix, Albrecht Peters published a Lutheran critique of *The Eucharist* because it neglects themes central to Lutheran piety of the Lord's Supper. Absent are, e.g., Luther's paralleling of the words of institution addressing forgiveness to the believer with other divinely mandated words of baptism and absolution from sin and the personal presence of the crucified and risen Lord who gives to communicants participation in his sacrificed and risen body. "Einheit im Herrenmahl?" *Theologische Revue* 75 (1979), 181–90. A wider presence of such misgivings came to light in several Lutheran churches' responses to BEM on the Eucharist. See Martin Seils's study of these responses in *Lutheran Convergence?* LWF Report 25 (Geneva: LWF, 1988). However, it must be asked whether these Lutheran emphases, brought out in criticism of *The Eucharist*, should not be appreciated by Catholics as an enrichment of their Eucharistic instruction and spirituality.

30   *Justification in the Life of the Church*, §§ 215–16, referencing the affirmation of Eucharistic promotion of growth stated in § 75 of *Communio Sanctorum*.

era, this regard was expressed in the catechisms with differing emphases, which however did not eliminate important areas of agreement. This shared esteem has become evident in our recent dialogues, which also show that our churches are agreed on several other dimensions of the Lord's Supper, which the following texts will relate.

28. Catholics and Lutherans agree that in Eucharistic worship the church participates in a unique way in the life of the Trinity: In the power of the Holy Spirit, called down upon the gifts and the worshiping community, believers have access to the glorified flesh and blood of Christ the Son as our food and are brought in union with him and with each other to the Father.

Eucharistic prayers, since the earliest Christian times, have a dynamically Trinitarian structure. The Christian doctrine of God as Trinity is the traditional framework for liturgical community prayer. Classically, Eucharistic prayers are addressed to the Father, commemorating Jesus' words and actions and invoking the Holy Spirit upon the gifts and the congregation. The international dialogue's 1993 statement, *Church and Justification*, states clearly this Trinitarian texture of the Eucharist: "The celebration of the Lord's Supper draws believers into the presence and communion of the triune God through thanksgiving (*eucharistia*) to the Father, remembrance (*anamnesis*) of Christ, and invocation (*epiclesis*) of the Holy Spirit" (§ 69; see also § 49, taken up in No. 1, above, of this Declaration). Lutherans have also highlighted the proclamation nature of the Eucharist, especially the institution narrative.

The world-level Lutheran-Catholic commission's 1978 document, *The Eucharist*, asserts: "The union with Christ into which we are drawn in the Eucharist through the power of the Holy Spirit ultimately leads to the eternal Father" (§ 29).[31] Because through the

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31   The central "Joint Witness" of this commission unfolds the main dynamics of eucharistic worship, in three sections, namely "Through, with, and in Christ" (§§ 13–20), "In the Unity of the Holy Spirit" (§§ 14– 28), and "Glorification of the Father" (§§ 29–37).

invocation of the Holy Spirit Christ is present in the Eucharistic action, both as offering himself to us and to the Father, our participation in his offering nourishes us and introduces us into the mysterious inner rhythm of the life of God.

The Eucharist of 1978 gave evidence of how trinitarian prayer shapes Catholic and Lutheran Eucharistic worship by joining to the commission's agreed statement a series of texts both of Catholic Eucharistic prayers and of orders of service for Holy Communion then in use in Lutheran churches of Germany, the United States (Lutheran Church in America), France, Slovakia, and Sweden.[32] The 2006 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, commended for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, gives settings for the service of Holy Communion, in which "The Great Thanksgiving" moves from the presider's invitation to give thanks and praise, to the "Holy, Holy, Holy," through the institution narrative, the memorial of Christ who died, rose, and will come again, to the concluding doxology of all honor and glory to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[33]

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29. Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic worship is the memorial (anamnesis) of Jesus Christ, present as the one crucified for us and risen, that is, in his sacrificial self-giving for us in his death and in his resurrection (Romans 4:25), to which the church responds with its sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Both Catholics and Lutherans commemorate Jesus' death and resurrection liturgically as they celebrate the Eucharistic

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32 *The Eucharist*, pp. 29–60.

33 E*vangelical Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), for example, pp. 107–09 (Setting One), 129–33 (Setting Two). However, both of these Settings offer an alternative, condensed, form which moves directly from the "Holy, Holy, Holy" to the institution narrative and then to the Lord's Prayer, without the Trinitarian doxology (pp. 108 and 130). This follows the tradition in Martin Luther's Latin Mass (*Formula missae*, 1523) and *German Mass* (*Deutsche Messe*, 1526).

memorial (*anamnēsis*).[34] This is not simply a collective mental act recalling a past event but an action transcending time, which allows the believer to enter the reality of what faith recognizes as the pivotal event in human history. The people of God, assembled in the liturgical celebration, receive in faith the proclamation of Scripture and join in celebrating again Jesus' Eucharistic gift of himself. They share now in Christ's sacrificial act of praise and thanks to the Father, at the Last Supper and on the cross; they join him who is risen to make eternal intercession for humanity. They offer themselves to the Father along with him, since they form, under his headship, what St. Augustine calls "the whole Christ."

Catholics see in *each* celebration of the Eucharist our inclusion in the one saving sacrifice of Christ offered for us to the Father. Lutherans generally emphasize the *uniqueness* of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, as a once-and-for-all event, whose benefits are now shared in Holy Communion, while understanding the present celebration of the Eucharist as the church's prayer of thanks and affirmation in response to his sacrifice. The traditional contrast is between the Catholic emphasis on the movement *ad Patrem* (to the Father) and the Lutheran emphasis on the movement *ad populum* (to the people). In light of ecumenical discussions and liturgical renewal, Catholics have grown in appreciation of the message proclaimed and grace announced to the people in the Eucharist, while Lutherans have grown in appreciation and recognition that the prayer of the people, spoken by the minister, is directed to the Father.

Statements of national and international dialogue commissions have argued that these two traditions on the Eucharist and the sacrifice of Christ are not necessarily exclusive of each other. The international Joint Commission's 1978 statement, *The Eucharist*, took over from the World Council of Church's Faith and Order Commission this basic affirmation: "Christ instituted the eucharist,

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34   The notion of *anamnesis* comes from Jesus' mandate, "Do this *eis tēn emēn anamnēsin*" ("as my memorial"; 1 Corinthians 11:24–25, Luke 22:19). It became a centerpiece of 20th-century ecumenical discussion through works on the Eucharist by Gregory Dix, F. J. Leenhardt, Max Thurian, and J. J. von Allmen.

sacrament of his body and blood with its focus on the cross and resurrection, as the *anamnesis* of the whole of God's reconciling action in him. Christ himself with all that he has accomplished for us and for all creation (in his incarnation, servanthood, ministry, teaching, suffering, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost) is present in this *anamnesis* as is also the foretaste of his *Parousia* and the fulfilment of the Kingdom" (§ 17).[35]

Regarding Eucharistic sacrifice, *The Eucharist* explains: "The notion of memorial, as understood in the Passover celebration at the time of Christ—i.e., the making effective in the present of an event in the past—has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the Eucharist. In the *memorial celebration of the people of God*, more happens than that past events are brought to mind by the power of recall and imagination. The decisive point is not that what is past is called to mind, but that the Lord calls his people into his presence and confronts them with his salvation. In this creative act of God, the salvation event from the past becomes the offer of salvation for the present and the promise of salvation for the future. ... In receiving in faith, they are taken as his body into the reconciling sacrifice which equips them for self-giving (Romans 12:1) and enables them 'through Jesus Christ' to offer 'spiritual sacrifices' in service to the world (1 Peter 2:5). Thus is rehearsed in the Lord's Supper what is practiced in the whole Christian life" (§ 36).

The international commission, in *The Eucharist* (1978), affirmed the agreement in this way: "Our two traditions agree in understanding the Eucharist as a *sacrifice of praise*. This is neither simple verbal praise of God, nor is it a supplement or a complement which the people from their own power add to the offering of praise and thanksgiving which Christ has made to the Father. The Eucharistic

35   *The Eucharist* cites here the "Accra text" (1974), which was revised in BEM of 1982. In BEM-E revisions occurred to give the following in place of the first sentence cited above, "The eucharist is the memorial of the crucified and risen Christ, i.e. the living and effective sign of his sacrifice, accomplished once and for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind. The biblical idea of memorial as applied to the eucharist refers to this present efficacy of God's work when it is celebrated by God's people in a liturgy" (§ 5). The second sentence cited above is in BEM-E, but with a revision which specifies that Christ is present in the *anamnesis* as "granting us communion with himself" (§ 6).

sacrifice of praise has only become possible through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross: therefore this remains the main content of the church's sacrifice of praise" (§ 37).

The Swedish-Finnish Lutheran-Catholic dialogue statement of 2010 adopts a wide framework in its section 4.5.1.3 on "The Eucharist as Thanksgiving, Remembrance, and Sacrifice" (§§ 222–231). A central statement on sacrifice moves from the Lutheran viewpoint to offer a context, both for what has been cited above from *The Eucharist* and for making important agreements explicit: "Both Catholics and Lutherans emphasize the character of the Eucharist as a gift in return, since it is a thanksgiving sacrifice. The Lutheran Confessions ... make a distinction between two kinds of offering, namely, sacrament (*sacramentum*) and sacrifice (*sacrificium*). The sacrament is God's gift of reconciliation and redemption, which comes first and which is given to us as a gift, while the sacrifice is the church's sacrifice of praise (*sacrificium laudis*), our response to God's gift. The response includes in the wider sense all good deeds that spring from faith. In the more narrow sense, this Eucharistic sacrifice includes the proclamation of the gospel, the profession of faith, prayer and thanksgiving, something that takes place at Mass.[36] In that sense the Mass as a whole can be seen as sacrifice, in which Christ first gives himself and his forgiveness to us and we respond by giving ourselves in thanksgiving to him. When the reformers criticized the medieval teaching about the sacrifice of the Mass, they were afraid that these two aspects would be confused so that the view of the sacrament as God's free gift would be dissolved and the Mass would be perceived as a human work, performed in order to satisfy God. However, if we seek to recover the sacramental meaning of the Eucharist, i.e. to understand it as a sacramental form, of which the content is the unique sacrifice of Christ, then the prerequisites exist for solving this controversial issue" (§ 229).

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36   At this point a note references the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, Art. XXIV, §§ 17–26; *BC*, 260–63.

30. Lutherans and Catholics agree that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ himself is present: He is present truly, substantially, as a person, and he is present in his entirety, as Son of God and a human being.

Catholics conceive of this presence of Christ as being brought about through the *transformation* of the original substances or central realities of the Eucharistic bread and wine into the substance or reality of the divinized body and blood of Christ by what Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent refer to as "transubstantiation."[37] Lutherans traditionally affirm that Christ is truly *present "in, with, and under"* the bread and wine, but do not usually speak of a transformation of the elements themselves.[38]

In Zürich, the Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli began teaching in 1525 that Christ's ascension ended his bodily presence among us and that the elements and actions of the Supper only represent Christ for our commemorative spiritual eating in faith regarding Christ's death for us. Luther reacted vigorously in treatises defending the Real Presence.[39] In the *Large Catechism* (1529) he taught that the word of Christ, remembered and spoken over the

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37   This terminology emerged in theological arguments against Berengar of Tours (d. 1088), who affirmed the Real Presence but denied any change in the elements. In 1079, a Council held in Rome required Berengar to profess and teach the "substantial conversion" of the elements (DH 700). In 13th-century scholastic theology, Aristotelian metaphysics of substance and accidents entered explanatory treatments of the Real Presence. Trent's teaching on the Real Presence in 1551 affirmed as doctrine the *conversio* of the substance of the elements into Christ's body and blood, adding that the church finds it fitting and proper to call this "transubstantiation" (DH 1642; see also *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, § 1376, which comes after citations of Saints John Chrysostom and Ambrose).

38   Some recent Lutheran statements have drawn an analogy between the hypostatic union in Jesus of two natures, which continue to remain distinct, and the "sacramental union" of natural bread and wine with the person of the risen Lord in the Eucharist, in which union does not involved mixture or change. See Orthodox-Lutheran Joint Commission (2006), § 4a; and *Justification in the Life of the Church*: Catholic-Lutheran Dialogue for Sweden and Finland (2010), §233). But in his conversation with Zwingli at Marburg in 1529, Luther insisted that the sacramental union between bread and Christ's body and the wine and Christ's blood is different from the hypostatic union of natures in Christ, observing that "this is not a personal union" (LW 37, 299 ff.).

39   See, for example, *That These Words of Christ, "This is my Body," Still Stand Firm against the Fanatics* (1527), in LW 37, 13–150; and *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), in LW 37, 161–372.

Eucharistic elements, "makes this a sacrament and distinguishes it from ordinary bread and wine, so that it is called and truly is Christ's body and blood."[40]

In 1530 the Augsburg Confession stated, "Concerning the Lord's Supper it is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form (*Gestalt*) of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there."[41] In response to the Confession, the *Confutation*, composed by Catholic theologians under direction of the Papal Legate and presented in the name of Emperor Charles V, stated, "The words of the tenth article contain nothing that would give cause for offense. They confess that the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present in the sacrament after the words of consecration."[42]

Although controversy made necessary a shift of attention to the objective reality of Christ's presence, Luther's catechetical texts cited in No. 1, above, are an emphatic teaching on the saving and reconciling Christ being present and active as he gives his body and blood, with its blessings and benefits, in the Lord's Supper or Eucharistic celebration.

Both traditional Catholic and traditional Lutheran approaches, then, different as they are in expression, affirm Christ's real, substantial presence in the sacrament. In the faith of both churches, when one receives the Eucharistic elements or species, one truly receives the body and blood of Christ in a sacramental way, and so comes into communion with Christ, in order to be on pilgrimage with him.

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40 *BC*, 468. Luther's catechisms of 1529 are confessional documents of the Lutheran tradition.

41 Article X of the Confession, which adds against Zwingli and others, "Rejected, therefore, is also the contrary teaching." *BC*, 44.

42 *The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession*, given in *Sources and Contexts of The Book of Concord*, eds. Robert Kolb and James A. Nestingen (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 112. Consequently, Melanchthon's *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, treats Art. X briefly, while adding texts from Greek Fathers to show "that we defend the position received in the entire church . . . . Moreover, we are talking about the presence of the living Christ, for we know that death no longer has dominion over him (Romans 6:9)." BC, 185.

The 1978 statement of the international Joint Commission, *The Eucharist*, draws this conclusion about the different ways Catholics and Lutherans traditionally conceive of Eucharistic presence: "The ecumenical discussion has shown that these two positions must no longer be regarded as opposed in a way that leads to separation. The Lutheran position affirms the Catholic tradition that the consecrated elements do not simply remain bread and wine, but rather, by the power of the creative word, are given as the body and blood of Christ. In this sense Lutherans also occasionally speak, as does the Greek tradition, of a 'change'. The concept of transubstantiation, for its part, is intended as a confession and preservation of the Mystery-character of the Eucharistic presence; it is not intended as an explanation of *how* this change occurs" (§ 51).

31. Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic Communion, as sacramental participation in the glorified body and blood of Christ, is a pledge that our life in Christ will be eternal, our bodies will rise, and the present world is destined for transformation, in the hope of uniting us in communion with the saints of all ages now with Christ in heaven.

As a sharing in the life of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Eucharist directs the gaze of the assembled ecclesial body on the future, when history will be endlessly fulfilled by our sharing in the divine Mystery. As the 1993 document, *Church and Justification*, put it, "[The Church] is already a partaking in the *koinonia* of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; but as the pilgrim Church, it is such provisionally and in fragmentary fashion; and this means in anticipation and expectation of its final destination, which is still pending: consummation in the Kingdom of God, in which the triune God will be 'all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:24–28)" (§ 73).[43]

The International Commission's statement, *The Eucharist*, emphasized this: "The form and effect of the Eucharist are a promise of the eternal glory to which we are destined, and a sign

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43   See statement No. 11 above, in the Church section.

pointing to the new heaven and new earth towards which we are moving: that is why the Eucharist directs our thoughts to the Lord's coming, and brings it near to us. It is a joyful anticipation of the heavenly banquet, when redemption shall be fully accomplished and all creation shall be delivered from bondage. ... The Lord's Supper enables us to understand the future glory as the boundless and eternal wedding feast to which we are invited by the Lord. As a fraternal meal, in which Christ frees and unites, it turns our gaze to the promised eternal kingdom of unlimited freedom and righteousness" (§§ 43–44; cf. § 70).

In *Church and Justification* (1993) the Commission is more explicit still about the relation of the Eucharistic liturgy to the Christian dead: "Catholics and Lutherans confess in common that the 'communion of saints' is the community of those united in sharing in the word and sacraments (the *sancta*) in faith, through the Holy Spirit: the community of 'those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus [and] called to be saints [the *sancti*]' (1 Corinthians 1:2). In the Lutheran Confessions, too, there is a fundamental adherence to the idea of a living communion with the saints, for despite criticism of invocation of the saints, it is not denied that we should give 'honor to the saints': in thanks to God for their gifts of grace, in the strengthening of our faith because of their example, and in 'imitation, first of their faith and then of their other virtues, which each should imitate in accordance with his calling' (*Apology* 21.4–7; *Book of Concord* 229–230). ... Vatican II placed the ideas of the fathers and the practice of venerating the saints in an ecclesiological context (*Lumen Gentium* §§ 50–51). It stresses the eschatological character of the Church as the pilgrim people of God, and speaks of that people's 'union with the Church in heaven' (*LG* 50)" (§§ 293–294).[44]

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44 The U.S. dialogue report, *Hope of Eternal Life: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue XI* (2011), says: "This intimate communion in the Spirit is not broken by death. As the Catholics and Lutherans stated in an earlier round: 'The fellowship of those sanctified, the "holy ones" or saints, includes believers both living and dead. There is thus a solidarity of the church throughout the world with the church triumphant.' This solidarity across the barrier of death is particularly evident in the Eucharist, which is always celebrated in unity with the hosts of heaven" (§217, quoting *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VIII: The One Mediator, the Saints, and Mary*, edited by H. George Anderson, J. Frances Stafford, and Joseph A. Burgess [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1992], §103).

32. Lutherans and Catholics agree that sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist is an essential sign of the unity of the church, and that the reality of the church as a community is realized and furthered sacramentally in the Eucharistic celebration. The Eucharist both mirrors and builds the church in its unity.

The church is united, above all, by communion in the life and the supernatural gifts of God. This unity cannot be separated from unity in the confession of faith; it also cannot be separated from a lived unity or fellowship among Christians, and it is rooted in the "one baptism" by which all Christians are made members of the body of Christ. But the Eucharist has a unique relevance for showing forth and building up the church of Jesus Christ.

The 1978 statement, *The Eucharist*, states that the unity of individual disciples with the Lord, and the unity of the whole church, which is his body, is rooted in and fed by the celebration of the Eucharist. "Under the signs of bread and wine the Lord offers as nourishment his body and blood, that is himself, which he has given for all. ... In giving himself, Christ unites all who partake at his table: the many become 'one body' (1 Corinthians 10:17). In the power of the Holy Spirit, they are built up as the one people of God. 'It is the Spirit that gives life' (John 6:63). The Eucharistic meal is thus the source of the daily new life of the people of God, who through it are gathered together and kept in one faith" (§§ 19–20).

Pointing to the sacramental roots of the communion among believers in faith and in Christian practice, the 1993 statement, *Church and Justification*, declared: "In a special way the [Eucharistic] celebration is the *koinonia* of believers with the crucified and risen Lord present in the Supper, and for that reason it also creates and strengthens the *koinonia* of the faithful among and with each other" (§ 69; cf. § 57).

The Swedish-Finnish dialogue gave in 2010 an account of Eucharist and church unity, in which the commission proceeded from very basic aspects to draw on Augustine's interpretation of key Pauline texts:

> The Eucharist, or Holy Communion, is already by definition a public or a communal event. Jesus Christ unites all those who partake of his body and blood. Holy Communion thus expresses and strengthens the spiritual communion that exists between Christ and the individual Christian, between the church and its members, and between different local churches. Those who share the common bread and wine should profess their common faith and share all their joy and all their suffering with one another. As members of the body of Christ, we become participants of the life of Christ as well as of the life of one another (1 Corinthians 12:27). The Church Father St Augustine exhorts us to fellowship, which culminates in the Eucharist: "'Only one bread,' he [i.e. St. Paul] says. Regardless of the many breads that are distributed, it is still 'only one bread.' Regardless of how many breads remain on the altars of Christ across the whole earth, it is still 'only one bread.' But what is this 'one bread'? He expounds it in the shortest possible way, 'though many, we are only one body.' This bread, which is the body of Christ, the apostle calls the church: 'You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is its member.' What you receive, that you are, by grace, through "which you are saved, and you confirm that we are all one when you answer 'Amen.' It is, as you see, the sacrament of unity (§ 220).[45]

The dialogue group concluded: "Catholics and Lutherans agree that Holy Communion is a celebration of solidarity" (§ 221). For this reason, our present inability to share Eucharistic communion on a regular basis reveals all the more dramatically our ongoing need for fullness of unity in faith, practice, and, eventually, Eucharistic sharing.

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45   The Commission cited Augustine's Sermon 229A, giving the Latin original in note 106 of the document.

IV. REMAINING DIFFERENCES AND RECONCILING CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

This section moves beyond the 32 affirmations of the *Declaration* and its documentation to consider certain unresolved matters. This part of the *Declaration* treats 15 topics that have arisen from study of the dialogues in the three areas of church, ministry and Eucharist. The topics represent doctrinal differences of varying gravity. This part differs from the parts concerning the agreements (parts II and III) in having a more tentative character, which serves to make clear the "on the way" dynamic of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecclesial relationship. Our labors toward reconciliation are not yet finished, even after decades of dialogue. This section presents, but does not propose to treat in a complete manner, the Lutheran-Roman Catholic differences with divisive effects.

Like the preceding parts, this part also arises from the work of the dialogues. In places, the dialogue reports have presented issues of doctrinal difference that the dialogue had not resolved, but some of the issues raised do prove, after consideration, not to be church-dividing. Therefore, this part also shows positive benefits from the dialogues, going beyond the major agreements stated and documented in parts II and III.

A. Church

In addition to yielding the significant agreements articulated above in common affirmations, five decades of Lutheran-Catholic dialogues have also treated matters of substantial differences and firmly held points of contention regarding ecclesiology. In important matters the dialogues have discovered and set forth convincingly that Lutherans and Catholics do share common views. At times, each side has exaggerated the differences held by the other. In many cases, each side has grown in appreciation for the insights espoused by the other side. But the dialogues have also articulated situations of remaining differences not yet

amenable to reconciliation. The following five examples strive to make clear both the progress made "on the way" to unity and the remaining differences that impede this journey.

1. Designating the church: "congregation of the faithful" or "sacrament of salvation"

Lutherans define the church with emphasis on its reception of salvation, that is, as the assembly or congregation of the faithful (congregatio fidelium) *in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments administered rightly (CA VII and VIII).[46] Recent Catholic ecclesiology has brought to the fore the analogous use of the term "sacrament" for the church, describing the church as being "in Christ, a kind of sacrament or instrumental sign of intimate union with God and of the unity of all humanity," or simply as "the universal sacrament of salvation" (LG 1 and § 48).[47] Lutherans register reservations regarding this Catholic terminology by insisting that sacraments are linked with Christ in his saving action*

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46   *Church and Justification*, §§ 109–112, sets forth the Lutheran position from Luther and the confessions, concluding, "The Church is therefore the *congregatio fidelium*, the congregation of salvation as a faith-congregation, founded by God's word and bound to it: 'God's Word cannot be present without God's people, and God's people cannot be without God's Word'" (§ 111, citing WA 50, 629).

47   "Christ, when he was lifted up from the earth, drew all people to himself (see John 12:32 Greek text); rising from the dead (see Romans 6:9), he sent his life-giving Spirit down on his disciples and through the Spirit constituted his body which is the church as the universal sacrament of salvation" (LG 48; also GS 45). A more elaborated statement is in *Church and Justification*, §§ 120–124; a more concise account is *Communio Sanctorum*, §87. Designating the church as "sacrament" is one part of Vatican II's biblical and patristic replacement of the previously predominant social-institutional conception of the church, defended in early modern Catholic theology largely concerned with apologetical argumentation. In the renewal, "sacrament" is one theme among several, as shown by M. J. Le Guillou's sketch in the entry, "Church," in *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6 vols., ed. Karl Rahner et al. (Freiburg: Herder, 1968–70), 1:318–23.

toward the church.[48] The church does mediate salvation, but only as recipient, especially through the sacraments, of Christ's grace of salvation.[49]

The traditional Lutheran designation of the church, "congregation of the faithful," emphasizes that the church comes together as an assembly by receiving salvation given by God, while the Catholic designation "sacrament of salvation," used analogously (*Church and Justification*, § 123), highlights the church's role, in Christ, as sign and instrument of salvation for its members and the world.

Catholics, however, do not deny the accuracy and significance of the term *congregatio fidelium* regarding the church. As the predominant definition for the church in medieval theology, it was the definition employed by the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*.[50] It appears as well in Vatican II and resonates with several themes of the Council.[51]

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48   On this, CA XIII states the purposes of the sacraments "not only to be marks of profession among human beings but much more to be signs and testimonies of God's will toward us, intended to arouse and strengthen faith in those who use them" (BC, 47). CA XXV, on confession, explains with reference to absolution the structure of Lutheran sacramental administration and reception, for "people are taught to make the most of absolution because it is the voice of God and is pronounced following the command of God. The power of the keys is praised and remembered for bringing such great consolation to terrified consciences, both because God requires faith so that we believe that absolution is God's own voice resounding from heaven and because this faith truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins" (BC, § 73). This account of absolution explains what is central to the dominical sacraments, that is, "the voice of God" spoken in Trinitarian consecration of those being baptized and in the words of Eucharistic institution addressed to the worshiping congregation.

49   "The individual sacraments are means of salvation because through them Jesus Christ accomplishes salvation and thus establishes and preserves the church. This means that the church does not actualize its own existence in the sacraments; rather the church receives salvation and its very being from Christ and only as recipient does it mediate salvation. In this perspective, the individual sacraments are linked with Christ as he faces the church. One should be reticent about language which blurs this distinction." *Church and Justification*, § 128; also, *Communio Sanctorum*, § 88.

50   *Catechism of the Council of Trent* I, 10, 2; I, 10, 5. See *Church and Justification*, §113.

51   *Church and Justification*, §§ 114–115, offers a cluster of texts, including designations of individual congregations as "congregations of the faithful" (AG §§ 15, 19, and PO § 4), and affirms, "This communion with God and of human beings among themselves is brought about by God's word and the sacraments" (§ 114).

From these themes it follows: "The church lives as a communion of believers, not by its own strength but entirely from God's gift" (*Church and Justification*, § 116).

Regarding the designation of the church as sacrament, Lutheran theology, while usually reserving the term "sacrament" for rites that are instituted by Christ, promise grace, and employ material elements, does share the central concern of Catholic sacramental ecclesiology, namely, that the church is indefectibly united to Christ, while remaining distinct from him as it carries out the signifying and instrumental role given to it. "As mediator of word and sacrament, the church is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit sanctifies; 'it is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God'" (*Church and Justification*, § 127, quoting Luther's Large Catechism I, 40ff). As recipient of God's grace, mediated to believers by word and sacrament, the church also becomes an instrument of God's grace, which it administers through the preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments.[52]

Furthermore, the Swedish-Finnish Catholic-Lutheran dialogue (§144) expressed openness by Lutherans to using "sacrament" and "sacramental" to refer to the church: "Just as the Christ is called the original sacrament, so the church may be called the fundamental sacrament. This has been expounded thus: 'The church is not one more sacrament, but that sacramental framework, within which the other sacraments exist. Christ himself is present and active in the church. The church is therefore, both according to Roman-Catholic and Lutheran-Melanchthonian tradition, in a mysterious way an effective sign, something which by grace effects what it signifies.'"[53]

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52   "According to the Lutheran conception, the church is the community in which the God-ordained means of grace—word and sacrament—become effective to the people. Thus the church has, in a derived sense, the character of an instrument of salvation: as mediator of word and sacrament, it is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit makes people holy" *Communio Sanctorum*, § 88.

53   Quoting *Kyrkam som sacrament (The Church as Sacrament: A Report on Ecclesiology)*, published by the Church of Sweden Central Board and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm, Uppsala–Stockholm, 1999, p. 12. See also the Faith and Order document, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013), § 27, proposing that, as explained, the differences of formulation on this point may remain as being compatible and mutually acceptable.

*Together with Lutherans, Catholics understand the church as "the assembly of faithful or saints which lives from God's word and the sacraments" (*Church and Justification, *§ 117). Although Lutherans and Catholics differ over use of the term "sacrament" to designate the church, they affirm together that the church is (1) both a creation of the word (*creatura verbi*) and servant of the word (*ministra verbi*) that it has received, (2) a sign for all people of the universal saving will of God, (3) an instrument of grace, by word and sacrament, (4) essentially shaped by both the reception of and administration of word and sacrament, and (5) constantly subject to the Lord in its action through which God imparts salvation as his gift. "Where this is together taught, there is material agreement, even if different judgments exist about the analogous use of the term 'sacrament' in relationship to the church."54*

2. The church holy and sinful

While Lutherans and Catholics both confess that the church on earth is holy, despite the presence and influence of sin at work in it, they set different limits in calling the church itself "holy" and "sinful," with Catholics refraining from calling the church itself "sinful," and Lutherans maintaining that no church office or decision is so immune from error and sin as to be exempt from critical examination in view of reform.

An extensive, profound, and convincing grounding of the church's God-given holiness is common to Lutherans and Catholics.[55] Especially from the early creeds' affirmation of holiness as a

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54 *Communio Sanctorum*, §89. In his ecclesiology text of 2011, W. Kasper devotes three pages to "sacrament" as a designation of the church. He presents several valuable ecclesiological considerations but concludes that the technical schemes adopted in this development show that the topic is ill suited for use in basic instruction of believers. *Katholische Kirche. Wesen—Wirklichkeit—Sendung* (Freiburg: Herder, 2011), 126–129.

55 *Church and Justification* tells in §§ 148–152 how the holiness of the church is rooted in the holiness of the triune God and in Christ's presence to his disciples "to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

church attribute and from Christ's promise that his followers, united to him and guided by the Holy Spirit, will abide in the truth, Catholics distinguish the personal sinfulness of believers from the "indestructibility of the one holy church," which cannot apostatize from God and become "sinful" in an ultimate sense (*Church and Justification*, § 150, from *LG* 39; and § 153, quoted).

Lutherans, for their part, hold that Catholics see the church's holiness objectivized in specific ecclesial offices and decisions, to which they attribute the Holy Spirit's aid in such a way that these offices and decisions are rendered immune from human error and sinfulness. From a Lutheran perspective, ecclesial offices and decisions are carried out by sinful human beings. Thus they continue to be imperfect and can obscure the indestructible holiness of the church.[56] Lutherans believe that, in this present age, the power of evil and sin is at work in the church.

However, Catholics, while asserting that the church is holy in the ultimate sense, agree with Lutherans that the power of evil and sin is at work in it. The church of complete and perfect holiness will appear only at the end of its earthly pilgrimage. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the pilgrim church includes "wheat and weeds" (Matthew 13:38), that is, good and evil people along with true and false teachers. Catholics agree with CA VIII about the presence of "many false Christians, hypocrites, and even open sinners ... among the godly" (*Church and Justification*, §§ 153–154). Consequently, believers are in need of daily repentance and the forgiveness of sins, and the church is in constant need of cleansing and renewal. After the passage in which Vatican II asserted that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church,

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56   *Church and Justification*, §§ 160–162, for example, "Above all this Lutheran query is directed at ecclesial offices and decisions which serve people's salvation and sanctification. The question arises when the Holy Spirit's aid is attributed to them in such a way that, as such, they appear to be immune from the human capacity for error and sinfulness and therefore from needing to be examined" (§ 161). Controversy arises over the Catholic beliefs (1) that revealed truth can be articulated in binding propositions and forms of expressing the gospel which are inerrant and infallible; (2) that there are abiding ecclesial offices which are willed by God's providence; and (3) that the saints sanctified by God are not all anonymous but can be named with certainty by canonization and addressed as those perfected. *Church and Justification*, § 163.

there came this contrast: "While Christ 'holy, blameless, unstained' (Hebrews 7:26) knew no sin (see 2 Corinthians 5:21) and came only to expiate the sins of the people (see Hebrews 2:17), the church, containing sinners in its own bosom, is at one and the same time holy and always in need of purification (*sancta simul et purificanda*) and it pursues unceasingly penance and renewal" (LG 8). The church is marked by a "genuine though imperfect holiness" (*LG* 48).[57] The practice of ecumenism begins with church reform, for, "In its pilgrimage on earth, Christ summons the church to that continual reformation (*ad hanc perennem reformationem*), of which it is always in need, in so far as it is an institution of human beings on earth" (*UR* 6, cited in *Church and Justification*, § 156).[58]

Lutherans, for their part, believe in the indestructibility and abiding existence of the church as the one holy people of God. "A Christian holy people is to be and to remain on earth until the end of the world. This is an article of faith that cannot be terminated until that which it believes comes" (Luther, WA 50, 626; LW 41, 148). In this sense, the Augsburg Confession affirms "that one holy Christian church will be and will remain forever" (CA VII). This belief in the indestructibility of the one holy church includes the idea that in the ultimate sense the church cannot apostatize from the truth and fall into error. Thus Lutherans confess, together with Catholics, that the church is "holy" and that this holiness is indestructible (*Church and Justification*, §§ 151–152, citing CA in 151).

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57   *Lumen gentium*, § 48, goes on to say that "until the arrival of the new heavens and new earth in which justice dwells (see 2 Pt 3:13), the pilgrim church in its sacraments and institutions, which belong to this age, carries the figure of this world which is passing and it dwells among creatures who groan and until now are in the pains of childbirth and await the revelation of the children of God (see Romans 8:19– 21)."

58   Examples of Catholic reforming action are the nine practice-oriented "decrees" of Vatican II, which lay down norms for the pastoral office of bishops, formation for priesthood, the ministry and life of priests, the lay apostolate, renewal of religious life, use of the mass media, the contribution of the Catholic Eastern Churches, the church's missionary activity, and the ecumenical orientation and action of the whole church. In the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, the concluding Ch. VI gives norms for renewed Scripture usage in the church, while in the Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, only Ch. I is doctrinal, while Chs. II–VII prescribe reforms of liturgical practice.

*Though drawing different limits in usage of "holy" and "sinful" to characterize the state of the church on earth, Lutherans and Catholics together affirm the ultimate holiness of the church, a holiness deriving solely from union with the triune God, who alone is holy. At the same time both sides observe that the church's members are engaged in an ongoing struggle against sin and error (*Church and Justification, *§§ 153–155). Thus, in this usage, Lutheran and Roman Catholic explications are, in their difference, largely open to one another.[59] However, the discussion in Church and Justification raised an issue of difference that was not resolved and will return below: the nature and limits of the binding character of church teaching.[60]*

3. Doctrine enunciated in and by the church

*Lutherans and Catholics agree that the church is authorized by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to teach and to distinguish truth from error (*Church and Justification, *§ 205). Like the church of every age, the Lutheran as well as the Roman Catholic Church has been "a teaching church which sees itself under the continuing commission to preserve the truth of the gospel and to reject error" (*Church and Justification, *§ 207). Both sides agree that the church has the promise of the Holy Spirit, who leads it to truth. "The church does not have the truth at its disposal. It has the promise that it will remain in the truth if it allows itself constantly to be called back to it."[61] However, a difference surfaces over how this teaching ministry is exercised.*[62]

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59 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* offers a similar explanation in §§ 35–36, concluding, "Holiness and sin relate to the life of the Church in different and unequal ways. Holiness expresses the Church's identity according to the will of God, while sin stands in contradiction to this identity (cf. Romans 6:1–11)."

60 See the discussion below of the fourth point of difference in ecclesiology.

61 *Communio Sanctorum*, §43, correcting the English translation that omitted the all-important fourth word ("not") in sentence cited.

62 This was set forth at length in Round VI of the U.S. dialogue, on *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church* (1978), in *Church and Justification*, §§ 205–222, and most recently in *The Apostolicity of the Church*, in §§ 376–389 ("The Ministry of Teaching in Lutheran Churches") and §§ 411–428 ("The Teaching Office in Catholic Doctrine").

Catholics attribute a special responsibility and authority for teaching to the ministry and in particular to the episcopate; this position, however, does not constitute an essential difference from Lutheran doctrine and practice (*Church and Justification*, § 208). But in viewing the Catholic Church, Lutheran reformers believed that the inerrancy promised to the whole church had been concentrated too fully in the teaching ministry of bishops and popes in such a manner that the primacy of the gospel was at stake (*Church and Justification*, §§ 210–211). Lutherans have feared the magisterium's "monopoly" over interpretation of Scripture in enunciation of doctrine (*Apostolicity*, § 407).

However, Catholics do acknowledge a role and responsibility for the whole people of God, because the magisterium of bishops and the pope is anchored in the entire community's life of faith. The bishops' binding teaching office is exercised in fellowship and community with the whole people of God, where there is a many-sided exchange among church members, since all God's people are called to discover and witness to God's truth (*Church and Justification*, § 216; *Ministry in the Church*, § 51; *LG* 12). The pope's teaching office is exercised in collegiality with other bishops and in concert with the *sensus fidelium*.[63] Furthermore, in the teaching ministry, the magisterium is bound to the canon of Scripture and apostolic tradition (*Church and Justification*, § 217; *DV* 10).

For their part, Lutherans have affirmed the church's continuing commission to preserve the truth of the gospel and to reject error. "Its catechisms, especially Luther's large Catechism, and most particularly the Confessions with their 'teaching' and 'rejecting' exemplify this" (*Church and Justification*, § 207). Lutherans historically have had a strong sense of the ecclesial teaching function of ministers and theological faculties, asserting that no one should teach publicly in the church without a proper call (CA XIV; BC 47). The Lutheran Confessions also acknowledge the

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63 *The Apostolicity of the Church*, after presenting the teaching authority on the pope according to the two Vatican Councils, includes this point: "Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church modifies the treatment of the hierarchy and papal infallibility by placing them within the witness given by the whole people of God in its prophetic role" (§ 419).

teaching responsibility of bishops (CA 28, 21f). The churches of the Lutheran Reformation carry out binding teaching, subject to the primacy of the gospel, and they have instruments and organs for performing this ministry. The ordained ministry has specific responsibility for public teaching, and bishops have the task of public teaching at the supra-local level. At the global level, The Lutheran World Federation has exercised the role of judging doctrine, affirming ecumenical statements, and administering discipline (*Apostolicity*, § 388).[64]

Both Lutherans and Catholics ascribe to the Holy Spirit the effective maintaining of the truth of the gospel and the correct celebration of the sacraments. The church is authorized by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to distinguish truth from error through faithful teaching. Both sides affirm the need for a ministry and office of teaching, exercised within the whole church in concert with all the faithful. Lutherans and Catholics agree together that "in spite of their different configurations of teaching ministries ... the church must designate members to serve the transmission of the gospel, which is necessary for saving faith" (Apostolicity, § 453). Lutherans and Catholics agree that, for the church to abide in the truth, the teaching office must be present and functioning at local and regional levels (Apostolicity, § 453).

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64   There has been ongoing discussion and debate among Lutherans regarding the role of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the implications of its decision to become not only a federation but a "communion" of churches. These milestones are clearly important. While still a "federation" only, the LWF exercised discipline at its Seventh Assembly in Budapest in 1984, suspending two Southern African churches due to their continued failure to end racial division in their churches The LWF has exercised a role in judging dogma by its formal reception of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999). Other LWF communion-defining actions included a 2010 formal apology to the Mennonite community for the legacies of past persecution of Anabaptists as well as commitments "to interpret the Lutheran Confessions in light of the jointly described history between Lutherans and Anabaptists and to take care that this action of the LWF will bear fruit in the teaching of the Lutheran Confessions in the seminaries and other educational activities of our member churches" (Eleventh Assembly, Stuttgart, 2010; www.lwf-assembly.org/uploads/media/Mennonite-Statement-En_03.pdf).

4. The nature and limits of the binding character of church teaching

F*or Catholics, the Lord's promise that the church will abide in the truth grounds a conviction that the episcopal and papal magisterium can articulate the truth of the gospel in doctrinal affirmations that express or interpret divine revelation. Because of the mandate and authority of bearers of this office, the faithful are obliged to accept their teaching with a "religiously based assent" (*eique religioso animi obsequio adhaerere debent*).[65] Such teaching may in certain cases even be inerrant and infallible, and thus bind church members to assent at this level (*Church and Justification, § 163;* Communio Sanctorum*, § 65). Lutherans see the church's ministry and decisions as liable to error and so hold that as a matter of principle they must be open to examination by the whole people of God. Believers have the right and duty to consult Scripture in order "to test whether the proclamation offered to them accords with the gospel."[66] Consequently, any teaching claiming to be binding must be met with a reservation (*Vorbehalt*) regarding its binding nature.*

In Lutheran understanding, the church fulfills its responsibility for articulating doctrine through "a many-layered process, aiming for consensus through the participation of various responsibility-bearers," such as bishops, theological teachers, pastors, and congregations. The ordained and non-ordained cooperate in seeking a comprehensive agreement that will prove itself as continuous with the preaching and teaching tradition of the church. All members of the church, according to their respective callings, take part in the responsibility of teaching.[67]

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65   *Communio Sanctorum*, § 65, citing a phrase from *Lumen gentium*, 25, with its intricate account of the episcopal and papal magisterium, on the one hand, and of the corresponding types of adherence called for by the faithful.

66   *Communio Sanctorum*, § 66, citing the *Lehrordnung der VELKD von 16.6.1956*, ed. Martin Lindow (Hanover 1989).

67   *Communio Sanctorum*, § 66, based on the *Lehrordnung der VELKD von 16.6.1956*, ed. Martin Lindow (Hanover 1989).

Critically, Lutherans hold that the gospel cannot without reservation be consigned to an ecclesiastical ministry for its expression and preservation. Such a ministry is carried out by human beings liable to err. But error must not take on binding force in the church. Such a ministry must not claim the sovereignty and ultimate binding force that is reserved to the gospel alone. What office-holders teach in the church must be ultimately measured against the gospel to make sure that believers are relying on God's words and not human words (*Church and Justification*, § 212).[68]

A statement of this Lutheran conviction came in C*hurch and Justification*: "For the sake of the gospel, the Reformation doctrine of justification therefore requires that the church's ministry and its decisions should as a matter of principle be open to examination by the whole people of God. As a matter of principle justification debars them from insulating themselves from such an examination. In regard to its decisions, the teaching ministry must permit 'question or censure,' as the Apology says, by the church as a whole, for which the promise of abiding in the truth holds good, and which is the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise it seems doubtful from a Reformation perspective that the teaching ministry serves the word of God and is not above it" (*Church and Justification*, § 213).[69]

Communio Sanctorum speaks of doctrinal decisions being tested against Holy Scripture, which Lutherans believe to have in itself, based on God's promise, the power to present the truth of God effectively and to interpret itself (*Communio Sanctorum*, § 68). When the teaching ministry respects this reservation regarding

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68   Similarly: "Doctrinal decisions are dependent on recognition by the congregations (reception) and are fundamentally open to testing against Holy Scripture. The maintenance of the church in the truth is here 'not bound to a certain process or to an always pre-existing authority.'" *Communio Sanctorum*, § 67, citing *Kirchliches Leben in ökumenischer Verpflichtung*, ed. Hermann Brandt (Stuttgart: Calver Verlag, 1989), 133.

69   This cites the Apology, Art. 7 & 8, no. 23, giving what the Catholic opponents seem to hold, namely, the Roman pontiff's unlimited power, "which no one is allowed to question or censure." BC 178. The final sentence alludes to Vatican II's *Dei Verbum* where it claims that the magisterium is not above the word of God but stands at its service (no. 10).

binding teaching, this is the respect due to the independence and ultimate binding nature of the gospel and the grace of God (*Church and Justification*, § 214).

The Lutheran position set forth in *Church and Justification* prompted a Catholic statement extending from the inerrancy in faith of the faithful as a whole to the conviction that the apostolic tradition develops in the church amid its many-sided life with the help of the Holy Spirit (*Church and Justification*, §§ 216–221).[70] In doctrinal development, previous teachings come to be re-formulated and re-configured, in a painstaking quest for the truth, in which the faithful, bishops, and theologians participate (*Church and Justification*, § 221).[71] But in officially transmitting both traditional and newly developed Catholic doctrine, the bishops, in communion with the bishop of Rome, are authentic teachers of the faith by virtue of their episcopal ordination as successors in the presiding ministry of a local church (*Church and Justification*, § 216). When appeal is made to the Holy Spirit's guidance, especially in preserving solemn definitions from error, this is a criterion of the church's witness to the word of God, especially by councils, and is not contrary to the gratuity of salvation given in justification. The teaching ministry as such serves the communication of doctrinal truth, not the mediation of forgiveness of sins and justifying grace (*Church and Justification*, § 219).[72]

Here, deeply rooted convictions meet and oppose each other. For defusing their church-dividing character, one could start by probing the place in Catholic doctrine of the power of the

70   The description of doctrinal development rests on Vatican II's *Dei Verbum*, no. 8, especially the second paragraph.

71   Similarly, *Apostolicity*, §§ 426–428. For example, "While magisterial teaching issued as fully obligating represent for Catholics a necessary word of the church in given situations, history shows that they are not the church's last word" (§ 427).

72   The Catholic account is here denying the relevance of the Lutheran appeal in § 213 to justification doctrine as the ground of the asserted reservation regarding binding doctrine.

word of God to interpret itself—as is held dear by Lutherans.[73]
A further step would be to go deeper into the theory and
practice of the Catholic teaching office, in its role as an
instrument of God for defending and interpreting divine
revelation amid ever-new historical contexts of church life
and worship. A parallel concern would be to probe afresh the
relation of charisms and the central offices of the church.[74]

5. The parish congregation or diocese as "church" in the full sense

Lutherans and Roman Catholics have expressed differences
regarding where the "fullness" of "church" in a "synchronic, here-
and-now sense," is realized, discerned, and identified, whether
in the local parish (congregation) or in the local church led by
*its bishop (diocese) (*Church and Justification*, § 84;* Church as*
Koinonia of Salvation, chs. II–III).*

Lutherans hold the church to be present in all its essential
elements in a congregation of believers in which the gospel word
is preached and the sacraments administered, both by rightfully
called ministers (CA 7).

Catholics hold that a particular church of Christ is truly present
where a portion of God's people is entrusted to a bishop with his
clergy, to be formed into one by the Holy Spirit and by Eucharistic
celebrations (*Church and Justification*, § 92; *LG* 26–27 and CD
11).[75] Bishops, according to *Lumen Gentium*, have essential
ecclesiological significance, since they are "the visible principle

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73   This could involve examining the *Apostolicity* study, Part 4, on the biblical canon, and the Pontifical Biblical Commission's documents on interpreting the Bible in the church (1993) and on the inspiration and truth of the Bible (2014).

74   This restates with some additions the movement in via indicated in *Communio Sanctorum*, § 68.

75   The formulation follows closely *Christus Dominus* 11, where the term "portion" was deliberately preferred to "part," because a portion contains all the essential features of the whole, which is not the case with a part.

and foundation of unity in their own particular churches. ... In and from these particular churches there exists the one unique Catholic Church" (*LG* 23). The sacrament of episcopal ordination gives access both to the bishop's ministry of preaching, presiding in worship, and governing and to his membership in the universal episcopal college, which is an important locus of apostolic succession. In the college each bishop represents his church and brings it into the communion of the whole church, with the communion of the churches expressing itself as communion among the bishops between themselves and the bishop of Rome. In the local diocesan church, the bishop is the living connector between the universal college in communion with the bishop of Rome and the church in a particular place (*Apostolicity*, §§ 243–244).[76]

Nonetheless, Catholics do not deny the significance of the parish, because it is the site of the major events of proclamation, instruction, baptismal initiation, confession and reconciliation, confirmation, marriage and Eucharistic worship. It is the parish that is most familiar to Catholics as the place where the church is experienced (*Church and Justification*, § 93).[77] Vatican II statements point to the importance of the parish, where the church shows itself visibly when believers are gathered by the proclaimed gospel and share in the Eucharist at the same table (*LG* 26; *SC* 42; *Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, Ch. I). Catholics, together with Lutherans, have affirmed that Christians share in the *koinonia* of salvation most immediately in the worshiping community gathered around the baptismal font, the pulpit, and the Eucharistic table (*Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 36).

While Lutherans do not induct individuals into the episcopal office by sacramental ordination and do not have a worldwide episcopal college as a part of their church structure, they do value

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76   Concluding a section, "The Episcopal Office," *Apostolicity*, §§ 240–244.

77   However, the major event of ordination to Catholic pastoral ministry regularly occurs not in the parish church but in the diocesan cathedral, to better express the bishop's role and the sacramental incorporation of the ordinand into the diocesan corps of deacons or the presbyterate of priests.

regional, national, and worldwide realizations of the ecclesial community. Congregations manifest communion with each other by agreement in the apostolic faith, sharing the same sacraments, and mutual recognition of ministry. Lutheran congregations have formed significant connections with one another in different ways through organization into dioceses (e.g., synods, districts), national church bodies, and The Lutheran World Federation (*Church and Justification*, §§ 86–90; *Communio Sanctorum*, § 52; *Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, Ch. III).

Furthermore, the polity of the constituted Lutheran churches of the world is not "congregational" (as CA 7–8 might lead outsiders to think), but is always regional or synodical. Historically, this follows from the Lutheran reform being introduced officially into principalities or into domains of autonomous cities of the Holy Roman Empire. Options for the Reformation did not occur at the level of parish congregations. Through visitations, an *episkope* began to be exercised over the congregations of the region. This practice of visitation continues to be a Lutheran concern. A 2009 study by the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD), for example, concluded that visitation is "at the heart" of the task of *episkope* and "a witness to the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church of Jesus Christ."[78]

Today in The Lutheran World Federation "member churches" are distinct from several "recognized congregations," which find themselves alone in countries having no other Lutheran congregations or national structure. The former comprise the "communion of churches" while the latter are recognized as Lutheran in light of their doctrinal commitments and self-

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78   *Visitation* elaborated this point: "This oversight is not a secondary concern in the church; it belongs to the essence. In the Nicene Creed, for example, we confess our common faith 'in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church.' This faith is demonstrated in visitation. Because we thus recognise that the church exists in local congregations but must be understood as a worldwide community ('catholicity'). And in each visitation we have to answer the question whether we are still teaching and living 'in line with the origins' (namely according to the 'apostolic gospel'")" (Mareile Lasogga and Udo Hahn, eds., *Visitation: A Study by the Theological Committee of the VELKD*, Bishops Conference of the VELKD [2009], 10). With the intention of strengthening the LWF communion, the VELKD shared an English translation of this study with all member churches.

understanding, but they have no role in the governance or structure of the Communion, since they are not considered to be "churches."[79]

The Apostolicity of the Church explains the Lutheran "differentiation of the ministry" as resting on the congregational pastors' need of such *episkope* or oversight, because of their fallibility regarding correct gospel preaching and sacramental administration (§ 263). This, one must admit, is a point of Lutheran-Catholic agreement! The text goes on to declare that the internal differentiation of the one ministry, between congregational and supra-congregational tasks, is *necessary*—whatever form the latter may take or whatever title be used for it (§ 265).

In the Lutheran-Catholic difference over the realization of "church" in the full sense, different views of the bishop affect what is said regarding the significance of the parish congregation assembled for worship and of the reality and importance of regional expressions of ecclesial community and oversight. However, since Catholics affirm the value of the parish and since Lutheran church polity includes a necessary ministry of regional oversight, our actual church structures are in fact similar in important ways.[80]

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79   See the LWF Constitution V, which limits membership in this "communion of churches" to churches. Isolated congregations exceptionally can "affiliate" with the work of the LWF but cannot be members.

80   See below, in the Ministry section, the treatment of the Lutheran and Catholic differences connected both with the Vatican II doctrine on episcopal ordination and collegiality and with the ongoing Lutheran reflection on episcopal ministry.

IV. REMAINING DIFFERENCES AND RECONCILING CONSIDERATIONS

B. Ministry

Remaining differences on the ministry are especially diverse, and some appear to be particularly intractable. In addition to the controversies dating from Reformation times, new difficulties on this topic have emerged during the last half-century. Nevertheless, newly identified theological frameworks offer perspectives allowing for nuanced, graduated and differentiated evaluations that provide an alternative to sharp either/or assessments of ministry. A correlation of ecumenical progress made on the church with issues of ministry is an especially urgent task, since such a correlation could support a qualified but immediate mutual recognition of ministry in such a way that a partial recognition of ministry would correlate with the real but imperfect communion of churches.

1. The ministry and continuity of apostolicity

Together, Catholics and Lutherans have articulated complex understandings of apostolicity, with multiple dimensions, which allow each tradition to recognize apostolic elements in the other, including in the other's ministry. But an important asymmetry remains: Lutherans recognize the apostolic character of Roman Catholic ministry, but Catholics do not so recognize Lutheran ministry.[81]

According to Catholic teaching, in Lutheran churches the sacramental sign of ordination is not fully present because those who ordain are not themselves in recognized apostolic succession.

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[81]   The Lutheran position was sketched in the *Malta Report*: "Lutherans never denied the existence of the office of the ministry in the Roman Catholic Church. ... Lutheran confessional writings emphasize the churchly character of the Roman Catholic communion. Also, changes in the understanding and practice of the Roman Catholic ministerial office, especially the stronger emphasis on the *ministerium verbi*, have largely removed the reasons for the reformers' criticism" (§ 64).

"Therefore the Second Vatican Council speaks of a *defectus sacramenti ordinis* (*UR* 22) in these churches" (*Apostolicity*, § 283). This perception of a *defectus*, when understood as "lack" or "absence," clearly stands in the way of recognition of Lutheran ordained ministry.[82]

A number of recent dialogue reports, however, explore alternatives to such strong interpretations of *defectus*. The recommendation of the U.S. document, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, for example, is that "Catholic judgment on the authenticity of Lutheran ministry need not be of an all-or-nothing nature" (§ 107). In this view, "*defectus*" is to be understood as "defect" or "deficiency" rather than "lack," consistent with "the sort of real but imperfect recognition of ministries" proposed by this dialogue (§ 108).[83] The report then reasons backward from the affirmation of the *Decree on Ecumenism*, which had said, "Our separated brothers also celebrate many sacred actions of the Christian religion. These most certainly can truly engender a life of grace in ways that vary according to the condition of each church or community, and must be held capable of giving access to that communion in which is salvation" (*UR* 3). The U.S. dialogue continues, "If the actions of Lutheran pastors can be described by Catholics as 'sacred actions' that 'can truly engender a life of grace,' if communities served by such ministers give 'access to that communion in which is salvation,' and if 'the salvation-granting presence of the Lord' is to be found at a eucharist at which a Lutheran pastor presides, then Lutheran churches cannot be said simply to lack the ministry given to the church by Christ and the Spirit. In acknowledging the imperfect *koinonia* between our communities and the access to grace through the ministries of

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82   The English translation on the Vatican website is currently "the absence of sacrament of Orders" (*UR* 22; http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.htm; accessed June 18, 2015); for "lack" in official English translations see *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 167.

83   The document cites Walter Cardinal Kasper: "On material grounds [aus der Sachlogik], and not merely on the basis of the word usage of the Council, it becomes clear that defectus ordinis does not signify a complete absence, but rather a deficiency [Mangel] in the full form of the office." ("Die apostolische Sukzession als ökumenisches Problem," *Lehrverurteiungen-kirchentrennend?* III, 345; quoted in *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 108.)

these communities, we also acknowledge a real though imperfect *koinonia* between our ministries" (*The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 107). In *The Apostolicity of the Church*, emphasizing especially recognition of correct doctrine, the international dialogue reaches a similar conclusion (§§ 292–3; see also *Justification in the Life of the Church*, § 291–5, which appropriates this argument).

At this point the questions of recognition of apostolic ministry clearly are inseparable from the questions of Eucharist. *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* cites a letter from then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger to the German Lutheran bishop Johannes Hanselmann showing the close relation: "I count among the most important results of the ecumenical dialogues the insight that the issue of the eucharist cannot be narrowed to the problem of 'validity.' Even a theology oriented to the concept of succession, such as that which holds in the Catholic and in the Orthodox church, should in no way deny the saving presence of the Lord (*Heilschaffende Gegenwart des Herrn*) in a Lutheran [*evangelische*] Lord's Supper."[84]

This tenth round of the U.S. dialogue was in explicit continuity with their predecessors in the fourth round. While characterizing the statement as a "tentative conclusion" for the Catholic participants, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* cited the l981 conclusion: "we ask the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church whether the ecumenical urgency flowing from Christ's will for unity may not dictate that the Roman Catholic Church recognize the validity of the Lutheran Ministry and, correspondingly, the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharistic celebrations of the Lutheran churches" (*Eucharist and Ministry*, § 54; cited, with attention to the supporting studies in *The Church*

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84   "Briefwechsel von Landesbischof Johannes Hanselmann und Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger über das Communio-Schreiben der Römischen Glaubenskongregation," Una Sancta 48 (1993), 348; quoted in *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 107. Translation here from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion*, eds. Stephan Otto Horn and Vinzenz Pfnür (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005), 248. The full text of the 1993 letters of Bishop Hanselmann and the then Cardinal Ratzinger are given on pp. 242–252.

as Koinonia of Salvation, § 124. The same appeal had been made already in the *Malta Report*, § 63).

Thus, the correlation between this important and long-divisive ministerial topic and the recognition of real but imperfect ecclesial communion between Lutherans and Catholics provides a model and a basis for real but partial recognition of ministries. Such a recognition would capture the "on the way" quality of relations between Catholic and Lutheran communities of faith and would be the single most significant step concerning ministry that would move Lutherans and Catholics toward greater ecclesial communion.

2. The relationship between ordained ministry and the priesthood of the baptized

Catholics and Lutherans have sometimes characterized one another's position on the priesthood of the baptized in ways that imply important differences on this point. Catholics sometimes assume that Lutheran ministry is a delegation to exercise the ministry of the universal priesthood in such a way that there is no difference between the office of ministry and the priesthood of the baptized. Lutherans sometimes speak of the priesthood of the baptized as a rediscovery by the Reformation.

Lutherans and Catholics agree that "all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ" (*Apostolicity*, § 273). Moreover, they have said together that the priesthood of the baptized, sometimes called the "common priesthood," and the special, ordained ministry do not compete with one another (*Apostolicity*, § 275). Both office holders and the universal priesthood are essential to the church as is evident in Luther's assertion, "Where you see such offices or office holders, there you may know for a certainty that the holy Christian people must be there. For the Church cannot exist without such bishops, pastors, preachers and priests. And again, they cannot exist

without the church; they must be together" (*On the Councils and the Churches*, WA 50:641, 16-19 [LW 41:164]).

Catholics express the difference between the common and the hierarchical priesthood by saying that they differ "essentially and not only in degree" from one another (*Lumen Gentium*, § 10). The two cannot be seen as two points on a continuum, with the ordained priest being more intensively a priest or a "higher" priest than a baptized person or two priesthoods being considered as two degrees of priesthood. This difference in essence also means that this ministry is not derived from the congregation, that this ministry is not simply an enhancement of the common priesthood, and that the ordained minister is not a Christian to a greater degree (*Ministry*, § 20, note 23; *Apostolicity*, § 238). The two priesthoods are two different kinds of participation in the priesthood of Christ even though they are interrelated.

Like Catholics, Lutherans believe that in baptism individuals are initiated into the priesthood of Christ and thus into the mission of the whole church. All the baptized are called to participate in and share responsibility for, worship (*leitourgia*), witness (*martyria*) and service (*diaconia*) (*Lund Statement*, § 36), and there is a dimension of "mutual accountability" among all members of the church (§ 52).[85] However, only the ordained exercise the public office of ministry, an office conferred not by baptism but by ordination. The Augsburg Confession states that no one should teach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments without a proper public call (CA XIV). This call is part of a process of authorization and a requirement for ordination and never simply a delegation to act on behalf of a congregation. All the baptized are priests, but not all are given the office of ministry. Furthermore, the authority of the office is not derived from such

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85   "In the church there is no absolute distinction between the directed and the directing, between the teaching and the taught, between those who decide and those who are the objects of decision. All members of the church, lay and ordained, exercising different ministries, stand under the word of God; all are fallible sinners, but all are baptized and anointed by the Spirit. Mutual accountability binds together ordained ministers and other baptized believers. Episcopal ministry is exercised within the communion of charisms and within the total interplay of ministries in the church (§ 51).

authorization. The source of the authority of office is the office itself and the word of God that created the office.

The traditional Catholic assumption about Lutherans does not account for the asymmetry between the Catholic distinction between the common and ministerial priesthoods, on the one hand, and the Lutheran distinction between the universal priesthood and office, on the other hand. In other words, Lutherans do not consider the ministerial office to be a priesthood distinct from the universal priesthood, but do see it, insofar as it is an office, as something that is not either contained in or derived from the universal priesthood. Lutherans for their part need to recognize the Catholic emphasis on the priesthood and the ministry of the whole people of God.

*Both traditions in recent years have stressed the common priesthood as they seek to call forth the gifts of all the baptized. Both traditions then face the common challenge of articulating clearly and persuasively the proper relationship between ordained ministry and the common priesthood. Thus both Catholics and Lutherans need to clarify further the relation between the universal or common priesthood of all the baptized and the special ministry conferred by ordination (*Apostolicity*, § 167). Differences between the traditions on this point are not church-dividing. On the contrary, here is an example of a non-divisive difference in which particular insights and struggles of Catholics and Lutherans can help each another toward their shared goal.*

3. Sacramentality of ordination

Catholics consider ordination to be one of seven sacraments, while Lutherans do not call it a sacrament.

Lutherans use the word *sacrament* more restrictively than do Catholics, usually only identifying baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments. On the Lutheran side this difference is

not considered to be divisive. As early as 1981, the international dialogue report cited the Apology of the Augsburg Confession[86] to note that in principle a sacramental understanding of the ministry is not rejected" for Lutherans (*Ministry*, § 33). The German dialogue document *Communio Sanctorum* appeals to the same paragraph in the Apology, which "weighs" the designation of ordination as sacrament, and concludes, "The Lutheran Church has thus neither conclusively defined its own understanding of the sacraments nor condemned other understandings. It therefore does not consider the use of the term "sacrament" in a more far-reaching sense by other churches to be church-dividing" (§ 83; see *Apology* 13:17). Similarly, in the Swedish-Finnish dialogue, the Lutherans said that their view of ministry "includes a sacramental aspect," although the term "sacrament" is not typically used (*Justification in the Life of the Church*, § 279).

Crucially, for Lutherans as for Catholics, ordination, like baptism, is considered unrepeatable. The *Malta Report* saw in this once-for-life character a sort of equivalence in practice to the Catholic view of a "priestly character," as understood in contemporary theology. (See The *Malta Report*, § 60.)

For Catholics, the German study *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do They Still Divide?* suggests that, if progress could be made toward recognition of apostolic succession, it should be considered "whether the wide degree of agreement about essential components of the act of ordination does not justify recognition of the sacramentality of the ordination carried out in the Protestant churches."[87] *The Apostolicity of the Church* described the common practice in ordinations: "The Christian is called and commissioned, by prayer and the laying of hands, for the ministry of public preaching of the gospel in word and

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86   After explicating differences with "the opponents," the Apology continues, "But if ordination is understood with reference to the ministry of the Word, we have no objection to calling ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has the command of God and has magnificent promises like Romans l[:16]" (Apology XIII.11, BC 220).

87   Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg, eds., *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do They Still Divide?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 152.

sacrament. That prayer is a plea for the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's gifts, made in the certainty that it will be heard. Christ himself acts in the human rite of ordination, promising and giving the ordinand the Holy Spirit for his or her ministry" (§ 277). As *The Ministry in the Church* had declared, "Wherever it is taught that through the act of ordination the Holy Spirit gives grace strengthening the ordained person for the life-time ministry of word and sacrament, it must be asked whether differences which previously divided the churches on this question have not been overcome" (§ 33).

Thus, it would seem possible to assert officially that teaching about the sacramentality of ordination is not church-dividing.

4. Who can be ordained?

A disagreement of growing prominence between Lutherans and Catholics concerns who can be ordained. Many Lutheran churches ordain women, while the Catholic Church considers itself not authorized to ordain women. In recent years, this difference has complicated issues of mutual recognition of ministry.

Agreeing that ministry is not the personal possession of the minister or to be claimed as a right, both Catholics and Lutherans believe that the church helps to call forth, nourish, test and confirm the vocations of those who are to be ordained. Both Catholics and Lutherans have changed over time in their practices concerning who can be ordained.

Most Lutheran member churches of the LWF hold themselves free under the gospel to ordain women. They see in this practice "a renewed understanding of the biblical witness" which reflects "the nature of the church as a sign of our reconciliation and unity in Christ through baptism across the divides of ethnicity, social status and gender" (*Lund Statement,* § 40). At the same time, "it can be said that in general the Lutheran churches which

have introduced the ordination of women do not intend a change of either the dogmatic understanding or the exercise of the ministerial office" (*Ministry*, § 25). Significantly, churches in the LWF that do ordain women and those that do not have remained in communion with one another.

The Catholic Church does not consider itself as authorized to ordain women.[88] Nevertheless, in *The Ministry in the Church* the international dialogue commission affirmed that the Catholic Church "is able to strive for a consensus on the nature and significance of the ministry without the different conceptions of the persons to be ordained fundamentally endangering such a consensus and its practical consequences for the growing unity of the church" (§ 25).

Much ecumenical work is needed to resolve how a mutual recognition of ministry can advance given this asymmetry between Lutheran and Catholic views on who can be ordained. A number of ecumenical dialogues have found it possible to make many common affirmations regarding ministry without resolving this issue. Nevertheless, at this moment these issues constitute a significant difference in theology and practice between the two traditions, and it has not been determined how church-dividing these differences might be or how the questions for further discussion might best be articulated.

5. Distinction between bishops and priests/ministers

Another issue that has become more problematic for Lutherans and Catholics in recent decades arises from new Catholic teaching from the Second Vatican Council. The teaching of Lumen Gentium *that episcopal consecration confers the fullness of ordination (LG 21, 27) introduces the ecumenical question whether this way of distinguishing between priests and bishops creates a new dividing*

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88   John Paul II reiterated this position in the 1994 Apostolic Letter Ordinatio Sacerdotalis, § 2, 4.

issue between Lutherans and Catholics. The Apostolicity of the Church *observes, "When Vatican II emphasizes the episcopate as the basic form of church ministry, it gives prominence to a difference from the Lutheran understanding of ministry, which is fully realized in the public service of word and sacrament in the local community" (*Apostolicity*, § 115).*

Before the Second Vatican Council, the relation between priests and bishops was for Catholics a more open question. While traditionally the distinction between presbyters and bishops was located in the powers proper to each, because a bishop could ordain and confirm while a priest could not, it was also clear that practices had embraced considerable diversity and change over time. Historical research, for example, shows some exceptional circumstances when some abbots were given jurisdiction to ordain their monks in the medieval period (*The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 169). When considered across the broad sweep of history, then, no absolute borderline has existed between a priest and a bishop as regards the powers of ordination.

Vatican II expanded the theology of the episcopate by identifying it as the fullness of the sacrament of order, by emphasizing that episcopal consecration is also an ordination and not just additional jurisdiction, and by situating the episcopacy within the episcopal college. The teaching of Vatican II that the bishop possesses the fullness of the Sacrament of Order[89] amounts to saying that there is a "continuum" within sacramental ordination, but this should not be interpreted as a *gradus honorum* as if a bishop accumulates lower orders before achieving the fullness of orders. Thus, the present ordering within the *Pontificale Romanum* (1990) begins with the rite for a bishop and presents the three orders in a descending order, indicating that the other two orders, deacons and priests, participate in the one sacrament of order whose fullness resides in the bishop. The bishop possesses the fullness of the Sacrament of Order not because he was ordained first as deacon and priest, but because episcopal ordination invests him with that fullness.

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89   The singular, Sacrament of Order, is used here even though English often uses the plural, Sacrament of Orders, since the Latin is *sacramentum ordinis*, singular.

That fullness includes both the bishop's identity as priest and his responsibility for *diaconia*.

Furthermore, the sacramentality of episcopal consecration indicates that a bishop is ordained to the threefold office including the governing office of pastoral leadership, the sanctifying office of priesthood, and the prophetic office of preaching and teaching. The episcopal powers associated with this threefold office derive from the Sacrament of Order and not from jurisdictional canonical mission. Finally, the episcopacy is inherently collegial, episcopal ordination incorporating the new bishop into the worldwide college of bishops.[90] As *Lumen Gentium* states, "The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in their role as teachers and pastors, and in it the apostolic college is perpetuated" (*LG* 22). *The Apostolicity of the Church* concludes from this teaching, "For Vatican II the episcopate thus becomes the basic form of ordained ministry and the point of departure for the theological interpretation of church ministry" (§ 241).

Current Lutheran reflection on *episkope* and those who exercise this ministry reflects both important internal diversity in the world communion and a consciousness of the importance of ecumenical engagement on this important subject. It is striking that the LWF celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2007 with its Council's unanimous approval of the *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church* (known as the Lund Statement). While such an action cannot bind Lutheran churches, nevertheless, in the words of LWF General Secretary Ishmael Noko, "speaking in unison on this important subject both required and demonstrated matured depth in the ecclesial identity of our communion and growing strength in relations among our member churches" ("Preface"). Calling for "ecumenical awareness" at every step, the

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90   The Council of Trent prepared for this paradigm of episcopal ministry. *The Apostolicity of the Church* comments that even though it "took as central the category of priesthood … it enlarged the concept so as to include pastoral tasks." Furthermore, "By assigning the position of pre-eminence to the bishop, Canon 6 represents a basic change of direction in the understanding of the Sacrament of Order, moving away from the Eucharistic body toward the ecclesial body of Christ and its members" (§§ 231–232). This expansion of the theology of ministry beyond an exclusively Eucharistic paradigm allows for greater affinity with Lutheran theologies of ministry.

Lund Statement concludes that as "Lutheran churches continue to develop their theology of ministry in the face of the many challenges posed within their respective contexts," they need to "develop a broader common understanding of how episcopal ministry points to the diaconal dimensions of the apostolic tradition and also of how the personal, collegial and communal dimensions of episkopé take shape in practice" (§ 61, using the threefold language for dimensions of ministry made central by BEM and used frequently in subsequent dialogues). Thus Lutheran practice, while continuing to maintain characteristic emphases on the oneness of ordained office and the possibility of variety in structural expression in response to contextual demands, nevertheless has clearly become a more open partner with Catholics in understanding the distinctiveness of episcopal ministry.

The U.S. dialogue statement, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, suggests a possible way of understanding the distinction between a bishop and a presbyter/pastor. It describes the difference in terms of the *koinonia* over which each has oversight and thus in terms of "their service to different levels of ecclesiality." The "normative complementarity" and mutual dependence that exist between the "face-to-face eucharistic assembly" and the "primary regional community" parallel a similar complementarity and interdependence between local and regional ministry. This perspective highlights the specific emphases of Lutherans and Catholics with their strengths and challenges. At the same time, it emphasizes also "the profound similarities" between the "distinct but inseparable offices" in their mutual interdependence: both bishops and presbyters are ordained to serve word, sacrament, and the pastoral life of the church" (*The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, § 82–94).[91]

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91   Titular bishops, who are members of the episcopal college and either serve the universal church (most often in a Roman dicastery) or assist their ordinary as auxiliary bishops in larger dioceses, contribute to the communion of the church in their distinctive roles even though they do not represent a particular church in the communion of churches.

At this point in the discussion of ministry, it would be helpful for Catholics to declare the beginning of canon 7 from the Council of Trent, "If anyone says that bishops are not of higher rank than priests, or have no power to confirm and ordain, or that the power they have is common to them and the priests"[92] as non-applicable to Lutherans today.

Furthermore, dialogue discussions provide encouragement that agreement between Lutherans and Catholics about the difference between a bishop and a presbyter/pastor is sufficient to determine that the teaching of Vatican II on the fullness of order conferred on a bishop need not be church-dividing. Such an interpretation, however, calls both partners toward growth in understanding of the relation between ministerial identity and the nature of the church as koinonia. *Catholics, for example, could continue to interpret Lumen Gentium's teaching as emphasizing more the bishop's responsibility for koinonia than his more extensive episcopal powers. Lutherans can attend to a more robust understanding of the collegial dimension of episcopal ministry in overseeing* koinonia. *Here again, a more explicit correlation between ministry and ecclesiology points a way forward toward a mutual recognition of ministry.*

6. Universal ministry and Christian unity

The questions of a universal ministry of the church and the roles of bishop of Rome are among the most longstanding and obvious differences between Lutherans and Catholics.

The Apostolicity of the Church notes, "there is no controversy between Lutherans and Catholics concerning the essential relation between each worshipping congregation and the universal church; nor do we differ over this relation being perceptibly represented and mediated in diverse ways. But there is a dispute about what

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92   Council of Trent, Session 23, 15 July 1563. Tanner, p. 744.

intensity and what structure this relation to the universal church must have for the worshipping congregations and individual to be in accord with their apostolic mission" (§ 287).

For Lutherans, questions about global structures for unity have an internal dimension. While certainly their own "communion in a worldwide framework is less developed" than for Catholics (*Apostolicity*, § 287), it has in recent decades been strengthened in a number of dimensions. Lutherans continue to seek the best institutional expressions for their unity throughout the world, especially through the communion identity of the Lutheran World Federation. In other conversations, Lutherans continue to ask themselves about possible recognition of a ministry of unity for the bishop of Rome.

For Catholics, the bishop of Rome as the successor of Peter is both a member of the worldwide college of bishops and the principle of unity of that college as well as of the multitude of the faithful (*LG* 23).[93] Catholic ecumenical discussions of universal ministry and its role in promoting unity intersect with calls to explore "how the universal ministry of the bishop of Rome can be reformed to manifest more visibly its subjection to the gospel in service to the *koinonia* of salvation" (§ 117).

In his 1995 encyclical *Ut unum sint*, John Paul II invited ecumenical dialogue partners to explore with him "the forms in which [the universal] ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned." He acknowledged that "the Catholic Church's conviction that in the ministry of the bishop of Rome she has preserved ... the visible sign and guarantor of unity constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by certain painful recollections." He continued, "To the extent that we

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93   This was already stated at the First Vatican Council in the Prologue to the definitions on the papacy. Vatican I, Session 4, July 18, 1870: First Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor aeternus* on the Church of Christ, DH 3051: "In order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided and that the whole multitude of believers might be preserved in unity of faith and communion by means of a closely united priesthood, he placed St. Pater at the head of the other apostles and established in him a perpetual principle and visible foundation of this twofold unity. ..."

are responsible for these, I join my predecessor Paul VI in asking forgiveness." Desiring to "seek–together, of course–the forms in which this ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned," he asked, "Could not the real but imperfect communion existing between us persuade Church leaders and their theologians to engage with me in a patient and fraternal dialogue on this subject, a dialogue in which, leaving useless controversies behind, we could listen to one another, keeping before us only the will of Christ for his Church and allowing ourselves to be deeply moved by his plea 'that they may all be one ... so that the world may believe that you have sent me' (Jn 17:21)?" (*Ut unum sint*, §§ 88, 95–6).

While the full potential of the invitations in *Ut unum sint* remains to be realized, the topic of the exercise of universal ministry has received repeated attention from Lutherans and Catholics, both before and after the encyclical. As early as the *Malta Report* in 1971, the office of the papacy as a visible sign of the unity of the churches was not excluded insofar as it would be subordinated to the primacy of the gospel by theological reinterpretation and practical restructuring (*The Gospel and the Church*, § 66). Its task was envisioned as helping to maintain the universal church in the apostolic truth, as serving the worldwide full communion of churches, and as encouraging local and regional churches in their faith and ministry (cf. Luke 22:32).

In the United States, Round V, *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* (1974), examined a number of attitudes toward the ministry of the pope, including ways in which this ministry could "serve to promote or preserve the oneness of the church by symbolizing unity and by facilitating communication, mutual assistance or correction, and collaboration in the church's mission" and also ways in which it historically has provided "a major obstacle to Christian unity" (§ 4). Round X, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* (2004), urged the question, "If the interdependence of assembly and ordained ministry is typical of the structure of the church at the local, regional, and national level, then why should such an interdependence not also be found at the universal level?" (§ 118).

For Lutherans, taking this question seriously would involve asking themselves "whether the worldwide koinonia of the church calls for a worldwide minister of unity and what form such a ministry might take to be truly evangelical" (§ 120).

In Germany, Catholics and Lutherans have been able to say together that "a universal ministry serving the unity and truth of the church corresponds to the essence and the task of the church, which is realized on the local, regional, and universal level. It is appropriate to the nature of the church. This ministry represents all of Christendom and has a pastoral duty to all particular churches" (*Communio Sanctorum*, §195).

In Sweden and Finland, *Justification in the Life of the Church* (2010), seeking to contribute to "the continuation of the talks on the ministry of Peter as a service to wholeness and unity," concluded, "The reformers were willing to accept the pope on condition that he was willing to submit to the gospel. The same conditions are repeated in the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue, which has opened for the possibility of a ministry of Peter as a visible sign of the church as a whole, on the condition that this ministry is subordinate to the primacy of the gospel. This would however mean a change or an adaptation of the current structure of the papacy. A possible task for the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue would be to define further what the gospel requires in this context" (§ 328).

Issues of papal ministry, especially in regard to authority and jurisdiction, raise questions that have no promise of imminent resolution. Discussion between Lutherans and Catholics about what "in service to the gospel" would mean for the exercise of papal primacy are still in their early stages. Nevertheless, even the fact that these discussions are no longer at the first stage is significant. Commitment exists both internationally and regionally to pursue these issues with greater concreteness and specificity.

Moreover, other dimensions of a universal ministry have a special timeliness in our cultural moment. Manifest

changes in the exercise of papal leadership offer the possibility of renewed discussions of this ministry. In a time of growing global awareness and instant communication across many lines of division, the bishop of Rome bears witness to the Christian message in the wider world through evangelization, interfaith relations, and promotion of social justice and care for creation. A question still to be fully explored is how he may bear this witness on behalf of both Lutherans and Catholics.

IV. REMAINING DIFFERENCES AND RECONCILING CONSIDERATIONS

C. Eucharist

In matters concerning the Eucharist, the dialogues have discovered and set forth convincingly that Lutherans and Catholics do share common views. The *Declaration* has articulated six significant agreements in the area of Eucharist. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues in recent decades have also dealt with differences related to the Lord's Supper that have not yet been fully reconciled. However, the dialogues also have demonstrated that many perceived disagreements are mitigated by clarification and understanding of one another's terminology. In certain cases, each side has grown in appreciation for the positions espoused by the other side.

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1. Eucharist as sacrifice

*Historically, Lutherans and Catholics have had disagreements about how the terminology of "sacrifice" should be applied to the Eucharist. In recent ecumenical consensus, both sides have affirmed that it is appropriate to speak of a "sacrifice of praise" in connection with the Eucharist (*The Eucharist*, § 37). Still, the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue group for the Swedish-Finnish church (2010) observes: "From a Reformation perspective, it is however unusual to describe the church as involved in the sacrifice of Christ" (*Justification in the Life of the Church*, § 230). Thus, some Lutherans continue to regard the language of "sacrifice" found in Catholic theology and the Catholic Eucharistic rite to be a potential stumbling block to unity.[94]*

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94   In the Roman Missal, Third Edition (2010), the priest says: "Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father," and the people respond: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice of your hands for the praise and glory of his name for our good and the good of his holy church." The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (#95) asserts: "In the celebration of the Mass the faithful form a holy people, a people of God's own possession and a royal Priesthood, so that they may give thanks to God and offer the unblemished sacrificial Victim not only by means of the hands of the Priest but also together with him and so that they may learn to offer their very selves."

In his 1520 treatise *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, a text that is formative for many Lutheran pastors and other Lutheran leaders, Luther used strong language to argue against the terminology of "sacrifice" as he understood it to be employed by many of his contemporaries (LW 36:35). For the 16th century reformers, the "diminution in practice of congregational communion was regarded as scandalous, and the primary blame for this was placed on the idea of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice. It was thought that this idea allowed for a view which made unnecessary the reception in faith of Eucharistic grace and attributed an autonomous sacrificial power to the priest" (*The Eucharist*, § 59).

However, as the 1978 U.S. dialogue statement, *The Eucharist*, explains: "All those who celebrate the Eucharist in remembrance of him are incorporated in Christ's life, passion, death, and resurrection. ... In receiving in faith, they are taken as his body into the reconciling sacrifice which equips them for self-giving (Romans 12:1) and enables them 'through Jesus Christ' to offer 'spiritual sacrifices' in service to the world (1 Peter 2:5)" (§ 36).

Ecumenical conversations have shown that many of the perceived disagreements are mitigated by clarification and understanding of what is intended by the Catholic language of "the sacrifice of the Mass." Furthermore, both research into the historical background of the Reformation polemic and considerations of new developments in both churches have proved especially helpful. In The Eucharist*, the members of the Joint Commission assert: "We can thankfully record a growing convergence on many questions which have until now been difficulties in our discussions. ... [A]ccording to the Catholic doctrine the sacrifice of the Mass is the making present of the sacrifice of the cross. It is not a repetition of this sacrifice and adds nothing to its saving significance. When thus understood, the sacrifice of the mass is an affirmation and not a questioning of the uniqueness and full value of Christ's sacrifice on the cross" (§ 61). Thus we encourage increased attention to the instruction and formation of clergy, as well*

increased catechesis of the laity, regarding the teachings of their own traditions, and greater knowledge and sympathetic understanding of one another's traditions.

2. Mode of Eucharistic presence

*"Roman Catholic and Lutheran Christians together confess the real and true presence of the Lord in the Eucharist" (*The Eucharist*, § 48). However, there are differences in their theological statements and terminology about the mode of presence.*

Catholics widely use the term "transubstantiation," employed by Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent (DS 1642), to describe the ontological transformation of the original substances or central realities of the Eucharistic bread and wine into the substance or reality of the divinized body and blood of Christ. In its 1978 document, the international Joint Commission stated: "In order to confess the *reality* of the Eucharistic presence without reserve the Roman Catholic Church teaches that 'Christ whole and entire' becomes present through the transformation of the whole substance of the bread and the wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ while the empirically accessible appearances of bread and wine (*accidentia*) continue to exist unchanged" (*The Eucharist*, § 49, quoting Council of Trent, DS 1641).

However, members of the international Joint Commission (1978) have suggested that this difference in understanding the mode of presence need not be church-dividing "if both sides were to profess the reality of the presence in a sufficiently clear and unambiguous manner and, further, if the mystery-character of the Eucharist and the eucharistic presence of the Lord were to be affirmed. ..."[95] They have further recommended that Lutherans should not therefore regard the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as a rationalistic attempt to explain the mystery of the presence of Christ in the sacrament but rather understand this doctrine "as an

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95   "Supplementary Studies: The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist," in *The Eucharist*, §§ 62–63.

emphatic affirmation of the presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament. ..."[96] They also recommended that "Catholics, on the other hand, should recognize that a clear and unambiguous affirmation of the real presence of Christ—as is indeed given by the Lutheran side—can no longer form the subject of an *anathema sit* ["let that person be anathema"]. ..."[97]

Building on Lutheran and Catholic affirmations of Eucharistic presence, and our shared concerns to confess the mysterious but real presence of the risen Christ giving himself to the recipient in the Eucharist, we encourage our increased attention to the instruction and formation of clergy, as well as increased catechesis of the laity, regarding Lutheran and Catholic teachings about the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Clergy and other church leaders are urged to study one another's traditions carefully in order to gain a sympathetic understanding of these traditions and to instruct others as accurately as possible, so that each side may avoid mischaracterizations of the other's beliefs and practices.

3. Reservation of the elements/Eucharistic devotion

Traditionally, Lutherans and Catholics have had differing views and practices regarding the reservation, use and disposition of the Eucharistic elements after the conclusion of the liturgical celebration. Both Lutherans and Catholics reserve the elements to commune the sick, the homebound, and others unable to be

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96   "Supplementary Studies: The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist," in *The Eucharist*, § 63, quoting *The Eucharist as Sacrifice* II. 2c, p. 195. See above, the historical note in Agreement No. 4. In fact, the Catholic doctrine is not defined as "transubstantiation" but is a "conversio" ("conversion," "change"). The Council of Trent calls the term transubstantiation "fitting" (DS 1642 and 1652).

97   "Supplementary Studies: The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist," in *The Eucharist*, § 63, quoting *The Eucharist as Sacrifice* II. 2c, p. 195.

present at the Eucharistic service.[98] Other practices, however, have often been the subject of disagreements. Many Lutherans have taken exception to Catholic practices of adoration of Christ in the Eucharistic elements outside the Eucharistic celebration.

As the report of the U.S. dialogue *The Eucharist* explains: "According to Catholic doctrine, the Lord grants his Eucharistic presence even beyond the sacramental celebration, for as long as the species of bread and wine remain. The faithful are accordingly invited to 'give to this holy sacrament in veneration the worship of *latria*, which is due to the true God.' Lutherans have not infrequently taken exception to certain of the forms of Eucharistic piety connected with this conviction. They are regarded as inadmissibly separated from the Eucharistic meal. On the other hand, Catholic sensibilities are offended by the casual way in which the elements remaining after communion are treated sometimes on the Lutheran side" (§§ 53–54, quoting Council of Trent DS 1643).

In the encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* of April 17, 2003, Pope John Paul II affirms as highly important the worship of Christ present under the Eucharistic species outside of Mass, which pastors must encourage (No. 25). The same recommendation is echoed in Pope Benedict XVI's post-synodal exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis* (Feb. 22, 2007), in §§ 66-69. Critical comments came from Lutherans, seeing this as troublesome in view of the relatively recent origin of the practice and of its practice in only the Latin Rite.[99] However, after three decades of ambiguity, the practice is increasing again among Catholics, both young and old.[100]

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98   Cf. *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, adopted for Guidance and Practice by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1997), Application 48A, p. 49.

99   George Lindbeck, in a symposium on John Paul II's encyclical in Pro Ecclesia, vol. 12 2003, 405-414; also Richard L. Jeske, "*Sacramentum Caritatis*: A response," *Ecumenical Trends*, September 2007, p. 12.

100   Prayer before the tabernacle came up so strongly, especially from the audience, at the 2008 Quebec International Symposium on Eucharistic Theology that the Laval theology faculty devoted to it a whole issue of the pastoral journal *Lumen Vitae*, that is, vol. 64 (2009), no. 3.

It may be helpful to note that Lutheran concerns about the adoration of Christ in the Eucharistic elements outside of the Eucharistic celebration have their roots in Reformation-era polemics—written at a time when people received Communion rarely and viewing the elevated host was seen as a powerful form of contact with Christ as a sort of substitute for receiving Communion. In the current situation where Lutherans and Catholics now are encouraged to commune frequently, and parishes regularly make Communion available, the concern about the Eucharistic adoration supplanting reception of Communion is less justifiable.

The Catholic concern about Lutheran disposition of the Eucharistic elements is addressed by words of Luther and instructions given to Lutheran churches. Luther had instructed the Lutheran pastor Simon Wolferinus not to mix leftover consecrated Eucharistic elements with consecrated ones. Luther told him to "do what we do here [i.e., in Wittenberg], namely to eat and drink the remains of the Sacrament with the communicants so that it is not necessary to raise the scandalous and dangerous questions about when the action of the Sacrament ends" (WA, Briefweschel X: 348f). Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are instructed: "Any food that remains is best consumed by presiding and assisting ministers and by others present following the service" (*Use of the Means of Grace*, Application 47b, p. 48).

The 2010 Swedish-Finnish Catholic-Lutheran dialogue statement, *Justification in the Life of the Church*, notes: "It has ... become increasingly usual in the Church of Sweden either to keep the Eucharistic elements in a special place or to consume them completely" (§ 235). The U.S. dialogue recommends that "for Lutherans the best means should be adopted of showing respect due to the elements that have served for the celebration of the Eucharist ..." (§ 55).

Both traditions assert the need for reverence due to the Eucharistic elements following the conclusion of the Eucharistic service. Further reflection and dialogue

***is necessary on the purpose of the reservation of the
Eucharistic elements after a liturgy is concluded, on the
continuing presence of Christ in the elements, and on the
propriety of adoration directed to Christ in the reserved
Eucharistic elements, for in this area an important, though
not church-dividing, difference remains at this time.***

4. Eucharistic fellowship

*In our churches, there are different regulations regarding the
invitation of non-members to receive Communion. Most Lutheran
congregations invite baptized believers to receive at the table. In
the Catholic Church, normally only those in full communion with
the Catholic Church are invited to receive the sacrament.*

Lutherans and Catholics generally concede that the Eucharists
we now celebrate are imperfect signs of the church's unity,
because not all baptized Christians can share in them. Thus the
catholicity of the church is not present in its fullness because of
this separation of baptized Christians at the table of the Lord.
Baptism unites them, but this division keeps them, and their faith
and life, at a distance from each other. Consequently, catholicity
is not operative in the Catholic Church in a full manner (*UR* 4).
Furthermore, this separation at the Eucharistic table means that
our unity in Christ is not manifested to the world.

This division has lamentable effects in the lives of individuals,
including the pain suffered in Lutheran-Catholic marriages,
when one spouse cannot receive Communion in the other's
congregation. Our churches have grave need of development in
our pastoral practice to justify occasional Eucharistic hospitality.
Based on the present Ecumenical Directory and looking toward
the general good, especially for those in Lutheran-Catholic
marriages, Catholic communities might increase the opportunities
for Catholics and Lutherans to receive Communion together.
Already local Catholic bishops, given the principles stated in §§
129–31 of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity's

Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms for Ecumenism, can develop their considerations of "grave and pressing need" (§ 130) to receive the Eucharist. This should be done in light of (a) the full possibilities of the principles stated in the *Directory* and (b) the spiritual good of Lutherans well-disposed to receive the Eucharist, especially for those in Catholic-Lutheran marriages who attend church regularly, those who make retreats in Catholic retreat houses and similar venues, those gathered for ecumenical meetings, and so forth.

Neither of our churches has agreed on a definitive position about what intermediate sacramental steps, if any, might be taken, to help lead to reconciliation and full communion among separated Christian communities. The possibility of occasional admission of members of our churches to Eucharistic communion with the other side (communicatio in sacris) *could be offered more clearly and regulated more compassionately.*

V. NEXT STEPS ON THE WAY

Together with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, the 32 agreements in this *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist* are instances of the imperfect but real and growing unity of Catholics and Lutherans. With the authoritative teaching of the JDDJ, guidance from dialogue documents like *From Conflict to Communion*, and the many efforts at all levels to deepen the relations between our two traditions, reception of *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist* can become an occasion to renew our commitment to continue together on the way to full communion.

We, therefore, recommend that The Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity together receive, affirm and create a process to implement consequences of the 32 "Statements of Agreement on Church, Ministry and Eucharist" in section two of *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist*. Receiving these agreements culled from international and regional dialogues recognizes that there are no longer church-dividing differences with respect to these statements and emphasizes their cumulative importance. Thus, such recognition is itself a further step on the way.

Moreover, reception of these agreements invites The Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church to implement practices that would express and advance this growing communion between them.

- Creation of a process and a timetable for addressing remaining issues on church, Eucharist and ministry is clearly an important step forward.
- The expansion of opportunities for Catholics and Lutherans to receive Holy Communion together would be a significant sign of the path toward unity already traveled and a pledge to continue together on the journey toward full communion.

- Lutherans and Catholics will continue to advance on the path toward unity by addressing the moral issues that are often deemed to be church dividing in the same spirit of mutual respect and commitment to unity characterized by their work on issues of justification, church, Eucharist and ministry.

In addition to these initiatives, full reception of these 32 agreements at local and regional levels invites a number of pastoral responses specific to particular contexts that would include the deepening of many common activities well established. In many places substantial steps have already been taken. In each context Lutherans and Catholics will have to find the most appropriate ways forward to continue their journey toward full communion. Some recommendations to continue or to initiate these efforts for fostering unity include:

Prayer

- For Lutherans and Catholics to let their yearly Week of Prayer for Christian Unity prayer time serve as an impetus to pray together and meet more regularly during 2016 and 2017.

- For local Catholic and Lutheran clergy to gather regularly for common prayer and study. Our agreements on ministry indicate that that Catholic priests and Lutheran ministers are in real, if imperfect, communion with each other. This communion might manifest itself in regular prayer together, in study of the ecumenical documents listed above, and in regular spiritual retreats.

Education

- For local Catholic and Lutheran religious educators to develop together materials that inform their students about the most important aspects of our communities. This might include study of key elements from our histories and from the major documents mentioned earlier with ideas for their local implementation.

- For local congregations of Catholics and Lutherans to study the Bible together—especially the New Testament—as individuals and in small groups.

- For members of Lutheran and Catholic parishes and other local Christian communities to learn more about each other by spending time during 2016 studying texts such as JDDJ, *From Conflict to Communion,* and *Declaration on the Way* in preparation for the commemoration of the Reformation in 2017.

- For Lutheran and Catholic seminaries to provide opportunities for all their students to learn about the progress in Catholic-Lutheran relations.

Collaboration

- For local Catholic and Lutheran bishops to establish a permanent Lutheran-Catholic working group for their region. A local group would (a) seek out the best practical ways to collaborate and (b) recommend to church leaders new or renewed collaborative action(s) and provide for continuity in efforts for other ministries.

- For Catholics and Lutherans to work together to care for those with spiritual, emotional and physical needs in their community. Many already work together for social justice. We believe that our collaboration must be rooted in prayerful discernment of what God would have us do, perhaps beyond our current ministries.

- For local Lutheran and Catholic bishops to work together with each other and with clergy and laity to encourage collaboration in prayer, study and service. This collaboration by the bishops could include identifying local leaders for various ecumenical projects.

- For local Catholic and Lutheran parishes to enter into covenants with one another. This might include promises to pray for each other at each Sunday liturgy, regular gatherings for prayer and study, and common sponsorship of local ministries.

All of this flows from Jesus' prayer for his disciples after the Last Supper, "That they may all be one" (John 17:21).

MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

Catholics

Cochair:
Bishop Denis J. Madden,
Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore,
Maryland

Rev. Dr. Brian E. Daley, S.J.
University of Notre Dame, South
Bend, Indiana

Rev. Dr. Jared Wicks, S.J.
Pontifical College Josephinum,
Columbus, Ohio

Dr. Susan K. Wood, SCL
Marquette University, Milwaukee,
Wisconsin

Staff:
Rev. John W. Crossin, OSFS
United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

Lutherans

Cochair:
Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop Emeritus,
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America; Augsburg College,
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dr. Kathryn L. Johnson
Louisville Presbyterian
Theological Seminary, Louisville,
Kentucky

Rev. Dr. William G. Rusch
(resigned June 3, 2015)
Yale University, New Haven,
Connecticut

Rev. Dr. Joy A. Schroeder
Capital University/Trinity
Lutheran Seminary, Columbus,
Ohio

Staff:
Rev. Donald J. McCoid
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America, Chicago, Illinois

En Bloc Items

I. **Board Development Committee**

II. **Budget and Finance**
    A. **Audit Committee Membership**

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To re-elect Marjorie Ellis to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year term ending August 2017; and
        To elect Meri Jo Petrivelli, Clarance Smith and Ingrid Sponberg Stafford to the ELCA Audit Committee to two-year renewable terms ending November 2017.

    B. **Audit Committee Report**

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing their review of the audited financial statements, management letter, and response of management for the churchwide organization's fiscal year ended January 31, 2015 and the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust's year ending December 31, 2014.

    C. **Cash and Investments**

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To approve the revised ELCA Core Investment Policy.

    D. **Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund Policy**

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To approve the revised Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund Investment Policy Statement.

    E. **Charitable Gift Annuity Policy and Investment Guidelines**

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To approve the revised ELCA Charitable Gift Annuity Philosophy and Policy Statement.

    CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
    Recommended:
        To approve retirement of the Investment Guidelines for the Charitable Gift Annuity Required Reserve upon successful completion of the transfer of assets.

III. Executive Committee

A. Appointment of the Memorials Committee
Churchwide bylaw 12.51.21., in regard to the Churchwide Assembly, provides for the appointment of a Memorials Committee to review memorials from synodical assemblies and make recommendations for assembly action. The 15-member committee includes four members of the Church Council, voting members of the assembly and two representatives of the Conference of Bishops. The Church Council appoints the committee at its November meeting prior to the Churchwide Assembly to allow for adequate notice to members for their participation in the meeting of the Memorials Committee subsequent to the completion of the 2016 synodical assemblies.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:
1. **Pr. Stephen Herr (8D) –** *co-chair*
2. **Ms. Marjorie Ellis (6F) –** *co-chair* **(POC)**
3. **Mr. Hans Becklin (5K) (YA)**
4. **Mr. Allan Bieber (3I)**
5. **Bp. Tracie Bartholomew (7A)**
6. **Bp. Ray Tiemann (4E)**
7. **Pr. Miguel Gomez-Acosta (2D) (POC)**
8. **Pr. Amanda Simons (3H)**
9. **Pr. Meggan Manlove (1D)**
10. **Ms. Patricia Cash (2A)**
11. **Ms. Anita Nuetzman (5F)**
12. **Ms. Anna Czarnik-Neimeyer (5I)**
13. **Ms. Diana Haywood (9B) (POC)**
14. **Mr. Rod Schofield (1B)**
15. **Mr. Bill Mintz (4F); and**
To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Memorials Committee for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.

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

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
To appoint the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:
1. **Mr. Paul Archer (6A) –** *co-chair*

2. **Pr. Vicki Garber (6C) –** *co-chair*
3. **Ms. Maren Hulden (3G) (YA)**
4. **Mr. John Lohrmann (1D)**
5. **Bp. Suzanne Dillahunt (6F)**
6. **Bp. Jon Anderson (3F)**
7. **Pr. Alex LaChapelle (5A) (POC) (YA)**
8. **Pr. Tracey Breashears Schultz (4F)**
9. **Pr. Ray Ranker (8G)**
10. **Mr. Imran Siddiqui (9D) (POC)**
11. **Mr. Randy Foster (2B) (POC)**
12. **Ms. Pamela Killinger (5B)**
13. **Ms. Patsy Glista (7D)**
14. **Ms. Ella Peterson (7A) (Youth)**
15. **Ms. Blythe Scott (9A); and**

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Reference and Counsel Committee for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.

IV. Planning and Evaluation

V. Program and Services

A. Consideration of extension request for assessing the need for and feasibility of initiating social message processes

Three resolutions call upon the ELCA's Theological Discernment Team to bring to the Church Council an assessment and possible recommendation regarding the need for and feasibility of developing social messages on the following topics:

1) "Genetics, Faith, and Responsibility" Implementing Resolution (IR) #8: Regenerative medicine (CA11.04.17).
2) "The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries" IR #9: U.S. national drug policy (CA13.05.17).
3) "Statement on Aging" (CC14.11.32)

Each was to be concluded by this fall with a report and recommendation. Unfortunately, these were not completed due to the realities of staff capacity in light of other pressing commitments on behalf of Church Council authorized tasks (e.g., social message on gender-based violence and Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families). It was not possible to conduct the required research and consultation to conclude work on any of these. Therefore, we are requesting an extension until fall of 2016 to conduct the required research to determine the need for and feasibility to initiate social message processes on the three topics: Regenerative medicine, U.S. national drug policy, and aging.

<u>**CC ACTION**</u> *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To acknowledge the extenuating circumstances that led to the limited staff capacities to provide a thorough assessment on social message processes; and

To grant an extension until the November 2016 meeting of the Church Council a report and recommendations from the Theological Discernment Team staff in the Office of the Presiding Bishop regarding the feasibility of developing social message processes for the

following three topics: regenerative medicine, including, but not limited to, a range of stem cell technologies; U.S. national drug policy; and aging.

B. Corporate Social Responsibility Screen and Issue Papers

In November 2003, the ELCA Church Council put in place a process for writing and approving an issue paper that addresses a concern within society that may require action by the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program. Issue papers interpret the social teaching of this church as they relate to investments.

In addition, this church is assisted in its decision-making through the development of social criteria investment screens that guide this church in evaluating the types of investments it wishes to hold. The original policy concerning these screens was developed in 1989 and revised in 2006. Additional background about the policy and procedures for CSR Issue Papers and Social Criteria Investment Screens can be found in the Program and Services Committee material.

At this meeting, the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council reviewed one revised social criteria investment screens and three revised issue papers.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To approve the amendments to the following corporate social responsibility issue paper and economic social criteria investment screens, but to request that the original issue papers be archived for historical and research purposes:

- **Community Economic Development Social Criteria Investment Screen**
- **Climate Change Issue Paper**
- **Domestic Access to Capital Issue Paper**
- **Caring for Creation Issue Paper**

C. Corporate Social Responsibility Succession Plan

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long history of working for justice through corporate social responsibility. The corporate social responsibility work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is mandated by the ELCA Constitution (14.21.14). The Church Council may direct the churchwide organization to exercise the corporate social responsibility of this church by filing shareholder resolutions, casting proxy ballots, and taking other actions as it deems appropriate.

Currently, Ms. Patricia Zerega fulfills the ELCA's corporate social responsibilities. She is a .50 independent contractor.

Succession planning and consideration of the future of CSR work beyond Ms. Zerega's tenure was determined a next step in joint planning around CSR. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit report on staffing recommendations moves the half-time contract position to a half-time churchwide staff position over the next several years.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To affirm the succession plan proposed by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for the Corporate Social Responsibility position.

D. Candidacy Manual

At its March 2012 meeting, the Conference of Bishops asked the Director for Candidacy to review the ELCA's candidacy process which is outlined in the Candidacy Manual. The

Candidacy Manual – found in the Program and Services Committee section – is the result of a two-year collaborative and thorough review process.

The Conference of Bishops reviewed the proposed process at its October 2015 meeting and expressed appreciation for the revisions that were made as a result of consultations with bishops, candidacy committees and many others.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To adopt the revised Candidacy Manual; and

To authorize the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, to make any necessary corrections for clarity and accuracy.

VI. Other Items
A. Church Council Nominations and Elections

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of churchwide committees, social ministry organizations, and seminaries.

The Committee on Appeals hears appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer. The committee consists of six ordained ministers and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election (ELCA Constitutional Provision 20.64). In accordance with continuing resolution 20.64.A13., the Church Council may elect individuals to serve on the Committee until the next Churchwide Assembly if the term of any member of the Committee expires before that member's successor is elected.

ELCA Bylaw 8.31.03. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries.

Biographical information is provided in Biographies.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To elect the following individuals to the Committee on Appeals to serve until the 2016 Churchwide Assembly: the Rev. Cheryl Hausman, the Rev. E. Roy Riley, Ms. Louise Hemstead, and Mr. Kevin Anderson.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary to a term from June 1, 2016 until May 31, 2019: the Rev. Richard Goeres, Ms. Miriam David, Ms. Carolyn Donges, and the Rev. Kathryn Tiede;

To elect to the board of directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg to a four-year term expiring December 19, 2019: Ms. Nancy Dering Mock;

To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia to a three-year term expiring October 31, 2018: the Rev. John Richter; and

To elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary to a four-year term expiring June 30, 2020: Mr. John Blanchard and Ms. Beth Lewis.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To approve the designation of the following members to the board of directors of The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society as representatives to the ELCA: Mr. David J. Horazdovsky [president], the Rev. John F. Holt [term ending in June 2016], Dr. Gwen

Wagstrom Halaas [term ending in June 2016], and Mr. H. Theodore Grindal [term ending in June 2018].

VII. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee
    A. Synod Constitution Amendments
    Provision 10.12. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: "Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification . . . ."

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
    To ratify the following amendments to the Montana, Minneapolis Area, Arkansas-Oklahoma, La Crosse Area, Southern Ohio (as amended), Metropolitan New York, Lower Susquehanna, and North Carolina synod constitutions.

    Montana Synod (1F) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendment to the constitution of the Montana Synod:*

S9.03.   The NOMINATING COMMITTEE shall consist of ~~twelve~~ six members who shall be ~~appointed~~ elected by the Synod ~~Council~~ Assembly and serve for three-year staggered terms~~to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. In making appointments to the Nominating Committee the Synod Council shall give consideration to geographical, clergy/lay, male/female and persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English representation~~. In making nominations to the Nominating Committee, representational principles of geography, gender, lay/clergy, and age will be considered.

~~S9.11. The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the council of Region I.~~

    Rationale: The Region I Council has changed its makeup to bishops and vice presidents.

    Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendments to the Minneapolis Area Synod constitution.*

S9.03.   There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of ~~11~~ 10-15 members who shall be elected by each of the conferences 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.

    Rationale: This allows flexibility if the number of conferences changes, rather than having to amend the provision each time.

S9.04.e.   During the balloting process, and according to a schedule outlined in the bylaws, printed information about ~~nominees~~ candidates shall be made available to voting

members and opportunity to address the Synod Assembly shall be offered to ~~nominees~~ candidates for the office of bishop.

Rationale: This corrects terminology to be used in the bishop's election.

S9.11.   ~~The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.~~

Rationale: This steering committee no longer exists.

†S10.01.   The Synod Council, consisting of …
                b.   The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be three ~~two~~ years.

Rationale: With a smaller council, this will allow for greater continuity.

S11.05.   ~~The Committee on Ecumenism shall consist of six persons appointed by the Synod Council for a term of three years, renewable one time. Three shall be ordained ministers and three shall be laypersons. The functions of the Committee on Ecumenism shall be to advise the bishop on ways to strengthen ecumenical relationships within the territory of the synod, to assist congregations in the development of ecumenical relationships, and to maintain a relationship with the ecumenical agencies within the territory of the synod.~~

Rationale: This committee no longer exists.

Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendments to the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod constitution.*

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.~~

S10.03. The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:
        a.   Provide spiritual leadership for the Synod.
        b.   Establish the vision, priorities, and goals of the Synod.
        c.   Oversee the Synod Mission Teams, Tables, and Committees.
        d.   Develop the Annual Mission Budget and oversight of the financial life of the Synod.
        e.   Carry out the administrative functions and responsibilities assigned to it by the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
        f~~a~~. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.
        ~~b.   Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.~~
        g~~e~~. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
        ~~d.   Supervise the ministry of all committees, task forces, and other program units of the Synod.~~

h~~e~~. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, 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.

i~~f~~. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

j~~g~~. 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.

k~~h~~. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly ~~and provide regular reports of its actions to congregations and pastors~~.

l~~i~~. 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.

S11.06. Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

[Rationale: The title would separate the endowment fund bylaws from the audit committee provision.]

S11.40. Standing Committees, Teams, Tables, and Task Forces.
~~S11.41. This synod shall have standing committees and task forces which will have responsibility for an identified portion of the program of this synod.~~
~~S11.50. Evangelism ministry committees and other program units.~~
~~S11.60. Leadership ministry committees and other program units.~~
~~S11.70. Outreach ministry committees and other program units.~~
~~S11.80. Stewardship ministry committees and other program units.~~
~~S11.90. Youth ministry committees and other program units.~~

La Crosse Area Synod (5L) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendment to the constitution of the La Crosse Area Synod:*

S8.52. The term of the bishop shall begin on the first day of the ~~fourth~~ third month following the election. The terms of the vice-president, secretary and treasurer and the Synod Council members shall begin at the conclusion of the Synod Assembly at which they are elected.

Southern Ohio Synod (6F) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendments to the Southern Ohio Synod constitution.*

†S1.21. The seal of this synod is ~~a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The name of this synod and the~~

~~year of its constituting convention shall form the circular outer edge of the seal~~ the emblem of the ELCA.

S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the ~~secretary of this Synod~~ Synod Council or by its appointed representative at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

S7.26. 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.

S10.06. If a ~~member of the~~ Synod Council member who is an ordinated minister ceases to be a member in good standing on a roster of this synod~~, if an ordained minister,~~ or a Synod Council member who is a lay person ceases to be a voting member of a congregation of this synod~~, if a layperson~~, the office filled by such member immediately shall ~~at once become~~ be deemed vacant.

Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendments to the Metropolitan New York Synod constitution.*

S9.03. ~~There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of no less than three nor more than nine 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 on Nominations and Elections.

S9.05. The ~~Nominating~~ Committee on Nominations and Elections shall nominate at least two persons for vice-president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2015]
Church Council action
Recommended: *To ratify the following amendments to the Lower Susquehanna Synod constitution.*

S7.24. ~~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 assembly.~~
Congregations shall elect voting members to the regular Synod Assembly prior to the conference assemblies preparing for the regular Synod Assembly.

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S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit <u>persons from</u> ~~mission settings formed with the intent of becoming recognized~~ congregations <u>under development</u> 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.

S7.35. Immediately after the Order for the Opening of the Assembly, the Executive Committee of Synod Council shall certify to the ~~bishop in his/her capacity as~~ chairperson of the Synod Assembly the total number of persons who are eligible to vote at that assembly in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of this synod.

North Carolina Synod (9B) [2015]
Background:

The following constitutional amendments were presented in writing and approved by a two-thirds vote of the 2014 North Carolina Synod Assembly. In accordance with provision †S18.13. of the synod constitution, the amendments were adopted by a two-thirds vote of the 2015 North Carolina Synod Assembly.

The rationale for deleting provision S7.24. was that the synod constitution addressed the matter elsewhere:

> †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly ...
> S7.21.A14. *Lay voting members shall continue in such service until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership in the congregation which elected them.*
> S7.22.01. All ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod, in attendance at the Synod Assembly, shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.

Recommended Action:
To ratify the following amendments to the constitution of the North Carolina Synod:

S7.24. ~~All ordained ministers on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call on the roster 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 official lay roster 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.~~

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

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d.   Maintenance of a ~~regular account with~~ record for each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this ~~account~~ record.

...

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

S9.03.   There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of ~~three lay persons and two pastors from each conference cluster~~ twelve 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.

S9.07.   If the treasurer is to be elected by the Synod Assembly, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S10.03.   The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:

...

d.   ~~Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, receive~~ Receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding ~~those~~ persons on the official rosters 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.

S13.21.   The alignment of congregations in ~~pastoral charges~~ a parish of multiple congregations, and ~~all~~ any alterations in ~~any~~ the alignment, shall be subject to approval ~~by the Synod Assembly or~~ 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~~ six months of operating expenses 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.

B. NLCM Articles and Bylaws
      The changes to the National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. (NLCM) Restated Articles
of Incorporation and Bylaws were approved by the NLCM, Inc. board at its meeting on
October 6, 2015. The changes are primarily editorial, bringing the documents up to date with
the restructuring in the churchwide organization.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
      **To approve the amended restated articles of incorporation and bylaws of the
National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Incorporated, as amended by the Legal and
Constitutional Review Committee (deleting the word "program" from "program unit"
each time it appears in the bylaws).**

C. Approval of ELCA Continuing Resolutions
ELCA Continuing Resolution 19.01.A15. deals with the election of the Vice President. It
allows for pre-identification of potential nominees for Vice President. The amendment comes
as a result of discussions that began at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and reflects the
surveys of the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops.
      Continuing resolution 16.12.C15. recognizes the changes that have been implemented in
the Mission Advancement unit. It gives the unit flexibility to develop strategies and resources
to accomplish its mission.
      Continuing resolution 19.61.B15. is updated to reflect the technology now used at the
Churchwide Assembly for nominations.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC – Two-thirds approval required]*
Recommended:
      **To adopt *en bloc* the following amendments to continuing resolutions of the
*Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America*:**

~~**14.32.B13.**~~   ~~*One voting member of the Church Council shall be selected in each triennium to serve—in
accord with 16.12.D11.d.4.—as a member of the Advisory Committee for the Church
Periodical.*~~

16.12.C~~11~~15.   *Mission Advancement Unit*
               ~~*The Mission Advancement unit shall be responsible for coordinating this church's
communication, marketing, public relations, mission funding, major gifts, planned gifts,
and constituent data management. It also shall oversee the work of the following:*~~
               ~~a.   The Lutheran *magazine*~~
               ~~b.   *The ELCA Foundation.*~~
               *The Mission Advancement unit shall be responsible for planning, coordinating and
carrying out this church's communications and constituent data management and shall
lead its fundraising and development efforts including current, major and planned gifts;
churchwide campaigns; and Mission Support interpretation and consultations.*
~~**16.12.D11.**~~   ~~*The church periodical,* The Lutheran, *shall be published by the churchwide organization.
The following shall apply to the church periodical:*~~
               ~~a.   *The Church Council shall elect the editor of the church periodical by a two-thirds vote
to a four-year term. The editor shall be eligible for re-election. Employment of the
editor may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop of this church and a two-
thirds vote of the members of the Church Council present and voting.*~~

b. *The editor shall be responsible to the Church Council. The editor shall select the editorial staff of the church periodical and shall be solely responsible for the periodical's content.*

c. *Official notices of this church shall be published in the periodical.*

d. *An advisory committee for* The Lutheran *shall have the responsibility for the church periodical. The advisory committee, in consultation with the presiding bishop of this church, shall nominate the editor for the church periodical. The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of nine members elected by the Church Council.*

   1) *The members of the advisory committee of the church periodical, who shall be nominated through the Church Council's nomination process, shall include persons chosen for their understanding of periodical publishing.*

   2) *Each member of the advisory committee for* The Lutheran *shall be elected for one six-year term, with no consecutive re-election and with one-third of the members elected every two years.*

   3) *The terms of office of persons so elected to regular terms on the advisory committee of the church periodical shall begin on the first day of the month following each regular meeting of the Church Council.*

   4) *The Church Council shall appoint one voting member of the council to serve as an advisory member of this committee.*

   5) *The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of this committee.*

   6) *The advisory committee of the church periodical shall:*

   a. *develop editorial and advertising guidelines.*

   b. *receive periodic reports from the editor.*

   c. *consult with the editor from the perspective of the expertise of committee members.*

   d. *be responsible, together with the presiding bishop of this church, for the annual performance review of the editor.*

16.12.D15. *The ELCA Foundation shall provide major gift and deferred giving programs, including educational and support services, for individual donors, congregations, synods, agencies, and related institutions, and shall promote pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church, its congregations, synods, agencies, and affiliated institutions. The ELCA Foundation shall also:*

a. *conduct—on behalf of this church, its congregations, synods, churchwide units, and related institutions—a program of major gifts and deferred giving.*

b. *provide educational materials and resources in the area of deferred giving.*

c. *provide advice to the Office of the Treasurer in the recommendation and establishment within that office of policies and procedures for processes governing valuation of noncash gifts, the management of assets of life-income agreements and endowment funds, and the distribution of earned-income payments to donors and to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.*

d. *engage—in cooperation with congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of this church—in efforts to:*

   1) *identify and cultivate prospective major and deferred-gift donors;*

   2) *seek gifts, bequests, and investments for endowment funds that support ministries of this church; and*

   3) *coordinate its programs and ministries with the objectives and programs of other stewardship and financial-resource development activities of the churchwide organization.*

16.12.E11. *The ELCA Foundation shall provide major gift and deferred giving programs, including educational and support services, for individual donors, congregations, synods, agencies, and related institutions, and shall promote pooled investment services for endowment funds*

*of this church, its congregations, synods, agencies, and affiliated institutions. The ELCA
Foundation shall also:*

*a. conduct—on behalf of this church, its congregations, synods, churchwide units, and
related institutions—a program of major gifts and deferred giving.*

b. provide educational materials and resources in the area of deferred giving.

*c. provide advice to the Office of the Treasurer in the recommendation and establishment
within that office of policies and procedures for processes governing valuation of
noncash gifts, the management of assets of life-income agreements and endowment
funds, and the distribution of earned-income payments to donors and to remainder
beneficiaries as regulated by life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.*

*d. engage—in cooperation with congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of this
church—in efforts to:*

1) identify and cultivate prospective major and deferred-gift donors;

*2) seek gifts, bequests, and investments for the Mission Investment Fund of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*

*3) seek gifts, bequests, and investments for endowment funds that support ministries of
this church; and*

*4) coordinate its programs and ministries with the objectives and programs of other
stewardship and financial-resource development activities of this church.*

19.31.B15.   *In a year when the vice president shall be elected, the voting members of the Churchwide
Assembly shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons who might be
considered for election as vice president. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the
Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall
contact those persons identified and request biographical information. At least 60 days
prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those
persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members.*

19.61.B11 15.   ***Nominations Desk and Nominations Form***

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

b. *A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary
of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times
prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure. This form is also
included in each voting member's registration materials.*

. . .

**D. Proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* related to the Word and Service Roster**

The Churchwide Assembly adopts amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and
Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

The proposed amendments are related to the proposal to unify the current three official
rosters of laypersons. The primary changes to the governing documents are in Chapter 7 of
the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America*, in Chapter S14 of the Constitution for Synods and Chapter C9 of the Model
Constitution for Congregations. The effects of these changes are reflected throughout all three
constitutions.

Rationale for the proposed amendments has been provided in an earlier memorandum
from Secretary Wm Chris Boerger. A two-thirds vote of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly is
required for adoption.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
To recommend the following for adoption by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To authorize the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words "ordained minister/s" and replace with the words "minister/s of Word and Sacrament" in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the word "clergy" and replace with the words "minister/s of Word and Sacrament" in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words "pastor/s" and replace with the words "minister/s of Word and Sacrament" where appropriate in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, for the purpose of clarity and consistency;

To authorize the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words "associate in ministry, diaconal minister and deaconess" and replace with the words "minister/s of Word and Service" in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial corrections that identify the rosters of this church and implement the creation of the ministers of Word and Service roster in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

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

7.20.   ~~O~~RDAINED MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

7.22.   ~~An ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. ~~An ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

7.23.   The standards for acceptance and continuance of ~~pastors in the ordained ministry~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.

7.24.   The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.22., 7.23., ~~7.30.,~~ and 7.31., and related bylaws.

7.30.   STANDARDS FOR ~~O~~RDAINED MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

7.31.   In accordance with the description ~~of an ordained minister~~ stated in 7.22., ~~pastors as ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures.

~~**7.31.10.   Basic Standards**~~

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7.31.~~101~~. **Basic Standards.** Persons admitted to and continued in the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

. . .

7.31.~~102~~. **Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

    a. Every ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

. . .

        6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;

        7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and

        ~~7~~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 ~~ordained minister~~ pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

        1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;

        2) ~~supervise~~ relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;

        3) ~~impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;~~

        ~~4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;~~

        ~~5)~~ install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; ~~and~~

        ~~6~~4) with the council, administer discipline; and

        5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and its synod.

7.31.~~103~~. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided ~~below~~ in 7.31.04., a candidate for ~~ordination as a pastor~~ the ministry of Word and Sacrament shall have:

. . .

    f. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and ~~adoption~~ adopted by the Church Council;

. . .

7.31.~~104~~. **~~Admission~~ Approval under Other Circumstances.** Candidates for ~~ordination as pastors or for reception~~ the ministry of Word and Sacrament who by reason of (a) age and prior experience, (b) ordination in another Lutheran church body, or (c) ordination in another Christian church body, whether in North America or abroad, shall be approved by the candidacy committee for ordination or reception according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In preparing such criteria, policies, and procedures, the appropriate churchwide unit shall consult with the seminaries of this church and, as appropriate, with other churchwide units.

7.31.~~105~~. **Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement ~~to the ordained ministry as a pastor~~ as a minister of Word and Sacrament, whether having served previously in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is

reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a ~~pastor~~ minister of Word and Sacrament in this church.

7.31.~~10~~06. **On Leave from Call.** ~~An ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that ministry without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament is a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

    a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

    b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament, may be retained on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church for a maximum of six years.

    c. Family Leave: ~~An ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years beginning at the completion of an active call.

    . . .

7.31.~~10~~07. **Ordination in Unusual Circumstances.** For pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances, a synodical bishop may provide for the ordination by another ~~pastor~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of an approved candidate who has received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ~~ordained ministry~~ minister of Word and Sacrament. Prior to authorization of such an ordination, the bishop of the synod of the candidate's first call shall consult with the presiding bishop as this church's chief ecumenical officer and shall seek the advice of the Synod Council. The pastoral decision of the synodical bishop shall be in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

~~**7.31.20.** **Invitation to Service**~~

7.31.~~20~~108. **Invitation to Service.** In accord with bylaw 8.~~7~~62.11. and following, ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may serve contractually in a ministry setting of this church under a "Letter of Invitation to Service" upon the authorization of the bishop of the synod in which such service occurs.

7.31.09. **Licensure and Synodically Authorized Ministry.** When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate pastoral leadership, the synod bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is

a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a minister of Word and Sacrament appointed by the synod bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod's pastor. Such an individual will be trained and licensed to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

7.40.   **CALLS FOR ~~ORDAINED~~ MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT**

7.41.   **Letters of Call. Letters of call to ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or properly approved candidates for this church's roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council.**

~~7.41.10.~~   **~~General Categories~~**

7.41.~~10~~01.   **Service under Call.** A~~n ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, a ~~synodical~~ Synod Council ~~or~~, a Synod Assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

a.   Calls may be extended for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.44.A16.

b.   A pastor serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, a pastor shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

c.   ~~Ordained m~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving ~~as interim pastors~~ in interim ministry appointed by the synodical bishop may serve under a letter of call, according to policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. A call to interim ministry shall be a term call extended by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

7.41.~~10~~02.   **Initial Call to Congregational Service.** Because the responsibilities of the office of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament are most clearly focused in the congregational pastorate, experience in which is deemed by this church to be invaluable for all other ~~ordained service~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament, initial service of at least three years shall be in ~~the parish ministry in~~ a congregation of this church or, with the approval of the synodical bishop, a congregation of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists. Exceptions to the three-year requirement may be granted under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

7.41.~~10~~03.   **Calls to Non-Congregational Service.** Calls to serve in institutions, agencies, and other entities inside and outside this church may be extended where there is an identifiable relationship of the work to the purpose of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such calls involve, for example, the care of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and activities closely associated with those tasks including oversight in the church and in inter-Lutheran and inter-church agencies and institutions. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament for their convenience or status. Synodical councils and the Church Council may seek the advice of the Conference of Bishops in specific situations.

7.41.~~10~~04.   **Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria,

policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament for their convenience, status, or personal preference. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

7.41.105.   **Calls to Serve in Unusual Circumstances.** When it is deemed to be in the interests of this church in the care of the Gospel, ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament may be called for a stated period of time, not to exceed three years, to minister on behalf of this church while employed in an occupation outside the traditional range of the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such calls may be extended by a Synod Council or the Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops according to criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such calls shall be reviewed annually.

7.41.106.   **Calls in Predecessor Church Bodies.** Accountability for specific calls to service extended in predecessor church bodies shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.

7.41.107.   **Retirement.** Ordained mMinisters of Word and Sacrament may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster.

a.   The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b.   If an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity, other than a congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.41.108.   **Disability.** Ordained mMinisters of Word and Sacrament may be designated as disabled and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster.

a.   The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b.   If an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity, other than a congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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7.41.~~109.~~ **Retention of Roster Records.** When ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament resigns or is removed from ~~that~~ the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

7.42. **Each ~~pastor~~ person on the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be related to that synod:**

a. **to which the congregation issuing the call to the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament is related;**

b. **which issues a letter of call to the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament;**

c. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council;**

d. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament, if a seminary teacher or administrator, was assigned by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of each affected synod, to promote proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region;**

e. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament was listed at the time of the issuance of a call to federal chaplaincy or on the roster of the synod of current address, if approved by the synodical bishop and received by the Synod Council;**

f. **in which the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament, upon receiving a call from this church, serves as a deployed staff person or on the roster of one of the synods to which the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament is deployed;**

g. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament was listed when placed on leave from call;**

h. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church; or**

I. **on whose roster the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament, if granted retired status, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.**

7.42.01. If the service of ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament who receives and accepts a letter of call from this church, under 7.42.c., would be enhanced through transfer of roster status from the previous synod of roster to the synod of current address, such a transfer may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.42.02. In unusual circumstances, the transfer of ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.42.03. In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.43. **A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than, the duration of the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the**

call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.

7.43.01. When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament.

7.43.02. ~~Ordained m~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament previously under call to the churchwide organization or to a synod shall respect the integrity of the ministry in which they no longer serve and shall not interfere with or exercise the functions of the office or position in which they no longer serve unless invited to do so by the presiding bishop or Church Council in the churchwide organization or, in the synods, by the bishop or the Synod Council.

7.44. **Each synod shall maintain a roster containing the names of those ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament who are related to it on the basis of 7.42. of this constitution.**

7.44.A1~~3~~6. *Sources of Calls for ~~Ordained~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament*

    a. *Principles for Sources of Calls*

        1) *A "call" is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the "Table of Sources of Calls for ~~Ordained~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament," through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a "letter of call."*

        2) *Interdependence within the body of this church suggests that any action of one of its entities affects other entities. Therefore, interdependence is expressed in all calls extended within this church.*

        3) *A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.*

        4) *A letter of call is issued by that expression of this church authorized to do so which is most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.*

        5) *Decisions on calls for ministries in unusual circumstances not otherwise provided for but deemed to be in the interests of this church's care of the Gospel are referred to the Conference of Bishops for recommendation to the appropriate calling body.*

    b. *Table of Sources of Calls for ~~Ordained~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament*

Setting	Calling Body
1.0 Congregational ministry	
1.1 Single congregation	*Congregation meeting*
1.11 Pastor	
1.12 Senior Pastor	
1.13 Associate/assistant pastor	
1.14 Co-pastor	
1.15 Shared-time pastor	
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*
1.3 Coalition and cluster ministry	*Synod Council*
1.4 Congregations beyond ELCA	

1.41	Independent Lutheran congregation	Synod Council
1.42	Overseas independent Lutheran congregation	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
1.43	Other	Synod Council or Church Council
1.5	Interim pastor	Synod Council
1.6	Pastor in a congregation under development	Synod Council

2.0   Synodical ministry

2.1	Bishop	Synod Assembly
2.2	Assistant to bishop	Synod Council
2.3	Shared staff by two or more synods	Synod Council of ~~oO~~ne of the participating synods
2.4	Synod staff partially supported by grants from churchwide units	Synod Council

3.0   Regional ministry

3.1	Staff	Church Council
3.2	Shared synodical-churchwide staff	Church Council

4.0   Churchwide ministry

4.1	Presiding bishop and secretary	Churchwide Assembly
4.2	Treasurer	Church Council
4.3	Staff of the churchwide organization ~~Presiding bishop's staff~~	Church Council
~~4.4~~	~~Office staff~~	~~Church Council~~
~~4.5~~	~~Unit executive director~~	~~Church Council~~
~~4.6~~	~~Other churchwide unit staff~~	~~Church Council~~

5.0   Chaplaincy and institutional ministry

5.1	Institution/agency related or unrelated to a synod	Synod Council
5.2	Institution/agency related more to than one synod	Synod Council of one of the synods
5.3	ELCA-related institution/agency	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
5.4	Federal agency/institution	Church Council
5.5	Military	Church Council

6.0   Campus ministry

6.1	Staff	Synod Council

7.0   ~~Church camp~~ Outdoor ministry

7.1	Staff	Synod Council

8.0   Ecumenical ministry

8.1	*Related to a synod*	*Synod Council*
8.2	*Related to more than one synod*	*Synod Council of one of the synods*
8.3	*National/international organization*	*Church Council*

9.0   Inter-Lutheran ministry

9.1	*Related to a synod*	*Synod Council*
9.2	*Related to more than one synod*	*Synod Council of one of the synods*
9.3	*National/International*	*Church Council*

10.0 Educational ministry

10.1	*ELCA-related seminary chaplain/faculty/ administrator*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
10.2	*Chaplain/faculty/ administrator of seminary unrelated to ELCA*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
10.3	*ELCA-related college chaplain/faculty/ administrator*	*Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
10.4	*Chaplain/faculty/ administrator of a college unrelated to ELCA*	*Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
10.5	*ELCA-related school chaplain/faculty/ administrator*	*Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located*
10.6	*Chaplain/faculty of a school unrelated to ELCA*	*Synod Council of the synod in which school is located*
10.7	*Director/staff of a continuing education center related to a churchwide unit*	*Synod Council in which the main office of center is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit*

11.0 Missionary ministry

11.1	*Outside United States*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
11.2	*Within United States*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*

12.0 Other

12.1	*Non-stipendiary service under call*	*Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops*

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12.2	*Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)*	*Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops*

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

7.46. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between ~~an ordained~~ 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop for the following reasons:

. . .

    6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

. . .

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 sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 and the pastor shall be listed on the ~~clergy~~ roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. 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.

. . .

7.47. ~~Ordained m~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Chapter 20 of this constitution ~~and bylaws~~.

7.47.01. No person who belongs to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be ~~ordained~~ called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so ~~ordained~~ called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins such an organization. ~~Violation of this rule shall make such minister subject to discipline.~~

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7.50. ~~OFFICIAL ROSTERS OF LAYPERSONS~~ **MINISTRY OF WORD AND SERVICE**

7.51. ~~This church may establish rosters of laypersons on which the names may be listed of those who qualify for such according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~
This church calls and receives onto the roster qualified persons to provide a ministry of Word and Service, exemplifying the life of Christ-like service to all persons and creation: nurturing, healing, leading, advocating dignity and justice, and equipping the whole people of God for their life of witness and service within and beyond the congregation for the sake of God's mission in the world.

7.51.01. ~~The standards of acceptance and continuance on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be included in the bylaws.~~

7.51.02. ~~Under constitutional provision 7.51., those persons previously rostered as commissioned church staff (The American Lutheran Church), deaconesses (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), deaconesses (The American Lutheran Church), deacons (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), lay professional leaders (the Lutheran Church in America), and commissioned teachers (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) shall be retained as associates in ministry of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church) in the recognized category of ministry of their previous church body for as long as they are in good standing according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church. Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.~~

7.51.03. ~~**Associates in Ministry.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of associates in ministry of those commissioned — according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church — for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God's people. Associates in ministry are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world as they serve in congregations and other ministry settings. The roster of associates in ministry, in addition to those listed in bylaw 7.51.02., shall be composed of:~~

~~a. those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and~~

~~b. those who are approved, subsequent to September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry in this church according to policies and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.~~

~~c. Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, a newly approved candidate shall be commissioned, according to the proper service orders of this church, as an associate in ministry.~~

~~Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.~~

7.51.04. ~~**Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of the deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of those consecrated — according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church — for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God's people. Deaconesses are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. They are to be theologically trained to serve in congregations and other ministry settings.~~

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a. A newly approved candidate for this roster shall be consecrated, according to the proper service orders of this church, as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

b. As used herein, references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America mean members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America listed on this church's official rosters of laypersons as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

c. Unless otherwise specified, all constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, except for the service order of consecration as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall apply to those on the lay roster of this church as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.51.05. **Diaconal Ministers.** This church shall establish and maintain a lay roster of diaconal ministers of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for service on behalf of this church in positions of Word and service that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. Diaconal ministers are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. Such diaconal ministers shall seek in a great variety of ways to empower, equip, and support all the baptized people of God in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the mission of God in the world.

a. Upon approval as a candidate for the lay roster of diaconal ministers, and upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, the candidate shall be consecrated, according to the service orders of this church, as a lay diaconal minister.

b. All constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall apply to those on the lay roster of diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.52. ~~The standards of acceptance and continuance as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall be included in the bylaws.~~ **A minister of Word and Service of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to serve, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and received onto the roster; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister of Word and Service shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**

7.52.10. **Standards for the Official Rosters of Laypersons**

7.52.11. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures:

a. **Basic Standards.** Persons approved and continued as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church in its governing documents and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

1) commitment to Christ;

2) acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;

3) willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;

4) academic and practical qualifications for the position, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;

5) commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;

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6) ~~receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and~~

7) ~~membership in a congregation of this church.~~

b. **~~Preparation and Approval of an Associate in Ministry.~~** ~~A candidate for approval and commissioning as an associate in ministry of this church shall have:~~

1) ~~membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;~~

2) ~~been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved for call by the committee;~~

3) ~~completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;~~

4) ~~been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;~~

5) ~~received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.~~

c. **~~Preparation and Approval of a Deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~** ~~A candidate for approval and consecration as a deaconess of this church shall have:~~

1) ~~membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;~~

2) ~~been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call;~~

3) ~~completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;~~

4) ~~been examined and approved by the synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;~~

5) ~~completed the required formation component, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, in the preparation program for service as a deaconess of this church;~~

6) ~~been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;~~

7) ~~received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.~~

d. **~~Preparation and Approval of a Diaconal Minister.~~** ~~A candidate for approval and consecration as a diaconal minister of this church shall have:~~

1) ~~membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;~~

2) ~~been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call;~~

3) ~~demonstrated competence in at least one area of specialization or expertise according to guidelines established by the appropriate churchwide unit;~~

4) ~~completed a first theological degree from an accredited theological school in North America;~~

5) ~~completed approved work in Lutheran studies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;~~

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6) completed the required formation component in the preparation program for Lutheran diaconal ministry as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;

7) completed an approved internship or practical preparation as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;

8) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adoption by the Church Council;

9) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;

10) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

7.52.12. **Approval under Other Circumstances.** A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit.

7.52.13. **Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as an associate in ministry, whether having previously served in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be endorsed by the pastor and council of the congregation of this church of which such a person is a member, and interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the synodical candidacy committee under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call in this church.

a. Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active lay roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official rosters of laypersons, as identified in 7.51.03.b. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.

b. A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of associates in ministry of this church, who was so certified during the period between January 1, 1988, and September 1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster category upon being received and accepted on another roster of this church.

7.52.14. **Maintenance of Lay Rosters.** Each synod shall maintain a lay roster or rosters containing the names of those related to the synod as members of its congregations who have been approved as associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers—according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church—for inclusion on such a roster or rosters.

a. To promote proportionate representation of the rostered faculty and administration in each synod related directly to a seminary of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, if a seminary teacher or administrator, shall be assigned to the roster of a synod by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of the affected synod.

b. For the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, serving under call in the churchwide organization, may be assigned to a synod, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

c. An associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, if granted retired or disability status on the roster, may be authorized to transfer from the synod where last

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rostered to the synod of current address, upon application for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

d. In unusual circumstances, the transfer of an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.52.15. The secretary of this church shall maintain the lay rosters of associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on which shall be listed the names of those who qualify according to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.

7.52.20. **Service as Rostered Laypersons**

7.52.21. **Service under Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, synod, or the churchwide organization.

a. A call may be extended either for indefinite or stated periods of time by the appropriate calling body for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.52.A13.

b. Regular, valid calls in this church shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

c. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

7.52.22. **On Leave from Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that call without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister engaged in graduate study appropriate for service in this church may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of six years.

c. Family Leave: An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such a rostered layperson who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the rostered layperson or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church   under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops,

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and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.

7.52.23. Issuance and Termination of the Call of an Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister.

a. A letter of call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, the synodical bishop, following appropriate consultation, will recommend a course of action to the pastor, lay rostered person, and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If any party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than the duration of, the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.

c. When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers.

7.52.24. Retirement. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.52.25. Disability. Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or

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diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

    a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

    b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.52.26. **Retention of Roster Records.** When an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

7.52.27. **Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

7.53. **Persons on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.**

7.53. **The standards for acceptance and continuance of ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

7.54. **The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of ministers of Word and Service who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.52., 7.53., and 7.61., and related bylaws.**

7.54.01. Ministers of Word and Service shall be known as deacons.

7.54.A16. *Those persons rostered in predecessor church bodies as commissioned church staff (The American Lutheran Church), deaconesses (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), deaconesses (The American Lutheran Church), deacons (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), lay professional leaders (the Lutheran Church in America), and commissioned teachers (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) shall be retained as deacons of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church). Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.*

7.54.B16. *Those persons previously rostered as associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be retained as deacons of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church). Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.*

7.60. **LICENSURE AND SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED MINISTRY**

7.61.01. When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership, the synodical bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation

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with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a pastor appointed by the synodical bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod's pastor. Such an individual will be trained and licensed to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

7.61.02. When needed to provide for diaconal ministry as part of a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible for such ministry to be provided by appropriately rostered lay ministry, the synodical bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a non-rostered person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer such non-sacramental ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by an ordained minister appointed by the synodical bishop and shall be trained and authorized to fulfill a particular ministry for a specific period of time in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

7.60. STANDARDS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE
7.61. **In accordance with the description stated in 7.52, ministers of Word and Service shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures:**
7.61.01. **Basic Standards.** Persons admitted to and continued in the ministry of Word and Service of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:
    a.   commitment to Christ;
    b.   acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
    c.   willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
    d.   academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
    e.   commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
    f.   receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
    g.   membership in a congregation of this church.
7.61.02. **Responsibilities.** 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;

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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 the ELCA 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.

7.61.03. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.61.04., a candidate who is to be called and received onto the roster as a minister of Word and Service shall have:

a. membership in a congregation of this church and registration, by its pastor and council, of the candidate with the candidacy committee;

b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being approved for call;

c. completed the academic and practical preparation according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;

d. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;

e. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and

f. received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

7.61.04. **Approval under Other Circumstances.** A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

7.61.05. **Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as a minister of Word and Service shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a minister of Word and Service in this church.

7.61.06. **On Leave from Call.** A minister of Word and Service of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that ministry without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which the minister of Word and Service is a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, a minister of Word and Service who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate

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churchwide unit a minister of Word and Service engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ministry of Word and Service in this church, may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church for a maximum of six years.

c. Family Leave: A minister of Word and Service who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such a minister of Word and Service who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the minister of Word and Service or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.

7.61.A16. *Any person removed from the roster of ministers of Word and Service that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official roster of ministers of Word and Service. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.*

7.61.B16. *A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of associates in ministry of this church, who was so certified during the period between January 1, 1988, and September 1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster category upon being received and accepted on another roster of this church.*

7.70. **CALLS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE**

7.71. **Letters of Call. Letters of call to ministers of Word and Service of this church or properly approved candidates for this church's roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council.**

7.71.01. **Service under Call.** A minister of Word and Service of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, the Synod Council, the Synod Assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

a. Calls may be extended either for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.74.A16.

b. A minister of Word and Service serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, a minister of Word and Service shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

7.71.02. **Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council— according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to a minister of Word and Service for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry

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needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

7.71.03. **Calls in Predecessor Church Bodies.** Accountability for specific calls to service extended in predecessor church bodies shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.

7.71.04. **Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Service may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If a minister of Word and Service who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity besides the congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster may grant permission for the minister of Word and Service to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.71.05. **Disability.** Ministers of Word and Service may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If a minister of Word and Service who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity besides the congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.71.06. **Retention of Roster Records.** When a minister of Word and Service resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

7.72. **Each person on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be related to that synod:**

a. **to which the congregation issuing the call to the minister of Word and Service is related;**

b. **which issues a letter of call to the minister of Word and Service;**

c. **on whose roster the minister of Word and Service was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council;**

d. **on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if a seminary teacher or administrator, was assigned by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of each affected synod, to promote proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region;**

e.   in which the minister of Word and Service, upon receiving a call from this church, serves as a deployed staff person or on the roster of one of the synods to which the minister of Word and Service is deployed;

f.   on whose roster the minister of Word and Service was listed when placed on leave from call;

g.   on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called, or the synod of current address, upon application by the minister of Word and Service for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church; or

h.   on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if granted retired status, was listed when last called, or the synod of current address, upon application by the minister of Word and Service for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.72.01.   If the service of a minister of Word and Service who receives and accepts a letter of call from this church, under 7.72.c., would be enhanced through transfer of roster status from the previous synod of roster to the synod of current address, such a transfer may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.72.02.   In unusual circumstances, the transfer of a minister of Word and Service who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.72.03.   In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of a minister of Word and Service serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

7.73.   A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to a minister of Word and Service of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than, the duration of the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for ministry of Word and Service, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.

7.73.01.   When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of ministers of Word and Service.

7.73.02.   Ministers of Word and Service previously under call to the churchwide organization or to a synod shall respect the integrity of the ministry in which they no longer serve and shall not interfere with or exercise the functions of the office or position in which they no longer serve unless invited to do so by the presiding bishop or Church Council in the churchwide organization or, in the synods, by the bishop or the Synod Council.

7.74.   Each synod shall maintain a roster containing the names of those ministers of Word and Service who are related to it on the basis of 7.72. of this constitution.

7.52.A13.   *Sources of Calls for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers*

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~~a. The principles governing sources of calls for ordained ministers shall, as appropriate, also govern sources of letters of call for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

~~b. Table of Sources of Call for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers~~

7.74.A16. ***Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service***

    a. Principles for Sources of Calls

        1) A "call" is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the "Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service," through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a "letter of call."

        2) Interdependence within the body of this church suggests that any action of one of its entities affects other entities. Therefore, interdependence is expressed in all calls extended within this church.

        3) A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.

        4) A letter of call is issued by that expression of this church authorized to do so which is most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.

        5) Decisions on calls for ministries in unusual circumstances not otherwise provided for but deemed to be in the interests of this church's care of the Gospel are referred to the Conference of Bishops for recommendation to the appropriate calling body.

    b. Table of Sources of Call for Ministers of Word and Service

Setting	Calling Body
1.0 Congregational ministry	
1.1 Single congregation	*Congregation meeting*
1.2 Multiple-congregation parish	*Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal, with one of the participating congregations issuing the call*
1.3 Coalition and cluster ministry	*Synod Council*
1.4 ~~Other c~~Congregations beyond the ELCA	
1.41 Independent Lutheran congregation	*Synod Council*
1.42 Other	*Synod Council*
2.0 Synodical ministry	~~*Synod Council*~~
2.1 Assistant to the Bishop	*Synod Council*
2.2 Shared staff of two or more synods	*Synod Council*
2.3 Staff partially supported by grants from churchwide units	*Synod Council*
3.0 Regional ministry	~~*Church Council*~~
3.1 Staff	*Church Council*
3.2 Shared synodical-churchwide staff	*Church Council*
4.0 Churchwide ministry	
4.1 ~~Officer's staff~~ Secretary	~~*Church Council*~~ *Churchwide Assembly*
4.2 ~~Unit executive director~~ Treasurer	*Church Council*

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4.3	~~*Other churchwide unit staff*~~ *Staff of the churchwide organization*	*Church Council*
5.0	~~*Social ministry institutions*~~ *Institutional ministry*	
5.1	*Institution/agency related or unrelated to a synod*	*Synod Council*
5.2	*Institution/agency related more to than one synod*	*Synod Council of one of the synods*
5.3	*ELCA-related institution/agency*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
5.4	*Other*	*Church Council*
6.0	*Campus ministry*	
6.1	*Staff*	*Synod Council*
7.0	~~*Church camp*~~ *Outdoor ministry*	
7.1	*Staff*	*Synod Council*
8.0	*Ecumenical ministry*	
8.1	*Related to a synod*	*Synod Council*
8.2	*Related to more than one synod*	*Synod Council of one of the synods*
8.3	*National/international organization*	*Church Council*
9.0	*Inter-Lutheran ministry*	
9.1	*Related to a synod*	*Synod Council*
9.2	*Related to more than one synod*	*Synod Council of one of the synods*
9.3	*National/International*	*Church Council*
10.0	*Educational ministry*	
10.1	*ELCA-related seminary*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
10.2	*Seminary unrelated to ELCA*	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
10.3	*ELCA-related college*	*Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
10.4	*College unrelated to ELCA*	*Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
10.5	*ELCA-related school*	*Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located*
10.6	*School unrelated to ELCA*	*Synod Council of the synod in which school is located*
10.7	*Director/staff of a continuing education center related to a churchwide unit*	*Synod Council in which the center's main office ~~of center~~ is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit*
11.0	*Missionary ministry*	

11.1	Outside United States	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
11.2	Within United States	*Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*

12.0 *Other*

12.1	*Non-stipendiary service under call*	*Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops*
12.2	*Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)*	*Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops*

7.75. **The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:**

a. **The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by death or following consultation with the synodical 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 to which they have been called 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 deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,**

1) **the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one non-rostered person, 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 non-rostered person.**

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**

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declare the position vacant and the minister of Word and Service shall be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service as disabled. 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 must 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 '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 majority 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 simple 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**

7.76. **Ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Chapter 20 of this constitution.**

7.76.01. No person who belongs to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins such an organization.

Chapter 20.
CONSULTATION, DISCIPLINE, APPEALS, AND ADJUDICATION

20.10.   **CONSULTATION AND DISCIPLINE**

20.11.   **There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline governing officers, ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service, ~~diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses,~~ congregations, and members of congregations. Except as provided in 20.18. or 20.19., such process shall assure due process and due protection for the accused, other parties, and this church. Since synods have responsibility for admittance of persons into the ~~ordained ministry of this church or onto other rosters~~ rostered ministries of this church and have oversight of pastoral and congregational relationships, the disciplinary process shall be a responsibility of the synod on behalf of this church.**

20.17.   **None of the provisions of this chapter is intended nor shall be construed to limit the authority of a Synod Council to ~~remove~~ determine roster status, under the bylaws of this church, ~~from the rosters of this church an ordained~~ of a minister ~~or other person~~ who is without regular call ~~and not retired~~, for any reason, even though such reason might also be the basis for disciplinary proceedings under this chapter.**

20.20.   **~~ORDAINED MINISTERS~~ The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline of officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.**

20.21.   **The disciplinary process for ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.21.01.   ~~Ordained m~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be subject to discipline for:
a.   preaching and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;
b.   conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office;
c.   willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament;
d.   willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; or
e.   willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

20.21.02.   The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
a.   private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
b.   suspension from the office and functions of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament in this church for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or
c.   removal from the ~~ordained ministry~~ roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church.

20.21.03.   Charges against ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
a.   at least two-thirds of the members of the congregation's council, submitted to the synodical bishop;
b.   at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, submitted to the synodical bishop;
c.   at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament, if not a ~~parish~~ congregational pastor, is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;
d.   at least 10 ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service of the synod on whose roster the accused ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop;

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    e.   the synodical bishop; or

    f.   the presiding bishop of this church, but only with respect to an accused who is a synodical bishop (or who was a synodical bishop at any time during the 12 months preceding the filing of written charges), submitted to the secretary of this church.

20.21.04.   When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:

    a.   When requested by the synodical bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synodical bishop, or, at the request of the synodical bishop, by the Synod Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.

    b.   When requested by the synodical bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed by the synodical bishop shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.

20.21.05.   If appointed, a consultation panel or advisory panel shall advise the synodical bishop as to whether or not the bishop should bring charges or may make other recommendation for resolution of the controversy that would not involve proceedings before a discipline hearing committee. To these ends, the panel may meet with complaining witnesses as well as with the concerned ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament. If requested by the synodical bishop, members of the panel also may assist, as representatives of the accuser, in the presentation of evidence and examination of witnesses before a discipline hearing committee.

20.21.11.   The Churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of 24–36 members, half of whom should be ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and half of whom should be laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years. Each member will serve until a successor is elected, without consecutive re-election, and will serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.

20.21.12.   The accused shall have the privilege of selecting two persons (one ~~clergy~~ minister of Word and Sacrament and one layperson) and their alternates of the six persons from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to serve on a discipline hearing committee. The remaining four persons (two ~~clergy~~ minister of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) and their alternates, or six, if the accused does not exercise the privilege, and their alternates shall be selected by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

20.21.23.   If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by the ~~ordained minister~~ pastor, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

20.21.24.   If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend a~~n ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and functions of ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament without prejudice and without affecting compensation and housing.

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20.22. **~~LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS~~ The disciplinary process for ministers of Word and Service shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.22.01. ~~Laypersons on official rosters~~ Ministers of Word and Service shall be subject to discipline for:

a. confessing and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;

b. conduct incompatible with the ~~standards for the rostered ministries of this church~~ character of the ministerial office;

c. willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for ~~the lay roster or rosters~~ ministers of Word and Service;

d. willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; or

e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

20.22.02. The disciplinary actions that may be imposed are:

a. private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;

b. suspension from the role and functions of ~~an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal~~ minister of Word and Service for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or

c. removal from the ~~official~~ roster ~~for laypersons~~ of ministers of Word and Service of this church.

20.22.03. Charges against a ~~layperson on an official roster~~ minister of Word and Service of this church that could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:

a. at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council of the congregation in which the ~~layperson~~ minister of Word and Service is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;

b. at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation in which the ~~layperson~~ minister of Word and Service is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;

c. at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the ~~layperson~~ minister of Word and Service is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;

d. at least 10 ~~ordained ministers or laypersons on official~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service on the rosters of the synod on whose roster the accused ~~layperson~~ minister of Word and Service is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop; or

e. the synodical bishop.

20.22.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament in 20.21.04. through 20.21.06.

20.22.05. If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.

20.22.06. If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the role and function of ~~the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal~~ a minister of Word and Service cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by ~~a rostered layperson~~ the minister of Word and Service due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by ~~a rostered layperson~~ the minister of Word and Service, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend ~~a rostered layperson~~ the minister of Word and Service from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide-synodical-congregation fund.

20.22.07. If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend a ~~rostered layperson~~ minister of Word and Service serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and

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functions of a ~~rostered layperson~~ minister of Word and Service without prejudice and without affecting compensation.

20.23. ~~**LIMITED DISCIPLINE**~~ **A process for limited discipline of rostered ministers shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.23.01. Where the written charges specify that the accuser will not seek~~, in the case of an ordained minister, removal from the ordained ministry of this church or suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in this church for a period exceeding three months, or, in the case of a layperson on one of the rosters of this church,~~ the rostered minister's removal from ~~such roster~~ the ministry of this church or suspension from the ~~office~~/role and functions of ~~a person on such roster~~ the ministry of this church for a period not exceeding three months, 20.23.01. through 20.23.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. and 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.

20.23.08. The discipline hearing committee shall conclude its meeting(s) and render its decision in writing within 45 days of the commencement of the meeting for which written notice was given under 20.23.06. The written decision shall be in two parts:

   . . .

   b. Determination. In this part, the committee shall state whether, based upon the facts that it has found, it believes discipline should be imposed and if so, which one or more of the following should be imposed:

      1) private censure and admonition by the synodical bishop.

      2) suspension for a period not exceeding three months from the ~~office and functions of the ordained ministry in the case of an ordained minister or from the~~ /role and functions of ~~a rostered layperson in the case of a layperson on a roster of~~ ministry in this church.

   . . .

20.30. ~~**CONGREGATIONS**~~
20.31. **The disciplinary process for congregations shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.31.02. The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:

   a. censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;

   b. suspension from this church for a designated period, the consequences of such suspension being the loss of voting rights of any member (including ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service) of the congregation at synod or churchwide assemblies, the loss of the right to petition, and the forfeiture of eligibility by any member of the congregation to serve on any council, board, committee, or other group of this church, any of its synods, or any other subdivision thereof;

   . . .

20.31.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament in 20.21.04. and 20.21.05.

20.31.05. If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.

20.40. ~~**MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS**~~
20.41. **The disciplinary process for members of congregations shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.41.04. If the counseling, censure and admonitions pursuant to bylaw 20.41.02.a. and b. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two ~~clergy~~

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ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to 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.

20.50. **RECALL OR DISMISSAL**

20.51. **A process for the recall or dismissal of officers shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.51. *[provision to become bylaw]*

20.51.01. The recall or dismissal of the presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:

    a.   for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;

    b.   for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or

    c.   for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

20.52. *[provision to become bylaw]*

20.51.02. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of such an officer shall be instituted by petition by:

    a.   the Church Council on a vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members; or

    b.   the Churchwide Assembly on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members.

The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.

20.51.03. Notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the accused person, the Church Council shall be notified of the entry of such judgment, and the office shall be vacated.

20.52.A11 16. *Recall or Dismissal of an Churchwide Officer*

    a.   *The petition for recall or dismissal described in 20.52. 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, except if the subject of the petition is the secretary, the petition shall be in care of the presiding bishop of this church at the same address).*

    b.   *In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the officer,*

        1)   *with respect to the officer the procedures outlined in 13.63. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Church Council, the Church Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal.*

        2)   *in the event of such petition, four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons, shall*

            a)*investigate such conditions in person;*

            b)*seek competent medical testimony;*

            c)*seek the counsel and advice of the other officers of this church; and*

            d)*submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.*

        3)   *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.*

    c.   *If the officer is an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. 20.20. as grounds for discipline of ordained minister. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.20. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for*

recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.20. as grounds for discipline.

d. In 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 20.21.16., except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with 20.51., 20.52., 20.53., or with the provisions of this continuing resolution; 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.

e. Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Church Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in 13.63.

20.53. **Notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the accused person, the Church Council shall be notified of the entry of such judgment, and the office shall be vacated.**

20.53.11. The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend a similar process for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, which process shall become operative when ratified by the Church Council.

20.53.A11. ***Recall or Dismissal of a Synod Officer***

a. The recall or dismissal of the bishop, vice president, secretary, or treasurer of a synod of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:

1) for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;

2) for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or

3) for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament or as a member of a congregation of this church.

b. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synodical 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 synodical bishops; or

4) the presiding bishop of this church.

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.

c. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synodical 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 synodical bishop.

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.

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d. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of a synod,

1) the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Synod Council, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal.

2) four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons, shall

a) investigate such conditions in person;

b) seek competent medical testimony;

c) seek the counsel and advice of the presiding bishop of this church if such officer is the synodical bishop;

d) seek the counsel and advice of the synodical bishop if such officer is the vice president, secretary, or treasurer of the synod; and

e) submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.

3) the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall adopt the findings and grant the petition.

e. If the synod officer is an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. for discipline of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.

f. If the synod officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01.

g. 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) if the proceedings were instituted by the presiding bishop of this church, the synodical bishop, or at least 10 other synodical bishops, the petitioner shall first meet with the Executive Committee of the Synod Council in which the officer serves. The Executive Committee shall function as a consultation panel to give advice to the petitioner;

2) if as a result of the consultation the petition is not filed, no further proceedings shall be required;

3) if as a result of the consultation the petition is filed or if the proceedings were instituted by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council, 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 20.21.16. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this continuing resolution; and

4) 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.

h. 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. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in †S8.56.

I. Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer. The Synod Council shall be notified of such decision and the office shall be vacated if the charges have been sustained.

20.60. **COMMITTEE ON APPEALS**

20.61.   **There shall be a Committee on Appeals to which may be referred appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer. The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend rules of procedure for the performance of its duties. The rules shall become effective when ratified by the Church Council.**

20.62.   **The Committee on Appeals shall be comprised of six ministers of Word and Sacrament and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election.**

20.62.A16.   *In the event that the term of any member of the Committee on Appeals expires before that member's successor is elected, the Church Council may elect an individual in the same category—minister of Word and Sacrament or layperson—to serve on the Committee until the next Churchwide Assembly. A member elected by the Church Council who serves less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to a full term by the Churchwide Assembly.*

20.63.   **The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.**

20.64.   **The decision of a discipline hearing committee may be appealed to the Committee on Appeals by:**

    a. **the accuser(s) who brought charges upon which a discipline hearing committee has acted;**

    b. **a minister of Word and Sacrament upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee;**

    c. **a minister of Word and Service upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee; or**

    d. **a congregation upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee.**

20.61~~4~~.A13. *Rules of the Committee on Appeals*

    a. *Any appeal to the Committee on Appeals shall be made in writing within 30 days after the decision of the discipline hearing committee has been delivered to the accused and the accuser(s). Appeals may be made only by the accused or the accuser(s) or their respective designated representative. Notice of the appeal shall be given by certified or registered letter addressed to the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of this church, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631), with a copy to the other party.*

    b. *The Committee on Appeals shall normally render its written decision within 60 days from the due date for the last written statement to be submitted under item h. below.*

    c. *The material that shall be reviewed by the Committee on Appeals (herein referred to as the record on appeal) shall consist of the following:*

        1) *a copy of the specific charges referred to the discipline hearing committee;*

        2) *copy of any rules governing the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*

        3) *information concerning the composition of the discipline hearing committee that heard the case;*

        4) *the verbatim record made by the stenographer or court reporter or the audio or video recording of the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*

        5) *all documents or physical evidence presented at the hearing before the discipline hearing committee;*

        6) *the written decision of the discipline hearing committee; and*

        7) *proof that the written decision was delivered to the accused and the accuser(s).*

    d. *It shall be the responsibility of the chair of the discipline hearing committee to furnish the record on appeal to the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of this church, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631), certifying to the completeness and accuracy of the record on appeal, within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal, unless the chair of the Committee on Appeals grants additional time for compelling reasons.*

e.   *If the Committee on Appeals has reason to believe that a required action was taken by a discipline hearing committee, but such action is not revealed in the record on appeal, the Committee on Appeals may, by written request to the chair of the discipline hearing committee, with copies to the accused and the accuser(s), solicit written confirmation of such action. Copies of such confirmation shall be supplied to the accused and the accuser(s).*

f.   *The persons or entities who may appeal to the Committee on Appeals are set forth in 20.63.*

g.   *The circumstances for which the Committee on Appeals may reverse or set aside the decision of a discipline hearing committee are set forth in 20.62.01., and consequences of such circumstances are set forth in 20.62.02.*

h.   *The party taking an appeal may present a written statement of reasons why the decision of a discipline hearing committee should be reversed or set aside. The other party shall have an opportunity to make a written response to the Committee on Appeals. The party taking an appeal then may present a written rebuttal. Appropriate limitations and due dates for these statements may be established by the committee chair. In the event of cross appeals, the committee chair may permit the filing of additional statements so that both parties have adequate opportunity to present their respective appeals and respond to the statement of each other. Parties shall promptly give to each other copies of any written statement filed with the Committee on Appeals.*

I.   *Final decisions of the Committee on Appeals require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting.*

j.   *Notice of decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be given in writing to the accused, the accuser(s), the chair of the discipline hearing committee, the synodical bishop, and the secretary of this church.*

k.   *The Committee on Appeals also shall prepare a brief summary of each appeal, which shall be presented to the Churchwide Assembly. Such summary shall not disclose the names of the accused, the accuser(s), or any witness. If the decision of the discipline hearing committee was reversed or remanded, the summary shall indicate the reasons for such reversal or remand.*

l.   *The Committee on Appeals shall elect the following officers: chair, vice-chair, secretary, and assistant secretary. In addition to the duties prescribed in Chapter 20, the chair shall schedule and preside at committee meetings. In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall act as chair. The secretary, or assistant secretary, shall keep such record of proceedings of the committee as is necessary.*

m.   *Meetings of the Committee on Appeals may be held in person or by conference telephone call.*

n.   *A majority of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business at a scheduled meeting, and three-fourths of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business by conference telephone call.*

o.   *Members of the Committee on Appeals shall refrain from discussing appeals made to the committee, except as required to discharge the duties of the committee membership.*

p.   *No member of the Committee on Appeals shall serve on any case if such a member is related (as defined in 19.61.04.) to the accused, the accuser(s), any witness who testified before the discipline hearing committee, or a member of the consultation or discipline hearing committee that considered the case, or where such member is a member or former member of a congregation that was an accuser or an accused. A member of the Committee on Appeals also may voluntarily disqualify himself or herself.*

q.   *See 20.52.A11. and 20.53.A11. for additional rules of procedure applicable in proceedings for recall or dismissal.*

r.   *See 20.61.B95. for additional rules of procedure applicable to stays.*

20.614.B95. *Any party who has appealed to the Committee on Appeals for review of a decision of a discipline hearing committee may request a stay in the effective date or other provision contained in said decision pending the appeal. Such request shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons why the requested stay is advisable. The request shall be forwarded to the Committee on Appeals, c/o ELCA Secretary, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631, with copy to the other party. The Committee on Appeals may grant the other party an opportunity to respond in writing. The Committee on Appeals may grant a stay for such period, and may renew the stay for such further periods, as it determines to be appropriate. The Committee on Appeals may make the grant of a stay subject to such conditions as it determines to be appropriate. Such determinations shall be final.*

20.625. **The circumstances for which the Committee on Appeals may reverse or set aside the decision of a discipline hearing committee and the consequences of such action shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

20.625.01. The judgment of a discipline hearing committee must be sustained unless the Committee on Appeals finds that one of the following conditions exists:

a. The discipline hearing committee abused its discretion. The discipline hearing committee may not be found to have abused its discretion unless at least one of the following is true:

1) The discipline hearing committee's Determination was not supported by any evidence in the record.

2) One or more of the discipline hearing committee's Findings of Fact is clearly erroneous. A Finding of Fact is clearly erroneous when, although there is evidence to support it, the Committee on Appeals on the entire evidence is left with the definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been committed. The Committee on Appeals may not reverse a finding of the discipline hearing committee simply because the Committee on Appeals concludes that it would have found differently had it been the discipline hearing committee. The Committee on Appeals must give due regard to the opportunity of the discipline hearing committee to judge the credibility of the witnesses.

3) Although the Findings of Fact are not clearly erroneous, the discipline hearing committee's Determination is nevertheless one with which no reasonable person, acting objectively, could agree. The committee's Determination may not be reversed simply because the Committee on Appeals, had it been the discipline hearing committee, would have reached a different conclusion. The discipline hearing committee's Determination must be sustained if reasonable people can disagree as to its propriety.

b. Due process has not been followed.

c. New evidence has been submitted by one of the parties, which evidence, in the judgment of the Committee on Appeals, should be considered.

d. The record of the proceedings before the discipline hearing committee is insufficient to permit the Committee on Appeals to determine whether the committee abused its discretion or followed due process.

20.625.02. When the Committee on Appeals has decided to reverse or set aside the decision of the discipline hearing committee, the Committee on Appeals shall proceed as follows:

a. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.625.01.a.1) or 20.625.01.a.2) exists, the Committee on Appeals may return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings or render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.

b. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that the condition listed in 20.625.01.a.3) exists, it shall render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.

c. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.625.01.b., 20.625.01.c., or 20.625.01.d. exists, it shall return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings.

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20.63. ~~The decision of a discipline hearing committee may be appealed to the Committee on Appeals by:~~
~~a. the accuser(s) who brought charges upon which a discipline hearing committee has acted;~~
~~b. an ordained minister upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee;~~
~~c. a congregation upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee; or~~
~~d. other persons on the official rosters of this church upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee.~~

20.64. ~~The Committee on Appeals shall be comprised of six ordained ministers and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election.~~

20.64.A13. ~~*In the event that the term of any member of the Committee on Appeals expires before that member's successor is elected, the Church Council may elect an individual in the same category—ordained minister or layperson—to serve on the Committee until the next Churchwide Assembly. A member elected by the Church Council who serves less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to a full term by the Churchwide Assembly.*~~

20.65. ~~The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.~~

20.66. Decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final; an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall be necessary to render a decision or opinion. Each decision or opinion shall be reported as soon as practical in writing to the parties concerned, and a summary of action taken shall be reported to the Churchwide Assembly.

20.70. ~~**DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES**~~

20.71.11. ~~The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline in each of the above categories.~~

20.71.12. ~~The Committee on Appeals shall present to the Church Council for consideration and recommendation a process and definitions, as required in bylaw 20.71.11.~~

20.8<u>70</u>. **ADJUDICATION**

20.8<u>71</u>. The presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this church.

20.8<u>72</u>. When there is disagreement on a substantive issue among churchwide units or between or among synods of this church that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting it to ~~mediate~~ <u>resolve</u> the matter.

20.8<u>73</u>. When a component ~~or beneficiary~~ of a churchwide unit <u>or office</u> has a disagreement on a substantive issue which it cannot resolve ~~with the board of its~~ <u>within the unit or office</u>, it may address an appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council. In this case, the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Church Council, the decision shall be referred to the Church Council for final action.

20.8<u>74</u>. When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between a synod or synods and the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals for consultation and adjudication. If this appeal fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Churchwide Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

20.8<u>75</u>. When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the

Congregation Council 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.

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CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

Chapter 14.
~~ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY~~ ROSTERED MINISTERS
S14.10. **Ministers of Word and Sacrament**
†S14.0~~1~~11. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or ~~extra parish~~ non-congregational service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.
†S14.0~~1~~12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
   a. Every ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
   . . .
   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 though distribution of its communications and publications;
   7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
   ~~5~~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 ~~ordained minister~~ pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
   1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
   2) ~~supervise~~ relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
   3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
   4) with the council, administer discipline~~.~~
   ~~c. Every pastor shall:~~
   ~~1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;~~
   ~~2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;~~
   ~~3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications~~; and
   ~~4~~5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this ~~ELCA~~ synod.

[*Update the numbering of subsequent provisions in Chapter 14.*]

S14.0~~1~~15. Each ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
†S14.1~~1~~16. When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the ~~pastoral office in the ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church:
   . . .
   b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or ~~pastoral~~ candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds ~~majority ballot~~ 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.
   . . .
S14.1~~2~~7. No ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. An ~~ordained~~ 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.
†S14.1~~3~~8. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

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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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

. . .

    6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

. . .

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 sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ~~ordained~~ 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 ~~ordained~~ 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 ~~and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled~~. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. 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.

. . .

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 ~~majority~~ 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 ~~simple~~ majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

. . .

†S14.14_9_. ~~Ordained m~~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.

†S14.15_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 ~~field of labor~~ call, or
    b. ~~the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer~~ approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.16_22_. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
    a. installation in another ~~field of labor~~ call, or
    b. ~~the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer~~ approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.1723. 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 ~~ordained~~ 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.

†S14.1824. With the approval of the synodical 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.~~13~~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.~~13~~18.

S14.2~~1~~5. All ~~ordained~~ 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. ~~Official Rosters of Laypersons~~ Ministers of Word and Service

†S14.31. ~~The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit governing associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall apply in this synod.~~

    a. ~~When a congregation of this synod desires to call an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister or a candidate for these official rosters of laypersons of this church:~~

        1) ~~Such a congregation of this synod shall consult the synodical bishop before taking any steps leading to extending such a call.~~

        2) ~~Issuance of such a letter of call shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

        3) ~~When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.~~

    b. ~~An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall confer with the bishop of this synod before accepting a call within this synod.~~

    c. ~~The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

    d. ~~Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod who are serving under call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.~~

The time and place of the consecration of those persons properly called to congregations or non-congregational service of 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 the ELCA 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. 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 synodical 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

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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 and the minister of Word and Service shall be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service as disabled. 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 synodical 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.

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MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

Chapter 9.
THE PASTOR ROSTERED MINISTER

*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds ~~majority ballot~~ vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

*C9.02. Only a member of the ~~clergy~~ roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

    a. Every ~~ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

        . . .

        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 though distribution of its communications and publications;

        7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and

        ~~5~~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 ~~ordained minister~~ pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

        . . .

        3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; ~~and~~

        4) with the council, administer discipline~~.~~

    ~~c. Every pastor shall:~~

        ~~1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;~~

        ~~2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;~~

        ~~3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications~~; and

        ~~4~~5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization ~~of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)~~ and of the __(insert name of synod)__ Synod of the ELCA.

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

    a. The call of ~~a~~ this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

        . . .

        6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

        . . .

    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 sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament and one layperson.

. . .

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 ~~majority~~ 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 ~~simple~~ 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~~ discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

*C9.07.   During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ~~ordained pastor~~ rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

~~C9.20.~~   **~~Ecumenical pastoral ministry~~**
~~C9.21.~~
C9.15.   Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ~~ordained minister~~ pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

*C9.21.   Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

*C9.22.   Only a member of the roster of ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.

*C9.23.   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 the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and

l. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

*C9.24. The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

*C9.25. 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 deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical 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 deacon, 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 ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;

4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;

5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;

6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church;

7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;

8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or

9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.

b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop in his or her 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 this 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 deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the office vacant and the deacon shall be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon 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 this 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 deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon'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 this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon 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 deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority 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 simple majority vote of the voting

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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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

*C9.26. The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

    a. installation in another field of labor, or

    b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

*C9.27. When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

*C9.28. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.

*C9.29. The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

*C9.31. The deacon(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.

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

The Churchwide Assembly adopts amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The process for amending the governing documents is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution. Proposed constitutional amendments for consideration at the Churchwide Assembly in 2016 must be considered at the Church Council meeting in November 2015. Although the processes for adopting bylaw amendments and continuing resolutions at a Churchwide Assembly do not require similar notice, the historic practice of the Office of the Secretary has been to seek to provide as complete a set as possible of proposed governing documents amendments at the fall Church Council meeting in the year before the Churchwide Assembly.

The proposed amendments represent an ongoing commitment of the Office of the Secretary and this church to continue to evaluate the efficacy of its governing documents and their alignment to its mission and ministry. The proposed amendments can also be found in "Draft Proposed Constitutional Amendments."

Rationale for the proposed amendments has been provided in an earlier memorandum from Secretary Wm Chris Boerger. A two-thirds vote of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly is required for adoption.

CC ACTION   *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
To recommend the following for adoption by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

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

3.02. **This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.**

3.03. **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.**

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

5.01. **The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church. This church recognizes that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. Therefore, all actions of this church by congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization shall be carried out under his rule and authority in accordance with the following principles:**

. . .

    f. **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent shall be male, and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Processes shall be developed that will assure that in selecting staff there will be a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and persons on the roster of ordained ministers. This balance is to be evident in ~~terms of both executive staff and support~~ the selection of staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.**

. . .

5.01.A87. *~~It shall be a goal of this church that within 10 years of its establishment its membership shall include at least 10 percent people of color and/or primary language other than English.~~*

5.01.A16. *This church commits itself to ethnic and racial diversity. Each expression of this church shall annually assess its ethnic and racial diversity when compared to the demographic data of its community or territory. The churchwide organization will work with synods as they assist congregations to reach out to persons of color or whose primary language is other than English.*

5.01.B87. *~~With regard to the minimum goal 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, it is understood that initially there may be exceptions to the attainment of this goal based on the makeup of the membership~~*

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within a particular synod. By the time of its second assembly, each synod shall establish a plan to attain this goal within 10 years.

5.01.B16. *Each synod shall develop goals and strategies that monitor progress toward reaching the commitment expressed in 5.01.A16 as part of its consultation process with the churchwide organization.*

5.01.D16. *The Churchwide Assembly shall receive reports from the presiding bishop and the secretary that monitor this church's progress toward meeting the commitment expressed in 5.01.A16.*

8.10. **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OF CONGREGATIONS, SYNODS, AND THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION, AND THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION**

8.13. **The synod shall provide for pastoral care of the congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service within its boundaries. It shall plan for, facilitate, and nurture the life and mission of its people and shall enlarge the ministries and extend the outreach into society on behalf of and in connection with the congregations and the churchwide organization. Conferences, clusters, coalitions, other area subdivisions, or networks shall serve to assist the congregations and synods in exercising their mutual responsibilities.**

8.18. **This church affirms the relationship established through the Lutheran World Federation as a communion of churches that confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God, and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship.**

8.18.01. The bylaws on ecumenical availability of ministers of Word and Sacrament under relationships of full communion shall apply to such service within this church of such ministers of other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation.

8.20. **RELATIONSHIP THROUGH OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS**

8.21. **Conferences, clusters, coalitions, other area subdivisions, or networks shall serve to assist the congregations and synods in exercising their mutual responsibilities.**

[*Update numbering of subsequent provisions and bylaws in Chapter 8.*]

8.322.03. Primary responsibility for recruiting members for its board belongs to each college or university of this church. This responsibility is best exercised when appropriate structures of this church are substantially involved. The college or university and the appropriate synods shall determine how many of the college or university board members are to be elected or ratified by the approved form of relationship as provided in 8.322.02.

8.322.04. The responsibility for initiating changes in constitutional documents rests with each college or university of this church. Each college or university will reach agreement with the appropriate structures of this church as identified in 8.322.02. regarding changes in constitutional documents. This church's participation may range from prior consultation to final approval.

8.322.06. In addition to and consistent with the above provision 8.322. and bylaws 8.322.01. through 8.322.05., colleges and universities of this church where a school, department, or unit of that institution is a seminary of this church must comply with all requirements, policies, procedures, and standards specified in provision 8.321. and bylaws 8.321.01. through 8.321.02.

8.762.11. An ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers—upon endorsement by the synodical bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops,

and adopted by the Church Council. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the appropriate roster—upon endorsement by the synodical bishops and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

. . .

~~d. A letter of call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a congregation of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, or an institution of such a church body on the territory of the synod, may be issued by the Synod Council. A letter of call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a national or international agency or institution of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, may be issued by the Church Council.~~

~~e. A first call may not be served in a congregation or other entity of a full communion partner church.~~

~~**8.73.   This church acknowledges the relationship established through the Lutheran World Federation as a communion of member churches which confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God, and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship. The bylaws on ecumenical availability of ordained ministers under relationships of full communion shall apply to such service within this church of ordained ministers from other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation.**~~

9.25.   A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:

     . . .

     b. 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 this constitution and the *Constitution for Synods* 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 the synod, or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be adopted as described in Chapters ~~16~~ 17 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

     . . .

9.53.06.   A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate ~~program~~ 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.

9.53.08.   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 ~~program~~ unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

~~**9.80.   DISCIPLINE OF CONGREGATIONS
               See Chapter 20.**~~

[*Update numbering of subsequent provisions and bylaws in Chapter 9.*]

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10.01.10. ~~**Names and Boundaries**~~
10.01.~~10~~01. **Names and Boundaries.** The names and boundaries of the synods shall be:

. . .

Synod 1.B—Northwest Washington. The counties of Island, King (north), San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom in the state of WASHINGTON; the congregation Bethany, Kitsap County, in the state of WASHINGTON.

. . .

Synod 1.D—Eastern Washington-Idaho. The state of IDAHO; the counties of Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman, Yakima in the state of WASHINGTON; the congregation Shepherd of the Mountains, Teton County, and the congregation Star Valley United, Lincoln County, in the state of WYOMING.

. . .

Synod 3.C—South Dakota. The state of SOUTH DAKOTA; the congregation Union Creek, Plymouth County, in the state of IOWA.

. . .

Synod 3.H—Saint Paul Area. The counties of Chisago, Dakota, Ramsey, Washington in the state of MINNESOTA; the congregations St. Mark, Our Savior's, and Living Waters in Anoka County, the congregation Spring Lake, Isanti County, and the congregation Christiania, Scott County, in the state of MINNESOTA.

. . .

Synod 5.E—Western Iowa. The counties of Adair, Adams, Audubon, Buena Vista, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Cherokee, Clay, Crawford, Dallas (west), Dickinson, Emmet, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Hamilton (west), Hancock, Harrison, Humboldt, Ida, Kossuth, Lyon, Mills, Monona, Montgomery, O'Brien, Osceola, Page, Palo Alto, Plymouth, Pocahontas, Pottawattamie, Ringgold, Sac, Shelby, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Webster, Winnebago, Woodbury~~, and Wright (west)~~ in the state of IOWA.
Synod 5.F—Northeastern Iowa. The counties of Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hamilton (east), Hardin, Howard, Jackson (north), Mitchell, Story (north), Tama (north), Winneshiek, Worth, Wright ~~(east)~~ in the state of IOWA.

. . .

Synod 5.K—South-Central Synod of Wisconsin. The counties of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Walworth in the state of WISCONSIN; the congregation Trinity, Adams County, in the state of WISCONSIN, and the congregation Jefferson Prairie, Boone County, in the state of ILLINOIS.

. . .

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

. . .

Synod 8.D—Lower Susquehanna. The counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York in the state of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregations St. Michael and Zion in Schuylkill County in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.
Synod 8.E—Upper Susquehanna. The counties of Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Tioga, Union in the state of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregation Trinity, Luzerne County, and the congregation Zion, Dauphin County, in the state of PENNSYLVANIA.

. . .

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

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

. . .

Synod 9.F—Caribbean. The commonwealth of PUERTO RICO; the territory of the U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS.

10.31.02. The presiding bishop of this church, or a bishop appointed by the presiding bishop of this church, shall preside for the installation into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, of each newly elected synod bishop.

[*Update numbering of subsequent bylaws under provision 10.31.*]

10.32. ~~CONFLICTS OF INTEREST~~ **The procedures governing matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops shall be set forth in the bylaws.**

10.32.01. ~~The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:~~

~~a.~~ Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in 10.32.0~~1.b~~2. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in 10.32.0~~1.c~~3., the synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical 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.~~ **10.32.02.** Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. (†S14.~~13~~18.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the ~~official~~ rosters of this church.

~~c.~~ **10.32.03.** A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical 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).

10.41. **Each synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority, and which shall meet at least biennially triennially. Special meetings may be called as needed. With the exception of ordained ministers on the rosters of synods other than their synod of residence, each member of the Synod Assembly, the Synod Council, a board, committee, or other organizational unit of the synod shall be a voting member of a congregation of the synod.**

10.71. **Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage or amount of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod, such percentage to be determined by the Churchwide Assembly. Individual exceptions may be made by the Church Council upon request of a synod. The actual percentage or amount shall be determined through individual consultations with each synod. Consultations may recognize and include receipts other than unrestricted receipts in establishing and reporting the synod's remittance to the churchwide organization.**

10.71.01. The percentage or amount determined by consultation shall be acted upon by the synod assembly as part of the adoption of the synod's budget. Should the synod assembly not approve the agreed upon percentage or amount, the synod and the churchwide organization should engage in a new consultation process to reach a mutually agreed upon percentage or amount of donor-unrestricted receipts or other receipts.

10.71.02. The percentage or amount determined by consultation shall come to the Church Council for approval or a request to reopen consultation.

10.80. **INSTALLATION**
10.81.01. The presiding bishop of this church, or a bishop appointed by the presiding bishop of this church, shall preside for the installation into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, of each newly elected synodical bishop.

[*Update numbering of subsequent provisions, bylaws and continuing resolutions in Chapter 10.*]

12.31. **The assembly shall meet biennially in regular session through 2013, and triennially thereafter. Special meetings may be called by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. The purpose for a special meeting shall be stated in the notice.**

12.31.02. The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance on this church's website and in this church's periodical. The secretary shall give written notice of a special assembly to the bishop of each synod upon the issuance of a call thereof and shall publish the same on this church's website and in this church's periodical at least 30 days in advance of the special assembly. Notice shall be provided to all voting members or voting members-elect not more than 30 days or less than 10 days in advance of any meeting. Notice may be provided electronically for voting members or voting members-elect who have provided email addresses, unless the voting member or voting member-elect has requested that written notice be mailed.

12.41.11. Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 6,000 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synodical bishop, who is *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. Unless otherwise determined by the synod, the synodical vice president shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Churchwide Assembly and be included in the number of the synod's voting members. These voting members elected by each synod shall comply with the principles of organization, commitment to inclusiveness, and interdependence as specified in Chapter 5 of this constitution. In addition, each synod shall elect one additional voting member who is a youth or young adult at the time of the election and one additional voting member who is a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English. There shall be at least two voting members from each synod. The Church Council may

allocate up to 10 additional voting members among synods, but no single synod may be allocated more than two additional voting members. The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect.

12.41.20. *Ex Officio* **Members**
12.41.2115. *Ex Officio* **Members.** The officers of the churchwide organization and the bishops of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. Unless otherwise determined by a synod, the synodical vice presidents shall also serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. *Ex officio* members They shall have voice and vote.

12.41.22. Unless otherwise determined by the synod, the synodical vice president shall serve as a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly.

12.41.30. **Advisory Members**
12.41.3116. **Advisory Members.** Members of the Church Council, unless otherwise elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, executive directors of units of the churchwide organization, the executive for administration, and other persons from the churchwide organization designated by the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council also may designate other persons as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. **12.41.32.** Advisory members shall have voice but not vote.

12.41.40. **Other Non-Voting Members**
12.41.4117. **Other Non-Voting Members.** Other categories of non-voting members may be established by the Churchwide Assembly.

12.51.10. **Reference and Counsel Committee**
12.51.1101. **Reference and Counsel Committee.** A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly.

12.51.20. **Memorials Committee**
12.51.2102. **Memorials Committee.** A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synodical assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action.

12.51.30. **Nominating Committee**
12.51.3103. **Nominating Committee.** A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate at least one person present nominations for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church in accordance with Chapter 19 of this constitution.

13.21. **The presiding bishop shall be an ordained minister of this church who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop shall:**

. . .

k. Recommend legal counsel to the Church Council.

l. Serve as an advisory member, with voice but not vote, on all committees of this church and all boards or committees of churchwide units, or designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative.

13.41.02. The secretary shall:

. . .

e. Coordinate Oversee the general counsel and coordinate the use of legal services by the churchwide organization.

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. . .

14.21.12.   The Church Council shall provide for the installation of the churchwide officers. At the installation of a newly elected presiding bishop of this church, the presiding minister shall be the ~~retiring~~ previous presiding bishop of this church or, where that is not possible, a synodical bishop designated by the Church Council.

14.31.   **The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the four churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and at least ~~33~~ 32 and not more than 45 other persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly.**

14.32.03.   Any Church Council member appointed to fill a vacancy of less than three years in a Church Council position not restricted to a specific synod shall not be deemed to have served a term and is eligible for election to a full term if she or he otherwise satisfies the criteria for election.

~~14.41.10.   Executive Committee~~
14.41.~~11~~01. **Executive Committee.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and seven members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:
        . . .

16.11.01.   ~~Consistent with applicable personnel policies, churchwide units and offices will have staff persons, some of whom shall be executive staff and others of whom shall be support staff.~~ In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units and offices will assure that staff include a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and ~~persons on the roster of ordained~~ rostered ministers. ~~This balance is to be evident in terms of both executive staff and support staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.~~

17.50.05.   The board of this organization shall meet at least two times per year and shall be responsible to the assembly that elected it. The assembly of this organization shall be representative of local and other groupings of women who are members of the women's organization. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the board, a board member's position shall be declared vacant and the board shall arrange for election to fill the vacancy under Article ~~I~~ XIII, Section ~~4~~ 5, Item 9, of the constitution and bylaws of the women's organization.

18.01.01.   **Functions.** The regions shall be a means for coordinated responses by synods and the churchwide organization to mission and program opportunities within the region.
18.01.02.   The region shall be a forum where the synods and the churchwide organization may study, plan, and share together in developing common programs unique to the region. Responsibilities carried out together will vary from region to region depending on the decision of the synods and churchwide units.
18.01.03.   Additional programs or services may be developed in each region upon the request of two or more synods, or upon the request of the churchwide organization and one or more synods, providing that each requesting synod and the churchwide organization supply the necessary financial support for the services requested.
18.01.04.   The funding of the region shall be shared by the participating synods and the churchwide organization according to a cost allocation as decided jointly by the synods and the churchwide organization.

~~18.10.10.   Functions~~

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18.11.11. ~~The regions shall be a means for coordinated responses by synods and the churchwide organization to mission and program opportunities within the region.~~

18.11.12. ~~The region shall be a forum where the synods and the churchwide organization may study, plan, and share together in developing common programs unique to the region. Responsibilities carried out together will vary from region to region depending on the decision of the synods and churchwide units.~~

18.11.13. ~~Additional programs or services may be developed in each region upon the request of two or more synods, or upon the request of the churchwide organization and one or more synods, providing that each requesting synod and the churchwide organization supply the necessary financial support for the services requested.~~

18.11.14. ~~The funding of the region shall be shared by the participating synods and the churchwide organization according to a cost allocation as decided jointly by the synods and the churchwide organization.~~

[Update the numbering of subsequent continuing resolutions.]

19.01.01. The treasurer shall be elected by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council.

19.01.02. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the 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 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 votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the 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 votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.

19.01.03. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect.

19.01.04. The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.

19.01.B09. *Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as churchwide officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their*

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election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Church Council.

19.01.C94. *Ecclesiastical Ballot. An "ecclesiastical ballot" for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:*

a. *in which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;*

b. *through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;*

c. *that precludes spoken floor nominations;*

d. *in which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;*

e. *in which the first ballot defines the total slates of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;*

f. *that does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;*

g. *in which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;*

h. *that does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and*

I. *in which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.*

19.01.D07. *Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot*

a. *For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from the synod.*

b. *Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot.*

c. *On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide, on the first ballot, any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, synod, or residence.*

d. *On the third and subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name.*

e. *A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot.*

f. *Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so.*

g. *Written ballots should not be folded.*

h. *Written ballots will be collected from the voting members in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.*

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

j. *Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting may be by means of electronic device.*

k. *When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees*

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were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.

> *l.* *On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes.*

19.02. **The members of the Church Council, except the chair of the Conference of Bishops and the treasurer of this church, shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. In preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. For 33 32 of the council members, the Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. With respect to the other nominees, the Church Council shall review its size and composition and take into consideration the experience and expertise of existing members and synodical nominees as well as the needs of the council in seeking to fulfill its duties and responsibilities. Based upon this analysis, the Church Council shall instruct the Nominating Committee to provide nominations in specific categories for the remaining positions up to 12 13. Excluding the churchwide officers and the chair of the Conference of Bishops, there shall not be more than two members of the Church Council from a synod. The Church Council shall have at least two members from each region. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected. If there is no Churchwide Assembly in the year when terms are scheduled to conclude, they end on August 31.**

19.02.A13. *The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that at least 10 percent of the voting membership of the Church Council shall be youth or young adults. Youth members shall be younger than 18 at the time of their election, and young adults shall be older than 18 and younger than 30 years of age at the time of their election.*

19.02.B11. *On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the year preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit a replacement name from the same synod as the original nominee. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

19.02.C05. *For purposes of nominations for the Church Council on a rotating basis, the following pairing of synods shall be observed insofar as possible: Alaska Synod and Northwest Washington Synod; Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod and Montana Synod; Southwestern Washington Synod and Oregon Synod; Sierra Pacific Synod and Southwest California Synod; Pacifica Synod and Grand Canyon Synod; Rocky Mountain Synod and South Dakota Synod; Western North Dakota Synod and Eastern North Dakota Synod; Northwestern Minnesota Synod and Northeastern Minnesota Synod; Southwestern Minnesota Synod and Southeastern Minnesota Synod; Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod; Nebraska Synod and Central States Synod; Arkansas-Oklahoma and Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod; Southwestern Texas Synod and Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Northern Great Lakes Synod; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area Synod and Northeastern Iowa Synod; Western Iowa Synod and Southeastern Iowa Synod; Northern Illinois Synod and Central/Southern*

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Illinois Synod; Metropolitan Chicago Synod and Greater Milwaukee Synod; North/West Lower Michigan Synod and Southeast Michigan Synod; Indiana-Kentucky Synod and Northwestern Ohio Synod; Northeastern Ohio Synod and Southern Ohio Synod; New Jersey Synod and New England Synod and Slovak Zion Synod; Metropolitan New York Synod and Upstate New York Synod; Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod; Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and Allegheny Synod; Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod and West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod; Upper Susquehanna Synod and Lower Susquehanna Synod; Delaware-Maryland Synod and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod; Virginia Synod and North Carolina Synod; South Carolina Synod and Southeastern Synod; Florida-Bahamas Synod and Caribbean Synod.

19.03.01. Before electing a member to fill a vacancy on a board or committee, the Church Council shall consult with the board or committee.

19.04.01. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Committee on Discipline, and the Committee on Appeals shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected, except as may be specified in continuing resolutions with respect to particular pending discipline matters.

19.04.A91. *With respect to committees that consider disciplinary cases or appeals:*
  a. *Any member of the churchwide Committee on Discipline who has been appointed to serve on a discipline hearing committee for a particular pending case shall continue to serve to discharge that appointment notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*
  b. *Any member of the synodical Committee on Discipline who is serving at the time that the Executive Committee of the Church Council appoints members from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to a discipline hearing committee shall continue as a member of that discipline hearing committee for the particular pending case, notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Synod Assembly.*
  c. *Any member of the Committee on Appeals who is serving at the time that an appeal is made shall continue to serve to decide that appeal, notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

19.06. **Further procedures for elections and qualifications for office may be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions, provided that such provisions do not conflict with any other provisions in this constitution.**

19.10. NOMINATION AND ELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

19.1106.01. In the nomination and election process the following general considerations shall be observed:
  a. It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to assure that this church maintains its commitment to inclusive representation.
19.06.02. b. In all elections by the Churchwide Assembly, other than for the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
  c. Before electing a member to a vacancy on a board or committee, the Church Council shall consult with the board or committee.
  d. On the final ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church, when only two names appear on the ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
19.06.03. e. Each triennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board of a separately incorporated ministry and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synodical bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.

19.06.04. The Church Council shall from time to time, by continuing resolution, establish committees and procedures for the conduct of elections at the Churchwide Assembly.

19.06.05. No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, or committee of the churchwide organization shall receive emolument for such service, nor shall any member be simultaneously an officer of this church, an elected member of the Church Council, or a voting member of a committee of the churchwide organization or board of a separately incorporated ministry. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment of the costs of insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not the churchwide organization would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise.

19.06.06. No employee of the churchwide organization of this church or its regions, nor any individual under contract to any unit of the churchwide organization or a region shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, an advisory committee, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, or the churchwide Nominating Committee during the period of employment or service under contract, except the full-time salaried officers as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.* (The phrase "under contract" shall not mean short-term contracts for specific, limited purposes, usually not to exceed six months.)

19.06.07. No person related to a staff member of the churchwide organization shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council or a committee that advises the unit in which the person's relative is employed. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the churchwide employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

19.06.A02. ***Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot***

    a. *The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used.*

    b. *For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod.*

    c. *Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms for the second common ballot will be in the same manner as the first common ballot.*

    d. *Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synodical bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee.*

    e. *Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot.*

    f. *A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket.*

    g. *Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked.*

    h. *Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session.*

    I. *Ballot forms should not be folded.*

    j. *Marked ballot forms must be deposited at the designated Ballot Stations at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held.*

    k. *If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot.*

    l. *Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.*

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m. *On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes.*

n. *Unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure or as otherwise ordered by the assembly.*

o. *On the second ballot, whether by common ballot or by electronic device, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first position on the ticket shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.*

19.06.B98. ***Breaking Ties in Elections***

a. *On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.*

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

c. *On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.*

19.06.C13. *A former full-time or part-time employee shall not be eligible for a minimum of six years subsequent to such employment, for nomination or election to the board of the separately incorporated ministry or committee related to the churchwide unit in which the employee served.*

19.2011.		**There shall be a Nominating Committee.**

19.211.01.	There shall be a Nominating Committee shall consisting of 12–18 members elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Each member shall be elected to one six-year term and shall serve until a successor is elected. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be eligible for consecutive re-election. The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

19.211.02.	The Except as otherwise provided, the Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council, board, or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. In the case of re-election, if authorized, or for nominees from church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, only one person need be nominated. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented as an alternative to a specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

19.211.03.	The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for the board of trustees of each of the separately incorporated ministries identified in Chapter 17 of this constitution, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the

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

[*Update numbering of subsequent bylaws in Chapter 19.*]

19.21.05.
19.11.06. The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that all persons nominated for any position, including the boards of separately incorporated ministries, possess the necessary competence and experience for the position. All persons elected to any position, whether nominated by the Nominating Committee or not, shall strive to represent this church and not just a particular geographic area.

19.11.A15. *Nominations Desk and Nominations Form*
> *a.* *Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church.*
> *b.* *A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.*
> *c.* *The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require.*
> *d.* *For purposes of nomination procedures, "synodical membership" means:*
> > *1)* *In the case of a layperson who is not on the roster of this church, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership; and*
> > *2)* *In the case of a rostered minister, the synod on whose roster such minister's name is maintained.*

19.11.B05. *Floor Nominations*
> *a.* *Floor nominations for positions on a board or committee of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 10 other voting members. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other churchwide committee to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 20 other voting members.*
> *b.* *A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.*
> *c.* *Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk.*

19.11.C05. *Restrictions on Floor Nominations for Boards*
> *a.* *Nominations from the floor for positions on churchwide boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
> *b.* *So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on*

that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met.

19.11.D16.   ***Restriction on Floor Nominations for Church Council***

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

19.11.E98.   ***Restriction on Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee***

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

     b.   *So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated.*

19.21.A13.   ~~The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that at least 10 percent of the voting membership of the Church Council shall be youth or young adults. Youth members shall be younger than 18 at the time of their election, and young adults shall be older than 18 and younger than 30 years of age at the time of their election.~~

19.21.B11.   ~~On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the year preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall submit a replacement name from the same synod as the original nominee. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.~~

19.21.C05.   ~~For purposes of nominations for the Church Council on a rotating basis, the following pairing of synods shall be observed insofar as possible: Alaska Synod and Northwest Washington Synod; Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod and Montana Synod; Southwestern Washington Synod and Oregon Synod; Sierra Pacific Synod and Southwest California Synod; Pacifica Synod and Grand Canyon Synod; Rocky Mountain Synod and South Dakota Synod; Western North Dakota Synod and Eastern North Dakota Synod; Northwestern Minnesota Synod and Northeastern Minnesota Synod; Southwestern Minnesota Synod and Southeastern Minnesota Synod; Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod; Nebraska Synod and Central States Synod; Arkansas-Oklahoma and Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod; Southwestern Texas Synod and Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Northern Great Lakes Synod; East Central Synod of Wisconsin and South Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area Synod and Northeastern Iowa Synod; Western Iowa Synod and Southeastern Iowa Synod; Northern Illinois Synod and Central/Southern Illinois Synod; Metropolitan Chicago Synod and Greater Milwaukee Synod; North/West Lower Michigan Synod and Southeast Michigan Synod; Indiana-Kentucky Synod and~~

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Northwestern Ohio Synod; Northeastern Ohio Synod and Southern Ohio Synod; New Jersey Synod and New England Synod and Slovak Zion Synod; Metropolitan New York Synod and Upstate New York Synod; Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod; Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and Allegheny Synod; Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod and West Virginia Western Maryland Synod; Upper Susquehanna Synod and Lower Susquehanna Synod; Delaware-Maryland Synod and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod; Virginia Synod and North Carolina Synod; South Carolina Synod and Southeastern Synod; Florida Bahamas Synod and Caribbean Synod.

19.30. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

19.31.01. The churchwide officers shall be elected as follows:

   a. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the 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 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 votes on the second ballot, and two thirds of the 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 votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.

   b. The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect.

   c. The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.

   d. The treasurer shall be elected by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council.

19.31.A09. *Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as churchwide 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 Church Council.*

19.40. **TERMS OF OFFICE**

19.41.01. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on a committee or board by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the assembly at which such persons were elected.

19.41.02. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Committee on Discipline, and the Committee on Appeals shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected, except as may be specified in continuing resolutions with respect to particular pending discipline matters.

19.41.A91. *With respect to committees that consider disciplinary cases or appeals:*

    a. *Any member of the churchwide Committee on Discipline who has been appointed to serve on a discipline hearing committee for a particular pending case shall continue to serve to discharge that appointment notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

    b. *Any member of the synodical Committee on Discipline who is serving at the time that the Executive Committee of the Church Council appoints members from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to a discipline hearing committee shall continue as a member of that discipline hearing committee for the particular pending case, notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Synod Assembly.*

    c. *Any member of the Committee on Appeals who is serving at the time that an appeal is made shall continue to serve to decide that appeal, notwithstanding that his or her successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

19.50. **EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE**

19.51.01. The Churchwide Assembly shall elect all members of the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA, the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund, and the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions. The Nominating Committee shall seek to ensure that these boards have within their membership persons with the expertise and experience essential to the fulfillment of the work of these separately incorporated ministries.

19.60. **OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

19.61.01. The Church Council shall from time to time, by continuing resolution, establish committees and procedures for the conduct of elections at the Churchwide Assembly.

19.61.02. No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, or committee of the churchwide organization shall receive emolument for such service, nor shall any member be simultaneously an officer of this church, an elected member of the Church Council, or a voting member of a committee of the churchwide organization or board of a separately incorporated ministry. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment of the costs of insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not the churchwide organization would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise.

19.61.03. No employee of the churchwide organization of this church or its regions, nor any individual under contract to any unit of the churchwide organization or a region shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, an advisory committee, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, or the churchwide Nominating Committee during the period of employment or service under contract, except the full time salaried officers as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.* (The phrase "under contract" shall not mean short-term contracts for specific, limited purposes, usually not to exceed six months.)

19.61.04. No person related to an executive director or an executive staff member of the churchwide organization shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council or a committee that advises the unit in which the person's relative is employed. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the churchwide employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including

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corresponding members of blended families and in laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

19.61.A94. *Ecclesiastical Ballot.* An "ecclesiastical ballot" for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:

a. in which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;

b. through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;

c. that precludes spoken floor nominations;

d. in which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;

e. in which the first ballot defines the total slates of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;

f. that does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;

g. in which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;

h. that does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question and answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and

I. in which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.

19.61.B15. *Nominations Desk and Nominations Form*

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

b. A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.

c. The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, synodical membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and synodical membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require.

d. For purposes of nomination procedures, "synodical membership" means:

1) In the case of a layperson who is not on the official rosters of this church, the synod that includes the congregation in which such person holds membership; and

2) In the case of an ordained minister, the synod on whose roster such ordained minister's name is maintained.

3) In the case of an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, the synod on whose roster such person's name is maintained.

19.61.C05. *Floor Nominations*

a. Floor nominations for positions on a board or committee of a churchwide unit require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 10 other voting members. Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other churchwide committee to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 20 other voting members.

b. A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.

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c.   Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk.

19.61.D05.   Restrictions on Floor Nominations for Boards

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

b.   So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met.

19.61.E05.   Restriction on Nominations for Church Council

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

19.61.F98.   Restriction on Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee

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

b.   So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated.

19.61.G02.   Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot

a.   The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used.

b.   For the first common ballot, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from the synod.

c.   Upon recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, the second common ballot may be conducted by electronic device. Unless the second common ballot is conducted by electronic device, the distribution of ballot forms for the second common ballot will be in the same manner as the first common ballot.

d.   Any discrepancy between the number of ballots given to a synodical bishop and the number of voting members (including the synodical bishop) from such synod must be reported by the synodical bishop to the Elections Committee.

e.   Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot.

f.   A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket.

g.   Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked.

h.   Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session.

I.   Ballot forms should not be folded.

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j. Marked ballot forms must be deposited at the designated Ballot Stations at certain exits of the hall in which plenary sessions are held.

k. If a ballot is damaged so that it cannot be scanned, a replacement ballot may be obtained at the Ballot Station upon surrender of the damaged ballot.

l. Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure.

m. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes.

n. Unless the second ballot is conducted by electronic device, polls for the second common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure or as otherwise ordered by the assembly.

o. On the second ballot, whether by common ballot or by electronic device, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest vote, the first position on the ticket shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.

19.61.H07. *Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot*

a. For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of that synod. The bishop of the synod, or his or her designee, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from the synod.

b. Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, one of the numbered ballots from the appropriate ballot set is to be used on each ballot for elections determined by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot. The chair will announce the number of the ballot from the appropriate ballot set that is to be used for each ballot. Failure to use the correct numbered ballot will result in an illegal ballot.

c. On the first two ballots for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide, on the first ballot, any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, synod, or residence.

d. On the third and subsequent ballots conducted by written ballot, only the last name of the nominee need be used, provided there is no other nominee with the same or similar name.

e. A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot.

f. Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so.

g. Written ballots should not be folded.

h. Written ballots will be collected from the voting members in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

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

j. Whenever the number of names of nominees that will appear on a ballot is nine or less, on recommendation of the chair and with the consent of the assembly, voting may be by means of electronic device.

k. When voting by electronic device, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same vote on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee.

l. On each ticket for which balloting is conducted by electronic device, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes.

19.61.I98. *Breaking Ties in Elections*

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a. ~~On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.~~

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

c. ~~On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist.~~

19.61.J13. ~~A former full-time or part-time employee shall not be eligible for a minimum of six years subsequent to such employment, for nomination or election to the board of the separately incorporated ministry or committee related to the churchwide unit in which the employee served.~~

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CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

†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.~~1~~01. and 10.02.02.

†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.

†S6.04.A01. *[continuing resolution becomes bylaw]*

†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.B09. *[continuing resolution becomes bylaw]*

†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.

†S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least ~~biennially~~ triennially.

S7.11.01. 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 ___ months prior to the assembly.

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 _____ years. If the treasurer is appointed by the Synod Council, the Synod Council shall appoint a new treasurer to a _____ year term.

†S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer ~~may be effected in accordance with the procedure established by the Committee on Appeals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ 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 synodical bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:

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        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 synodical 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 synodical 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 synodical 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 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.20. and 20.21. 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 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.20. and 20.21. 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 20.21.16. 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.

†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.

†S9.10. 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.

†S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be ordained ministers 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 terms of committee members shall be staggered so that the terms of four committee members (two clergy and two lay) expire every two years.~~
   ~~c.~~ The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.

†S14.13~~8~~. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:
   . . .
   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 ~~and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled~~. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. 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.
   . . .

†S14.~~15~~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 ~~field of labor~~ call, or
   b. ~~the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer~~ approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.~~16~~22. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
   a. installation in another ~~field of labor~~ call, or
   b. ~~the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer~~ approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent units that share responsibly in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program 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 and thus partnership in this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:

. . .

b. 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 by the Churchwide Assembly to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in consultation with the churchwide organization and approved by the Synod Assembly as part of its budget consideration.

c. 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 partnership funding with other synods and the churchwide organization. Unless an exception is granted upon the request of this synod by the Church Council, each budget shall include the percentage of congregational mission support assigned to it by the Churchwide Assembly.

†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 simple 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.

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MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

*C3.02.   This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian Unity throughout the world.

*C3.03.   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. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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.

*C3.04.   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.

*C3.0305.   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.

*C5.03.   Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:

. . .

   d.   adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;

. . .

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

. . .

   f.   Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.

   g.   This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:

      1)   Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

   h.   2)   Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.

   i.   3)   Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

   i h.   If a this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with

this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

*C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the *(insert name of synod)*   Synod.

*C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

. . .

c. ***Voting*** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

d. ***Associate*** members are persons holding membership in other [ELCA] [Lutheran] [Christian] congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

e. ***Seasonal*** members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:

   1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
   2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
   3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;
   4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
   5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
   6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

*C8.05.   Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
   a. death;
   b. resignation;
   c. transfer or release;
   d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.~~40~~41. and the accompanying bylaws; or
   e. removal from the roll due to inactivity ~~as defined in the bylaws~~ 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.

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

C10.04.   _____ percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C12.12.   A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the [senior] pastor or interim pastor, except when the [senior] pastor or interim pastor 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. Chronic or repeated absence of the [senior] pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

~~**Chapter 16.**~~
~~**BYLAWS**~~
~~***C16.01.**   This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.~~
~~***C16.02.**   Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.~~
~~***C16.03.**   Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.~~
~~***C16.04.**   Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.~~

Chapter 17~~6~~.
AMENDMENTS
*C17~~6~~.01.   Unless provision *C17~~6~~.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least _____ voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

*C17~~7~~6.02.   An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17~~7~~6.01., shall:

    a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;

    b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds ~~majority~~ vote of those voting members present and voting; and

    c. have the effective date included in the resolution[1] and noted in the constitution.

*C17~~7~~6.03.   Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17~~7~~6.01. and *C17~~7~~6.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

*C17~~7~~6.04.   This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a ~~simple~~ majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of ~~_____~~ at least two (2) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 17.
BYLAWS

*C17.01.   This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

*C17.02.   Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a ~~majority~~ two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

*C17.03.   Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify this congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

*C17.04.   Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 20.
PARISH AUTHORIZATION
[* Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]

*C20.01.   ~~This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council.~~

*C20.02.   ~~Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation~~

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[2]   *Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.*

of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.

*C20.03. ~~Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.~~

*C20.04. ~~Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.~~

*C20.01. This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.

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

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

*C20.04. Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

*C20.05. Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

*C20.06. Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

Future directions and priorities for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Background

Bishop Eaton and Wyvetta Bullock have requested advice on a process to reach decisions on future directions and priorities for the ELCA. This paper sets out a possible process design that builds on the Church Council Action "*to affirm the intention of the Presiding Bishop to convene a team to generate recommendations to sharpen our priorities as a church and bring greater clarity about what this church will do and will not do in order to serve God's mission more faithfully and effectively in the years to come*".

This process outline will be discussed initially by the Administrative Team at its meeting on August 17 and if appropriate, further developed as a result of that discussion.

What the process will deliver

Based on discussions with Bishop Eaton and drawing on the notes from the July 2 planning conversation involving Chris Boerger, Wyvetta Bullock, Christina Jackson-Skelton and Linda Norman, this process needs to deliver:

1. A directional statement on identity of the church and high level priorities that provide a sharpened and common focus for leadership of the church. This would be linked to, and help to interpret, Presiding Bishop Eaton's four emphases: We are Lutheran; We are church; We are church together; and, We are church for the sake of the world.
2. Ownership of the directions and priorities by church leaders – especially the Conference of Bishops and Church Council.
3. Motivation and renewed energy across the church to serve God's mission faithfully and more effectively and to work together to build a thriving, connected and sustainable church.
4. A common strategic framework for other levels of planning, including operational planning by the Churchwide Organization and synodical mission planning.

Starting assumptions

The Presiding Bishop has a legitimate and important role in leading a process to determine directions and priorities for this church.

Establishing directions and priorities is ultimately a decision making process. While different views and ideas can and should be heard, the church governing structures need to contribute to and take the decisions. Priorities for the whole church cannot be developed by the churchwide office alone.

While an expert group tasked with developing recommendations can collate and shape the thinking, the church leadership tables need to own and be part of the process.

To have an impact and be a call to collaborative leadership, the directions and priorities must matter to, and be supported by, a wide cross section of church leaders and church networks.

An ongoing communication strategy about the process will be highly important to getting the desired outcomes. In the face of possible scepticism, building hope, trust and confidence around the process is also important.

There is already a considerable body of work that sheds light on what is important now and into the future for the church. The intention is to harness this thinking rather than start from scratch.

If it is designed to be inclusive, the process can help to galvanize member understanding and engagement with what the church does together and how the different expressions and ministries contribute to this.

The process will be conducted and decided during late 2015 and 2016. This would provide an opportunity to launch the priorities as part of the celebration of the 500th Reformation anniversary in 2017.

Primary stakeholders

In decision making
Church Council, Conference of Bishops, Executive Committee of Church Council and Presiding Bishop with the Churchwide Administrative Team

To consult and keep informed
Church members, rostered and lay leaders, synods, social ministry organizations, separately incorporated ministries, educational institutions and the churchwide staff

Steps in the process

Stage 1 – Building ownership of the ambition and process

For stakeholders, particularly the decision makers, to feel commitment to shared priorities for the future, requires they broadly support the process, see it as important and are willing to engage. While there is agreement to establishing the *Future Directions Table*, it is not clear at this stage how their work will engage the wider church or result in decisions. The first step is to build buy-in to the process from the CoB, and Church Council.

Proposed approach
After some refinement based on the Administrative Team's advice, a proposed process should be discussed with the Executive Committee of Church Council and the Conference of Bishops.

Feedback will be considered to accommodate the views of these two highly important leadership tables. A more fully developed process outline will be taken to the November Church Council meeting for endorsement, including advice on makeup and a progress report from the *Future Directions Table*.

Practical steps
- Administrative team considers the approach outlined in this proposal, with input from other key staff as appropriate. Consultant is asked to revise the process based on this feedback. (August)
- Information on the process is shared with Churchwide Office senior leaders
- Presiding Bishop develops proposal for makeup of the Future Directions Table in consultation with Administrative Team, Executive Committee and Chair of the CoB (October)
- The proposed process is discussed with the Church Council Executive Committee, (September 30 conference call)
- The proposed process is discussed at the Conference of Bishops meeting (October 1-6)
- Feedback from the Executive Committee and Conference of Bishop's is considered and enhancements made to the process design as appropriate (mid-to-late October)

- At the Church Council meeting November 12-15, the process is ratified and members are involved in an initial scoping discussion
- A first meeting of the Future Directions Table would be set for December-January

Stage 2 - Starting the conversation – November to June

Proposed approach

As a first step, it is proposed that the Research and Evaluation team produce a synthesis report on the challenges facing the church and common directions and priorities that have been generated or proposed as a result of other strategic processes, including the LIFT I and II reports, Mission Funding Report, Church Council Retreat, Chris Grumm's report and relevant research data and survey. Ideally this would be completed in October as a resource for the November Church Council meeting.

As was intended in the Church Council Action, the *Future Directions Table* will have a role in generating and drawing together thinking as the process moves forward. They would be tasked to develop a short **Conversation Starter** paper that can be used as a basis for discussion in congregations, synods and other ministries of the church. (This paper would be given a positive, catchy name to create interest.)

A range of processes and mechanisms would be used to achieve engagement and generate conversations, for example:
- Using the website and social media to gather views from members and church leaders
- Disseminating the Conversation Starter Paper with a guided discussion template that can be used in a more structured way in congregations, synods, church networks, other ministries and with churchwide staff.
- In addition there would be structured conversations at the April Church Council and first Conference of Bishops meeting next year using the paper as a resource.

Feedback from this range of processes would be collated and referred back to the Future Directions Table. They would hold a meeting in June 2016 to consider the feedback and develop future propositions on directions and priorities for the church. These would be captured in a "Future Directions" document as a basis for consultation and substantive discussion by the key leadership tables.

Stage 3 - Consulting on directions and priorities

This stage would run between July and September and include a focused discussion at the Churchwide Assembly in August. Other elements could be:
- Wide distribution of the Directions Paper with questions to elicit feedback from synods, congregations and other ministries on the priorities
- Consultation with staff in the churchwide office
- Communication of the proposed directions via the website and social media, with opportunities to comment
- Targeted consultation with youth, ethnic specific congregations/worship communities and separately incorporated ministries.
- Interviews with a cross section of church leaders to directly test the propositions and fill gaps in the voices that are being heard in the process.

Stage 4 – Deciding the directions and priorities

The Future Directions Table would meet in late September/early October to develop a clear proposal on directions and priorities to go to the November 2016 Church Council meeting.

The proposal should go to Church Council with an already established base of understanding and support for what is being proposed from the Executive Committee and the CoB. If time permits it would be tested via meetings with these groups leading up to Church Council.

The Presiding Bishop would seek in principle support for a directions statement from Church Council, allowing for some further refinement as a result of the feedback.

Stage 5 – Launching the directions and priorities

It is proposed that the directions statement be launched as part of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. This provides a wonderful opportunity for the Presiding Bishop and the three leadership tables to come together and communicate a shared vision for the future of the church.

For consideration

This is an ambitious process that will require bold leadership, tight management and a very clear communication strategy. It also requires that time and priority is given to the process at key meetings throughout 2016.

It is an iterative process that builds on work that is already familiar to the church leadership. It moves through three clear writing stages:

- A paper to start conversations
- A Directions Paper with propositions on directions and priorities as a basis for consultation and feedback
- A Directions Statement or Framework that is the result of the process.

It is assumed the Presiding Bishop is a leader in the process with support of the Administrative Team and the Chair of the CoB and members of the Executive Committee and the Church Council. The roles of individual leaders and leadership tables should be clearly spelled out in communications about the process.

The process seeks to utilize existing structures and meetings that occur across the church. There may be other opportunities to use gatherings to get input.

It is already proposed that meetings of the Future Directions Table would benefit from facilitation. This may also be the case for some of the major sessions – for example at Church Council and the CoB. Another success factor will be the way feedback and input is progressively considered and acknowledged. It is important through the communication strategy to keep visible where the thinking is going. There could be regular communications from the Presiding Bishop as the process moves forward.

At this stage the budget available to support the process is not known but this will obviously be a factor in what is possible and how the various steps are managed.

Lyla Rogan, Consultant

Strategic Directions for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

September - November 2015	November 2015 - June 2016	July - September 2016	October - November 2016

Building ownership of the process

- Consultant advises on process design
- Input from Churchwide Administrative Team and staff (Sept)
- Church Council Executive Committee and Conference of Bishops input (Sept-Oct)
- Research and Evaluation - background paper on learnings from previous studies and trends impacting the ELCA (Sept-Oct)
- Process ratified by Church Council and Future Directions Table appointed (Nov)
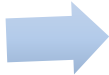
Starting the conversation

- Future Directions Table meets to shape a Conversation Starter paper to launch discussion across the ELCA (Dec-Jan)
- Encourage conversations in congregations, synods, ministries, networks and the churchwide office (Dec-Feb)
- Use social media and the website to gather views from church members and leaders (Dec- Feb)
- Structured sessions at Church Council and CoB meeting (April)
- Future Directions Table meets to review emerging themes
- *Directions Paper* prepared based on input from across this church (June)

Consultation phase

- Communication of the proposed directions via the website and social media - invite comment
- Feedback on Directions Paper from synods, congregations and other ministries
- Consultation with staff in the churchwide office
- Focused consultation with youth, ethnic specific congregations and separately incorporated ministries
- Interviews with a cross section of church leaders to test the future propositions and fill gaps in the voices being heard
- Structured discussions at Church Assembly (Aug)

Take decisions and launch the directions statement

- Future Directions Table develops recommendations for Church Council (Sept-Oct)
- Directions and priorities discussed, refined and approved by Church Council (Nov 2016)
- ELCA Directions Statement launched and publicised as part of the 500th Reformation Anniverary (2017)

TO   ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops
FROM   Leaders of the Seminaries of the ELCA
DATE   1 November 2015
RE   TEAC Recommendations and Conference of Bishops Response

Grace and peace in the name of Jesus Christ.

We write with gratitude for the work of the Theological Education Advisory Council
and the recent letter of support authored by the Conference of Bishops. We stand in
full agreement with the bishops' naming of this time as a *kairos* moment in how we
form leaders for Christian ministry. Further, we greatly appreciate the encouragement
to innovate, engaging in change that will likely be as disruptive as it is salutary. We
are also committed to enacting all necessary reforms to preserve and advance a
strong ecology of theological education and confessional formation for the sake of the
Church. The TEAC report and bishops' endorsement provide much needed support to
move ahead with the significant changes we recognize are necessary if the schools we
lead – in whatever forms they ultimately adopt – are to have not simply a viable future
but also a vibrant one that advances in mission rather than simply preserves our
historic ministry.

We are also most grateful for the bishops' pledge of support as we move into an
uncharted future because we know that we cannot do this work alone. For this
reason, we suggest four particular areas for sustained attention and further
conversation:

Leadership Recruitment
We have long known that the primary agents of vocational discernment for
professional leaders are most often the ordained and lay leaders of our
congregations, camp counselors and directors, and synod staff. Recognizing that
there is a growing shortage of trained leaders, we are eager to engage ministry
partners across the church in pursuing a focused and creative campaign to identify
and come along side the next generation of congregational leaders.

Mission Support
For good reason, much attention of late has been given to the operating deficits of
our seminaries, and we are working diligently on cutting expenses and raising
revenue. As we cope with declining enrollment and increased costs, the support
synods give to seminaries has never been more important. Currently, synodical
support varies widely from synod to synod and on the whole has eroded
significantly over the past two decades. We therefore urge a broad and candid
conversation about the value we place on training leaders, and how together we can
become better stewards of the resources entrusted to us.

Embracing Innovations in Technology and Pedagogy
The seminaries of the ELCA have been increasingly collaborating and innovating over the last decade in order to make theological education and formation as accessible as possible. Beneficiaries of this work include not only those preparing for rostered leadership but also countless congregational members. At this point, we are eager to extend the reach of our teaching in more efficient ways via increased use of online and distance education at every level. In order to make this kind of investment, we need not only the financial support of the church but also the eager embrace of innovations in technology and pedagogy. While we recognize that it is difficult to imagine things beyond our experience, we need supporters who will not compare all new efforts to the methods employed "back in the day" but rather who are eager to take some risks for the sake of the Gospel as we seek to educate leaders for faith communities increasingly at home in the digital world.

Collaboration with Global Partners
There have been multiple conversations to address our church's need and desire to develop greater racial ethnic diversity in our congregations. One example is the desire for a robust Latino theological education network. The seminaries have been invited into a conversation to work together on strategies to address this need in Latin America. We wonder if there are other ways through our companion synod networks that together with the Global Mission unit we might find new partnerships to strengthen what we can learn from our global partners and what we might share in our theological education network.

Well aware of the challenges before us and grateful for your partnership in stewarding faithfully the call and treasure entrusted to us, we look forward to further conversation and action as we seek God's preferred future for the Church, its leaders, and those committed to equipping them for a lifetime of faithful service.

Unanimously approved on this date in Chicago, Illinois

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

   The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, November 12-15, 2015. The council centered its work around daily worship, frequent prayer and personal reflections on faith.

   The action of the Church Council in reference to the Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families Working Group Report and Recommendations is as follows:

   To receive the report with gratitude and refer the recommendations of the Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families Working Group to the appropriate churchwide organization units for implementation and to report back to the Church Council by the November 2016 meeting.

**Report and Recommendations of Ministry to and with
Same-Gender Couples and Their Families Working Group (M2SGF)**

Preface

Charged with the task to bring a report and set of recommendations, the ELCA Working Group on Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families has spent time each meeting with Paul's words to the Philippians in 1:27-2:10. (See inset for partial quote.) We repeatedly have pondered their meaning for us and our church as it lives in this time of ongoing discernment regarding how to look upon publically accountable life-long, monogamous same-gender relationships. Again and again we have been challenged by Paul's words as we consider our church's diversity of convictions and of pastoral practices. We have sought to let the mind of Christ guide us through deep differences with a humility that looks not to our own interests but to the interests of one another and this whole church.

> **Philippians 2:1-5**
> [1]If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, [2]make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. [3]Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. [4]Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. [5]Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,…

While we have inevitably examined the range of conviction sets around our meeting table, we have not revisited questions about theologies of marriage or sexual orientation. We have not focused on questions about the legitimacy of ordination or performing same-gender marriage. This was not our charge; rather, we have investigated and labored, probed and focused on how our church could do ministry well within the diversity of convictions that are evident within most congregations and synods.

Our work led us to full consensus and is presented here in:
  I. A report divided into two parts that describes our efforts and provides the background leading to nine recommendations.
  II. A set of recommendations presented with accompanying explanations focused on pastoral responsibility for ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families.
  III. A set of appendices containing documents or links relevant to the report and recommendations.

I. Report

Part A: Why we were called together and what we did

1) The background and context for the formation of the Working Group
The 13th Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), meeting in August of 2013, responded to formal requests for conversation and resource sharing related to ministry in light of changing family configurations. Acting upon the assembly's direction, the ELCA Church Council at its November 2013 meeting authorized the formation of a working group to bring a report and

recommendation regarding ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families. These official actions occurred in a context created by decisions from 2009 that, in turn, resulted from conflict and a *de facto* ELCA-wide discernment that began long before 2009.

As indicated in the ELCA social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," (HS:GT) over the last several decades this church began to understand and experience in new ways the needs of those in same-gender relationships who seek lifelong companionship and commitment and sincerely desire the support of other Christians for living faithfully in all aspects of their lives. (HS:GT, p. 18) The new challenges to long-held understandings regarding homosexuality led many to consider again the meaning and application of Scripture as well as the Lutheran theological heritage. The decades-long discussions revisited what medicine and science were learning and raised questions about corresponding public law and policy. To state the obvious, the social and churchwide conversation was extensive and often heatedly contested, but it did not resolve differing and deeply held convictions. While an old consensus deteriorated and many views shifted, a new consensus had not emerged.

In this context, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," adopted in 2009, drew on a foundational Lutheran understanding of ethics. That understanding held that in the common purpose to love the neighbor, Christian freedom may permit a certain diversity of conflicting conscience-bound practices. The statement did not recognize all possible convictions or practices but established a range because "in this discernment about ethics and church practice, faithful people can and will come to different conclusions about the meaning of Scripture and about what constitutes responsible action." (p. 19) Further, it taught that "this church, on the basis of 'the bound conscience,' will include these different understandings and practices within its life as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world." (p. 19)

While the social statement did not require official change in ELCA ministry policy, the subsequent ministry policy resolutions adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly (see Appendix A) did create a new "structured flexibility." Resolution 1 affirmed that the ELCA would strive to be a church that bore the burden of respecting others whose consciences and practices differed within the range of convictions set by the social statement. Resolution 2 made it possible *for "congregations that choose to do so"* [italics added] to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships." Resolution 3 and Resolution 4 directed that the ELCA to "*find a way for those in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church*" [italics added]. These directives for ministry policy allowed structured flexibility in decision-making regarding approving or disapproving candidacy and call for those who are otherwise qualified.

Multiple consequences flowed in mixed and ever-changing measures for the life of the ELCA as a result of the adoption of the social statement and the ministry policy resolutions. There has been joy, relief, sorrow, pain and anger within our church. There has been splintering and recommitment. There has been a loss of membership and financial support, and yet, for some, a renewal of confidence. There has been criticism and yet also affirmation for the changes made. Leaders and members often have been exhausted and/or enlivened by the opportunities and challenges. Some have mourned and others have sensed resurgence in the ELCA's mission and ministry. These multiple and mixed consequences remain as of 2015.

While many observations could be made about the ELCA experience since 2009, three in particular are relevant to this report.

1) The ELCA in its documents remains deeply committed to ministry with all children of God.
2) The ELCA is learning what an extraordinary challenge it is to live into being a church that recognizes and honors a range of varied, diverse, even at times contradictory, understandings and practices. These challenges and opportunities continue to call forth from us the confident and daring faith Martin Luther described, a faith empowered by God to trust that such diversity can be held within one body.
3) In holding together both the responsibility and the challenge, it has become clear that the ELCA as a whole in 2009 was not fully prepared for the challenges and opportunities brought by the adoption of "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and the ministry policy resolutions. In particular, we had not given full thought or consideration for what pastoral ministry to and with same gender couples would look like across all conviction sets in the ELCA.

The 2013 Churchwide Assembly assumed this context and urged the attention to ministry with same-gender couples and their families by adoption of Resolution CA13.03.12, which had been brought by memorials from over a dozen synods. The assembly resolution, by a formidable vote percentage, called for action (see Appendix B). In November of that year, the ELCA Church Council directed the formation of a working group to bring a report and recommendations.

2) Who was the Working Group?
The ELCA Working Group on Ministry to and with Same-gender Couples and Their Families met for the first time in June of 2014. The membership (bios are available in Appendix C) were constituted according to ELCA commitments to diversity of race and gender and reflected a variety of competencies and life experience. It is notable that this Working Group was the first ELCA working group intentionally created to bring the range of four conviction sets (from "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust") into extended conversation.[1]

The Working Group devoted its initial attention to building relationships among members and crafting its charter both as a guide for its work and as a benchmark for accountability. The charter was affirmed by the Church Council in November of 2014 (see Appendix D), and it sustained the intent of the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council action by:
- shifting the completion date to fall of 2015 as a realistic timeframe;
- focusing its investigation on ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families;
- committing each member to honor and respect others around the table whose understandings of pastoral responsibility to same-gender couples and their families are guided by differing convictions;
- calling for assessment of the general situation and needs in the church; and
- anticipating the development of specific recommendations to foster conversation and sharing of resources throughout this church in regards to practical ministry concerns.

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[1] The composition of the ELCA Task Force for Studies on Sexuality (2002-2009) intentionally included a diversity of perspectives on homosexuality but was not, obviously, guided by a description of conviction sets. The 2014 working group membership did not include any individuals who had served on the task force, with the exception of one churchwide organization staff member.

3) What did the Working Group do and how did it operate?
While each of its four face-to-face meetings and its several conference calls included different tasks, the Working Group centered each meeting with worship, repeated exercises of Dwelling in the Word that reflected on Philippians 1:27-2:11, relationship building and common prayer. The group spent time reflecting on what it means to disagree well and committed itself to using communal discernment practices, including a modified consensus model for reaching decisions.[2]

The first meeting led members through presentations and exercises to understand the scope and nature of the task, grasp the ELCA history and context, craft a charter, assess what questions to ask and to develop a relationship of trust and respect among members of the working group. Subsequent meetings returned at times to similar concerns but were dedicated largely to receiving information from panels and reports. The last two meetings as well as several conference phone calls were devoted to discussion of possible recommendations and to frank discussion about what would be most beneficial and appropriate for the ELCA. Through its tenure, the Working Group gradually achieved consensus for the content of its report, recommendations and appendices.

During its tenure, the group or its teams exercised several forms of information gathering, including:
- an online public survey, which was available for six weeks in the fall and early winter of 2014 (see Appendix E);
- a request that the Conference of Bishops explicitly discuss these issues and share a report of that conversation (accomplished in March of 2014);
- a series of panels about pastoral ministry with reflections from a spectrum of conviction sets;
- reports from representatives of ecumenical partners;
- the compilation of ministry resources from various conviction sets (see Appendix F);
- a clergy focus group in April 2015;
- the discussion of emails and letters and conversations communicated to members of the Working Group;
- a review of the Working Group's draft recommendations by the Conference of Bishops and members of the Program and Services committee of the Church Council and executives in the churchwide organization.

Working Group liaisons provided periodic reports to the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops during its existence.

Part B: What we learned

1) What we learned about ourselves and about the challenges of being in conversation with others of differing convictions.
The Working Group was convened in accord with a range of convictions and with ELCA commitments regarding diversity. At the first meeting our conversation included what we each felt about the task assigned, reflecting both a sense of responsibility and significant apprehension. Many of us honestly wondered aloud how it would be possible to agree on recommendations, and all felt challenged by

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[2] The importance of communal discernment approaches has been encouraged by many in the ELCA for some time, including by the L.I.F.T. report in 2011. What "communal discernment" means within the ELCA can best be understood from the findings of the Communal Discernment Task Force. See Appendix K.

Paul's admonition to be "in full accord and of one mind." Nevertheless, we each made a commitment to seek a way of being church together that looked "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others."

As noted previously, we committed to:
- "Dwelling in the Word" together repeatedly at each meeting (see Appendix G);
- be prayer partners with those of alternative convictions;
- commune together each meeting;
- hold to agreed ground rules for conversation; and
- learn and practice processes of communal discernment.[3]

We were honest throughout our time together about our differing convictions and why they mattered personally and theologically, but as a group, we sought to listen and to care for each other first. The question was often asked, what is it that we can learn from each other despite our different convictions? The reminder was continually lifted up that Christian unity is a gift of our baptism not a result of being in complete agreement.

But it was hard! We continually struggled with the challenge to get beyond our personal, implicit sense that "my beliefs are right and righteous." Such deeply held convictions, after all, arise from what one is taught early and/or emerges from one's understanding of the Scriptures, the gospel, the Lutheran Confessions, analysis of the issues, and personal experiences. Deeply held beliefs inform even one's very sense of self. We held no expectation during this process that others should abandon convictions, but we came to recognize how snap judgments accompanied our convictions and shaped even the way we heard each other. When one believes "the gospel supports my beliefs," it is hard to step back and try to learn from someone who disagrees.

We also learned both that words themselves can have many layers of meaning and that it was easy to talk past one another without even realizing it, despite best intentions. Within discussions, there sometimes were perceptions among some that not all positions were respected. In addition, we realized early on that members brought competing expectations and emphases to the common task. We also came to realize that we were trying to manage multiple visions about what it means to be the ELCA today and about the nature of faithful witness.

We name these specific struggles in order to be honest and to acknowledge the reality that other conversation groups in our church also may experience. Yet, through these struggles, we discovered again how much the Spirit can accomplish in and through us. We saw the Spirit lead to powerful expressions of care for one another and open unexpected ways forward. We experienced the Spirit at work in developing trust among us and in bringing convergence. We discovered anew that God can bring insight and consensus through struggles by empowering us to stick to the task with forgiveness and prayer. We also discovered that, in spite of our differences, we were able to come together on a wide range of ministry issues.

Our work together reinforced the effectiveness of communal discernment as an open and faithful approach in which active listening comes before seeking to establish one's turf or position. In doing so,

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[3] See footnote 2 for reference information.

we came to recognize that some differences were largely a matter of distinctive emphasis or language rather than genuine contradiction. We discovered that we agreed on some substantial matters. We learned to appreciate each other's deep concern for faithful witness and ministry and for our church's future despite our different theologies of marriage. It also became clear that there are some legitimate boundaries to draw regarding what is and is not wise and caring ministry. Most importantly, we discovered in greater depth and richness the bonds that unite us to each other because we trust we have been justified by grace and not by works or moral beliefs.

Through our struggles and striving together, we also have come, sometimes hesitantly, to appreciate both the challenge presented by and the wisdom of "Human Sexuality: Gift &Trust;" it is an approach that encourages living together as a church in a time of continued discernment and rapid social change. Despite whatever the document's shortcomings may be, it encourages all of us to respect each other and to remain in dialogue. It assumes God-given mission and communion is at least as important as any differences among us and calls all to ministry to and with same-gender couples and families. It emphasizes welcome, care and support within the boundaries and context of a range of varied convictions and sets the stage for some level of diversity of pastoral care within the ELCA.

Through these struggles and gifts, we came to appreciate and understand each other better and came to understand more deeply what it means to be attentive to each other's concerns while living as a church with the four conviction sets.

2) Important things we learned or recognized about the situation in the ELCA and the U.S.
(For more on the following items, see Appendix E.)
a. Within the ELCA, multi-layered and deep differences remain that are closely tied to varied interpretations of the Scriptures, Lutheran Confessions, social analysis, scientific findings, and personal experiences. These inform what is viewed as appropriate pastoral care. "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" establishes the teaching of this church, and some regard it highly. Others do not. Others have avoided reading or discussing it because of the controversy and conflict it has caused, or may cause, within the church. As a result, many members do not understand what the document teaches in general and misunderstand specifically what it states about homosexuality and the conviction sets.

b. Across our church it often is not widely understood that the range of convictions identified in the social statement (see Appendix H) do not legitimize *all* convictions or ministry practices. For instance, some in this church believe and preach that the Bible condemns "practicing homosexuals" as "abominations" (as an extrapolation of Leviticus 18:22). Others in this church believe that same-gender relationships should not be held to the highest legal accountability available. These positions and some others fall outside the four conviction sets and are not supported by the social statement. These two examples demonstrate the need for continual discussion regarding the teaching parameters in the document. Further, it is important to recognize that conscience-bound belief applies only to individuals; congregations do not have a conscience. (Congregations, however, have the authority to adopt policy – e.g., whether to allow same-gender marriages in the sanctuary – based on a prevailing conviction, preferably after a period of communal discernment.) In addition, the social statement's four conviction sets attempt to describe and do not prescribe belief to individual members of the ELCA.

c.   Several factors in the contemporary social situation create new urgency and, sometimes, tensions for our church. First, there is a widespread sense that many in our congregations do not wish to or do not feel safe in having conversations about ministry to same-gender couples and their families. There often is an assumption that most, if not all, in a congregation believe the same thing. In actual fact, the beliefs and practices among church members appear to be more varied than often recognized. Second, there is a growing recognition that same-gender couples and their families are found in a surprising number of congregations regardless of geographic and social location. Finally, the Supreme Court decision of June 26, 2015, (Obergefell v. Hodges 576 U.S.) has unmistakably changed how ministry will occur throughout the U.S. This constellation of social factors opens need and possibilities for our church at this time to equip and encourage safe conversation and to provide some needed resources.

d.   It is counter-cultural in this current social climate of polarization and partisan loyalties to heed Paul's approach that we must bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2) as we engage in an ongoing "discernment about ethics and church practice, [where] faithful people can and will come to different conclusions." (HS:GT, p. 19) There are those who have experienced intolerance or condemnation. Some who identify generally with conviction sets #1 and #2 have heard forms of the pointed question, "If you don't agree with what was passed in 2009, why are you still here?" The suspicion is that they are simply being tolerated because the majority in conviction sets #3 and #4 *know* they are correct. Some who identify generally with conviction sets #3 and #4 have heard that they are not truly "faithful" because those in conviction sets #1 and #2 *know* they are the only ones being true to Scripture and the confessions. The unfortunate result is a weakened church and ministry, and it is clear that this situation will not be reconciled quickly. However, good faith efforts toward safe and respectful conversations *about ministry practice* are a critical place to begin.

> Martin Luther, 1535 Lectures on Galatians: "To love does not mean, as the sophists imagine, to wish someone else well, but to bear someone else's burdens, that is, to bear what is burdensome to you and what you would rather not bear. … Love is sweet, kind, and patient—not in receiving but in performing; for it is obliged to overlook many things and to bear with them. In the church faithful pastors see many errors and sins which they are obliged to bear."

e.   Finally, we as a church have occasion to recognize and celebrate that conversations and discernment about ministry across convictions have been and are happening in some congregations and ministry sites throughout the ELCA. Those examples can provide resources and insights on best practices that should be shared.

3) What we learned about conversations and disagreeing well.
        (For more about these items, see Appendices J and I.)
Much of what we learned about conversations and disagreeing well has already been expressed above. Several key points about constructive practices bear identification here.
   a.   It is important to establish covenant guides and have agreement on them for conversation. Several sources for these guides are available in appendix J.

   b.   The purpose of conversations must be clear. The conversations we commend are not about changing others' convictions or others' self-identification, but rather focusing on ministry to and

with same-gender couples and their families. Such conversations will require taking time to seek understanding of differences, but the point is seeking practical ministry outcomes.

c.   To create an environment for safe conversation and to disagree well within that environment require effort and commitment that are theologically grounded as well as practically applied. (For a fuller reflection on disagreeing well, see Appendix I.)
Aspects of an environment for safe conversation include:
   •   fundamental respect for the other person as a redeemed child of God despite differing convictions; and
   •   explicit rejection of verbal condemnation or marginalization because of differing convictions.

d.   Aspects of disagreeing well within this safe environment include:
   •   Fairness. I am disagreeing well when I can state the position of the person I am disputing with accurately enough that the other person recognizes that position as genuinely his/her position.
   •   Intellectual integrity. I am disagreeing well when I can state the strongest, most compelling argument *against* my position. In other words, I am disagreeing well when I can recognize and acknowledge where my own position is most vulnerable and where a contrasting position makes valid points.
   •   Honest humility. I am disagreeing well when, after thinking through my position and expressing it with true conviction, I acknowledge that as a fallen, flawed human being I may be wrong.

4) What we learned or recognized about ministry resources.
   a.   The Working Group affirms the belief, widely held, that people are the most important "resource" in this church's life. In terms of "people resources" our church is blessed with many leaders from differing convictions, rostered and non-rostered, who have gifts. These gifts include abilities to lead safe and respectful conversations, to assess ministry needs astutely, and to imagine and implement wise and caring ministry practice. In terms of people "resources," it is also the case that leaders, rostered and non-rostered, may find themselves in situations where their personal convictions differ markedly from the needs or the convictions of a couple and the family that seek pastoral care. As a result, it is critical at this time in the church to re-emphasize the idea that rostered leaders may best provide pastoral care by referring a particular ministry situation to a colleague. It appears that this often may require that the synod office be ready to facilitate appropriate reference, including the possibility of referring to full communion partners.

   b.   We have discovered that useful, written resources appear to be of two types:
   1) The first has to do with how to start safe, respectful and constructive conversations about effective ministry in the context of diverse convictions, for instance within a congregation.
   2) The second type concerns trustworthy resources for pastoral ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families, such as the bullying of children of same-gender parents. While many of these needs are generic to all families, at this time of social transition some resources sensitive to the special situation of same-gender families would be useful but are rare.

   c.   The findings assessed by the Working Group specifically include requests for liturgical resources. The decisions of 2009 left to the local congregation or ministry site the task of finding liturgies of

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prayer and support consistent with a prevailing conviction set. The Working Group confronted several difficult and controversial quandaries on this matter. Among these quandaries, the most vexing is the dilemma regarding the call for marriage liturgies specifically for same-gender couples or for heterosexual couples who wish to affirm they are supportive of same-gender marriage in principle. On that question there are mutually exclusive perspectives that both offer compelling claims to be the perspective most true to the ELCA. (For more details, see the preface in [Recommendation 9](.).)

d. Two other aspects should be noted regarding the availability of useful ministry resources, liturgical or otherwise:
1) There is a lack of easy access to trustworthy resources. It can be difficult to find or assess resources that are sourced by, or are at least compatible with, Lutheran theology.
2) In particular, there are few ministry resources of any kind that reflect conviction sets #1-#3 and are sourced by Lutheran theological commitments. That is, there are few Lutheran resources for convictions that do not accept or do not equate publically accountable, lifelong monogamous same-gender relationships with marriage.

e. The Working Group has determined that additional ministry resources are needed. The situation is ripe for knowledgeable and skilled rostered and lay leaders to create, or to share resources they have created. Further, there is a need for availability and increased awareness of such practical ministry resources. (For a list of resources compiled by the Working Group, see Appendix F.)

Conclusion

Arising from what we have learned about the power of the Spirit, about ourselves, about the contemporary situation, about conversation, and about resources, we have proposed nine recommendations. As a Working Group, we have sought to be faithful to our charter and have full consensus on this report and each of these recommendations as a faithful rendering of our work. The nine recommendations may not represent what any one of us individually would personally hope for, but we offer them--in some cases with fear and trembling--out of our best understanding about what is balanced, needed and useful at this time for our church's ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families. Each recommendation, found in bold, is preceded by a preface that provides context and is followed by an explanation that provides reasoning. We share these with a fervent prayer that what we have learned and recommended will further ministry within the body of Christ.

George Watson, Chair	Smith Heavner
Tempie Beaman	Kayla Koterwski
Christine Blice-Baum	S. John Roth
Mary Froiland	Suzanne Wise
Aaron Fuller	Erma Wolf
Amsalu Geleta	Carol Yeager
Cliff Haaland	

A sign-off means that each working group member attaches her or his name to this document in general support of it as the report and the recommendations achieved in this Working Group. Each member believes this text represents a faithful rendering of the work both to hear and to lead the church on this matter. Each member considers this to be a strong text even though it is not a perfect one or a text each one agrees with in every detail.

II Recommendations

A. General recommendations

1 <u>**Recommendation 1**</u>
2 *Preface*
3 The Working Group on Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families
4 believes that the differing and deeply held convictions about homosexuality and about the
5 appropriateness of the 2009 decisions remain significant and multi-layered within the
6 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). At the same time, same-gender couples and
7 their families are increasingly present throughout our church with needs and gifts for
8 ministry. Therefore, the Working Group believes this first recommendation should set the
9 tone for the ELCA as a precondition to the other recommendations. Moreover, it should be
10 noted that all these recommendations assume the range of four conviction sets as
11 recognized in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" (HS:GT, see Appendix H, pp. 21-22) and no
12 recommendation here is intended to revisit the decisions of 2009.
13
14 **The Working Group recommends that ELCA congregations re-familiarize themselves with the**
15 **ELCA's social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and Ministry Policy Resolutions (MPR),**
16 **both adopted at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. These documents emphasize ministry to and**
17 **with same-gender individuals, couples and families while placing this welcome, care for, and**
18 **support within the boundaries and context of a range of varied convictions. This context sets the**
19 **stage for some diversity of pastoral care within the ELCA congregations and other ministry sites.**
20
21 *Explanation*
22 "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" builds on other churchwide assembly actions over the
23 years to convey the ELCA's opposition to "all forms of verbal or physical harassment and
24 assault based on sexual orientation" and calls upon "congregations and members to
25 welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for
26 their legal protection." (HS:GT, p. 19) It describes and recognizes as boundary setting a
27 range of four convictions that is open to some variation in ministry practice while the
28 Ministry Policy Resolutions of 2009 commits the ELCA to find "ways to allow congregations
29 that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long,
30 monogamous, same-gender relationships." (see Appendix A, resolution 2) It is important at
31 this time for ELCA leaders and congregations to understand and to promote the emphasis
32 on ministry expressed in these documents. The purpose in this refamiliarization is not to
33 revisit the question of the differing conviction sets recognized in the social statement but,
34 acknowledging those convictions, to support and encourage ministry by all. Ministry begins
35 with receiving the couple and their family as they are in the integrity of their relationship so
36 as not to undermine it. Our church respects and honors that differing convictions may be
37 held by the members and leaders in a ministry setting.
38
39

40
41   **Recommendation 2**
42   *Preface*
43   It has become clear to the Working Group that the range of convictions regarding same-
44   gender relationships as recognized in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and the Ministry
45   Policy Resolutions of 2009 may challenge the practice of ministry in ways that sometimes
46   are distinctive from other situations of pastoral care. Both the varied ministry needs of each
47   couple and family in particular contexts of each congregation or ministry setting and the
48   diversity recognized in the social statement mean it is important in our church to utilize
49   pastoral referral as a widespread practice.
50
51   **The Working Group recommends that members and leaders throughout this church provide**
52   **pastoral care to couples and families by referral when personal convictions and ministry needs are**
53   **dissimilar (including the possible referral to full communion partners).**
54
55   *Explanation*
56   Pastors and other rostered leaders often seek to follow Paul in trying to "be all things to all
57   people," and there is an understandable reluctance to refer pastoral needs, such as a
58   request for counseling or for a particular liturgical practice. The pastoral care of this church,
59   however, does not rest entirely on any one individual or any one congregation but flows
60   from its participation in the whole body of Christ. In light of this church's acceptance of a
61   range of convictions and the reality of varied needs, it is important to re-emphasize the idea
62   that rostered leaders are to provide *or* to provide *for* pastoral care that is appropriate to a
63   couple or family. Providing for pastoral care may well require referral and should be
64   encouraged as an acceptable pastoral exercise, including possible referral to full
65   communion partners. This practice will be appropriate especially when personal convictions
66   or congregational decisions are not in agreement with the needs or the convictions of the
67   couple and the family in question (see also Recommendation 6 and Recommendation 8).

B. Regarding conversations

68
69
70   **Recommendation 3**
71   *Preface*
72   In keeping with our call to be prepared to do ministry together, the Working Group lifts up
73   the importance of communal discernment among members of this church.
74
75   **The Working Group strongly encourages congregations and other ministry sites to engage in**
76   **and/or continue conversations regarding ministry to and with same-gender couples and their**
77   **families. Such life-giving conversations need to emphasize the theological commitments about the**
78   **basis of our unity in the gospel alone, the avoidance of labels and stereotypes about those in**
79   **differing conviction sets, and persistence in the spirit of love.**
80
81

82 *Explanation*
83 Some congregations within the ELCA have been or continue to be engaged in constructive
84 conversations regarding ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families. Some
85 congregational conversations begin only when leaders are approached by a same-gender
86 couple and/or family seeking a faith home, often inquiring about a wedding at the
87 congregation and/or the parish pastor or seeking the baptism of members of the family.
88 The Working Group strongly encourages that conversations be undertaken before an
89 immediate decision must be made, since these are necessarily more stressful for all
90 involved and likely to be less beneficial than those entered into with time for prayer,
91 preparation and discernment.
92
93 **Recommendation 4**
94 *Preface*
95 The Working Group believes that a key condition for strengthened ministry to and with
96 same-gender couples and their families involves reflection and discernment within this
97 church that is focused on ministry practice. Such reflection and practice are, however,
98 complicated by the challenge of living as a church with a range of diverse yet deeply held
99 convictions as well as by the limitations of time and capacity for discernment within
100 congregations or other ministry settings. While the ultimate goal is a church that employs
101 widespread communal discernment (see Appendix K), the emphasis at this time most
102 usefully will be on conversations among trusted colleagues focused on the practice of
103 ministry.
104
105 **The Working Group recommends that the ELCA emphasize and seek to equip respectful**
106 **conversations among trusted colleague groups of rostered leaders that focus on the exercise of**
107 **practical ministry, particularly with same-gender couples and their families. It is expected that**
108 **these conversations will respectfully recognize the existing diversity of convictions as well as the**
109 **diversity of needs and gifts of same-gender couples and their families.**
110
111 *Explanation*
112 This recommendation does not seek to specify how ministry-focused conversations should
113 be structured but envisions that trusted groupings of rostered leaders provide the key
114 forum at this time. It encourages cross-conviction conversation in a spirit of respect that
115 fosters mutual support and the cross fertilization of practical ideas. Such conversations
116 might occur in conference meetings, text study groups, closed social media groups,
117 synodical gatherings or in many other venues. This recommendation invites synodical
118 leadership to encourage, foster and equip such conversations. While the emphasis here is
119 conversations among rostered leaders, such conversations should in time aid and enable
120 additional and constructive congregational conversation about ministry.
121
122
123
124

125 **Recommendation 5**

126 *Preface*

127 Consistent with the emphasis on increasing rostered leaders' capacity as indicated

128 in Recommendation 4, the Working Group believes that first-call education offers an

129 indispensable venue for explicit and dedicated attention to these ministry concerns.

130

131 **The Working Group urges those responsible for First Call Theological Education as quickly as**

132 **feasible to find ways to create modules about ministry to and with same-gender couples and their**

133 **families as part of curriculum development. These modules should recognize the range of**

134 **accepted convictions identified in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" while exploring concepts and**

135 **approaches for pastoral ministry that also are sensitive to the diversity of needs and gifts of same-**

136 **gender couples and their families.**

137

138 *Explanation*

139 While Recommendation 4 encourages conversation and capacity-building among all

140 rostered leaders, First Call Theological Education appears to be an indispensable place for

141 education sensitive to cross-conviction conversation with a focus on ministry practice and

142 public witness. First-call education involves a large segment of this church's emerging

143 leaders and many of them experience some challenge in ministering among diverse

144 convictions and with same-gender individuals. This challenge is widespread since within

145 each ministry setting all four convictions may be present to some extent. First-call

146 education modules dedicated to these concerns would greatly enhance the overall capacity

147 of the ELCA's rostered leadership for providing appropriate and compassionate pastoral

148 care.

C. Regarding resources

149

150 **Recommendation 6**

151 *Preface*

152 It has become clear to the Working Group that rostered and lay leaders need a readily

153 available place to turn to for identifying "people resources" who can aid ministry to and

154 with same-gender couples and their families, especially in light of the emphasis on referral,

155 as suggested in Recommendation 2.

156

157 **The Working Group urges synodical bishops and their offices during this next year to review the**

158 **ways they are prepared to serve as a clearing house for referral or requests for resources related**

159 **to ministry questions.**

160

161 *Explanation*

162 Synod offices naturally function as a center for referral and resources of many kinds. Many

163 synod offices already informally aid church leaders who are seeking help on the issues at

164 stake here, but this recommendation urges explicit attention within each ELCA synod office

165 as to the "who and how." Examples include, but are not limited to, identifying

166 congregations where same-gender marriages may be conducted, where intentional ministry

167   to same-gender couples occurs, and local individuals who have a track record for facilitating
168   safe and respectful conversations across convictions. There are multiple ways for managing
169   this kind of information, but the goal is to establish and convey the means for rostered
170   leaders to seek help with referral and other "people resources."
171
172   **Recommendation 7**
173   *Preface*
174   The Working Group identified some practical resources that facilitate safe conversations
175   about controversial issues – including existing ELCA resources (see Appendix F). However, it
176   heard a desire for guidance on how to start conversations in the context of the distinctive
177   issues arising in ministry to and with same-gender families. Recognizing that in many
178   ministry settings all four convictions may be present, it believes a new resource would be
179   useful.
180
181   **The Working Group urges the churchwide organization to identify or prepare constructive**
182   **conversation resources attentive to the particular challenges of multiple convictions regarding**
183   **ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families and to provide these on the ELCA**
184   **website.**
185
186   *Explanation*
187   In many congregations or ministry settings some questions about ministry options would
188   benefit from a trustworthy resource that would guide conversation and discernment. This
189   resource could help explain to a congregation council, for instance, the ELCA's stance of
190   recognizing an identified range of convictions and provide guidance for holding constructive
191   conversations based on principles about how to disagree well (see Report Part B, 3c and
192   Appendix I). The availability on the ELCA website of an identified or prepared resource of
193   this kind would provide leaders with a trustworthy guide. Resources published or lifted up
194   by full communion partners should also be considered.
195
196   **Recommendation 8**
197   *Preface*
198   Many in this church of varied convictions need access to trustworthy resources for pastoral
199   ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families, for example, regarding
200   bullying of children or marital counseling. Many of these needs are generic to all families,
201   but at this time, some resources would be useful that are sensitive to the special situation
202   of same-gender families. The Working Group has identified two: a) The need for additional
203   resources, especially among conviction sets 1-3 (as numbered in "Human Sexuality: Gift and
204   Trust"), that are dedicated or adaptable to the interests of same-gender couples and their
205   families; and b) the need for a database containing trustworthy resources.
206
207   **The Working Group encourages rostered and lay leaders to seek increased awareness of existing**
208   **practical ministry resources or to contribute to the development of additional resources. It is**
209   **important to keep in mind that so-called reparative therapy or similar practices fall outside the**

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210   scope of recognized convictions in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." ELCA members are
211   encouraged to consult the list of resources compiled by the Working Group, found in Appendix F.
212   Consultation with full communion partners may also be appropriate.

213

214   *Explanation*
215   The churchwide organization does not have staff capacity for developing extensive
216   specialized resources, and most members in our church rely on sources from many other
217   places. This recommendation, then, does not direct the development of new Churchwide
218   Office generated resources but encourages knowledgeable individuals and organizations to
219   continue to provide resources as consistent with "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." Pastors
220   and others doing ministry, likewise, are encouraged to draw on contemporary medical and
221   psychological knowledge as they seek to provide care.

222

223   Some in our church, however, indicate the need for a reliable starting place for finding
224   trustworthy print and online resources. Some resources have already been identified by the
225   Working Group as part of their investigation and are listed in Appendix F and this
226   recommendation intends that those will be kept available as part of its report for a two-year
227   period. The site should make it clear that this collection of resource links is not created by,
228   endorsed or authorized by the ELCA, nor is it comprehensive. The Working Group's list of
229   resources will likely grow dated within a two-year time frame and should then be taken
230   down.

231

232   **Recommendation 9**
233   *Preface*
234   The Working Group confronted several difficult and controversial quandaries regarding
235   whether or how to provide liturgical resources attuned specifically to the situation of same-
236   gender couples and their families. Among these quandaries, the most vexing is the
237   dilemma we encountered when considering a recommendation regarding liturgical
238   resources appropriate for same-gender couples[**] that could be used within the marriage
239   service. On that question there are mutually exclusive perspectives that both offer
240   compelling claims to be the perspective most true to the ELCA.

241

242   In trying to present fairly what we are hearing, here is a representative sample of
243   statements that call for providing or creating liturgical resources:
244   ➤ The ELCA social teaching document "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" (see Appendix
245   H) commits the ELCA to a single conviction regarding same-gender couples and their
246   families, namely, acceptance, appreciation, and care for our sisters and brothers in
247   same-gender relationships and their families. And further, such acceptance,
248   appreciation, and care can be expressed only in the creation of a Lutheran liturgy for

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[**] These liturgical resources also are sought by some heterosexual couples who wish to affirm they are supportive of same-gender marriage in principle.

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249 same-gender marriage, which would symbolize the equal standing in the ELCA of
250 same-gender marriages and heterosexual marriages.
251 ➤ The Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) marriage liturgy reflects a theology of
252 marriage that assumes a male and female union. Therefore, the ELW marriage
253 liturgy cannot serve as an adequate platform for a same-gender marriage liturgy.
254 ➤ ELCA pastors who are performing same-gender marriage services are asking for an
255 ELCA marriage liturgy. Creating or providing this liturgy would assist pastors in
256 providing ministry to same-gender couples.
257 ➤ "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" supports those in the ELCA who conclude that
258 marriage is the appropriate term to use in describing benefits, protection and
259 support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong, monogamous relationships.
260 This is true even though it recognizes that the historic Christian tradition and the
261 Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and a
262 woman.
263 ➤ Some of our ELCA members have remained in the ELCA because of assurances that
264 the language in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" was flexible enough to allow for
265 same-gender marriages in states where it was legal and that such relationships
266 would be honored and respected and held to the same standards as different-
267 gender marriages.
268
269 In trying to present fairly what we are hearing, here is a representative sample of
270 statements that call for *not* providing or creating liturgical resources:
271 ➤ The ELCA social teaching document "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" (see Appendix
272 H) reserves the term "marriage" for heterosexual unions. If offices or units of the
273 ELCA were to create or to recommend a liturgy specifically geared to same-gender
274 marriage, they would be acting outside of the parameters of our social teaching
275 document. That document carefully avoided identifying lifelong, monogamous
276 committed same-gender relationships with heterosexual marriage, even though it
277 notes that there are those in the ELCA who conclude that marriage is the
278 appropriate term to use in describing benefits, protection and support for same-
279 gender couples entering into lifelong, monogamous relationships.
280 ➤ The ELCA has a marriage liturgy that was commended for use by the ELCA Church
281 Council and received by an ELCA Churchwide Assembly. A new marriage liturgy
282 should have comparable commendation and reception.
283 ➤ Some of our members have remained in the ELCA because they were assured that
284 our church would not use the word "marriage" for same-gender relationships and
285 would not create any new marriage liturgy; they would see a liturgical resource
286 appropriate for same-gender marriage as a betrayal of the promise to them.
287
288 In trying to present fairly what we are hearing, the dilemma can be expressed further in this
289 way. On the one hand, if the church does not provide liturgical resources for a same-gender
290 marriage service, it fosters the use of ill-conceived, unevangelical liturgies in our

291   congregations, which in turn can have an unfortunate effect on the faith of our people in
292   long-lasting ways. On the other hand, to use the word "marriage" for same-gender
293   relationships differs from the Lutheran Confessions, to which our constitution pledges our
294   church's faithfulness. In short, the church *ought* to identify or provide resources so as to be
295   true to pastoral care realities of our context *and,* at the same time, the church *ought not*
296   identify or provide liturgical resources, so as to remain true to the church's constitutional
297   and confessional commitment.

299   The Working Group concludes that there is no single solution to this dilemma that will serve
300   ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families to the satisfaction of everyone
301   concerned about this ministry and the full life of the ELCA. With consensus, we recommend
302   the following with fear and trembling before God, proceeding humbly, and asking
303   forgiveness for our shortcomings.

305   **In light of the dilemma presented in the above preface and with a commitment to**
306   **continue to live in the tension presented therein, the Working Group recommends that**
307   **the Office of the Presiding Bishop take lead responsibility for identifying or preparing a**
308   **small collection of supplemental liturgical resources for pastoral use that includes:**
309   • **A collection of prayers and words of support to welcome a married same-gender**
310   **couple in a pastoral setting in which a congregation has chosen not to conduct**
311   **marriage liturgies.**
312   • **Supplemental liturgical resources appropriate for same-gender couples for use within**
313   **the marriage service of Evangelical Lutheran Worship as a way to continue to live into**
314   **our commitment "to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to**
315   **recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender**
316   **relationships" (see Appendix A, CA09. 05.24, Resolution 2).**

318   *Explanation*
319   Our church holds in common that all Christians are called to "lead a chaste and decent life in
320   word and deed," (Sixth Commandment, Small Catechism) whatever one's sexual
321   orientation. It remains the case that members of our church continue to hold diverse and
322   strong convictions concerning how to regard lifelong, monogamous, same-gender
323   relationships, including whether and how to recognize publicly their lifelong commitments.
324   The decisions of 2009 left to the local congregation or ministry site the task of finding
325   liturgies of prayer and support consistent with a prevailing conviction set. However, in the
326   current context the lack of liturgical resources consistent with Lutheran theological
327   commitments seems inadequate and the Working Group has concluded that two kinds of
328   resources would be significant for sustaining our church's ministry.

330   As articulated by "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," there are those in the ELCA who
331   "believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same-gender relationships
332   are honored … but do not equate these relationships with marriage." (HS:GT, p. 20) The

333 provision of a collection of prayers and words of support would provide a means to
334 welcome a married same-gender couple where that is the prevailing conviction, *when*
335 *desired by that couple*. These resources would recognize that a legal ceremony was held
336 elsewhere and signal welcome for that couple and their family in their church home. These
337 resources should provide for flexibility of setting, e.g. the home, the pastor's office or public
338 worship.

340 On the question of marriage liturgy for same-gender couples, it is important to note that,
341 unlike some denominations of Christianity, the ELCA does not prescribe any liturgical rite
342 except that of ordination. The existing marriage liturgy in Evangelical Lutheran Worship
343 (ELW) therefore has not been "authorized" by our church nor is its use required, even
344 though the ELW itself has been received and used widely within the ELCA as a whole. The
345 liturgy there reflects established Lutheran theology and tradition and does provide some
346 options for alternative wording. However, deep and multifaceted differences remain as
347 represented in the preface above about whether or how that liturgy is adequate for
348 ministry needs in light of the decisions of 2009 and the context of 2015.

350 Mindful of the dilemma and the context, the Working Group believes the best way forward
351 for this church is to remain mindful of the commitments made in 2009. It recommends that
352 the Office of the Presiding Bishop take action to identify or provide liturgically sound
353 options for use within the marriage service of the ELW in order to better provide guidance
354 for members and congregations that "choose to recognize, support and hold publicly
355 accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships" (see Appendix A, CA09.
356 05.24, Resolution 2).

358 The identification or provision of such options embodies the freedom and flexibility in
359 worship that is a Lutheran inheritance and is consistent with the 2007 Churchwide Assembly
360 action of reception for the ELW (see Appendix L, CA07.02.04), which stated that:
361 • "worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every
362 assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;
363 • each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and
364 • worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the
365 Church is called to serve."

367 It is anticipated that these efforts to supplement our liturgical resources would be done in a
368 consultative process with liturgical representatives from diverse conviction sets and that
369 these resources would be available electronically on the ELCA website as options for
370 pastoral ministry.

III. Appendices

- Appendix A: Summary of 2009 Churchwide Assembly actions related to same-gender issues
- Appendix B: 2013 Churchwide Assembly action and subsequent Church Council action
- Appendix C: Short biographies of Working Group members
- Appendix D: Working Group charter
- Appendix E: Report of the Working Group survey by the ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation
- Appendix F: Resource bibliography list
- Appendix G: Dwelling in the Word: Appendix A of the Communal Discernment Task Force report
- Appendix H: Link to ELCA social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust"
- Appendix I: Reflections on the Theology and Character of Disagreeing Well by Bishop S. John Roth, Ph.D.
- Appendix J: Covenant guideline examples from
    - ELCA resource "Talking Together"
    - The United Methodist Church covenant guideline example
    - The Minnesota Council of Churches respectful Conversations Initiative https://vimeo.com/40730696 and http://www.mnchurches.org/respectfulcommunities/respectfulconversations.html
- Appendix K: Link to Report of the Communal Discernment Task Force
- Appendix L: 2007 Churchwide Assembly action receiving Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Only citations from ELCA statements are to be represented to 3rd parties as ELCA teaching.

The following is a summary of ELCA teaching in the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift & Trust* (HS:GT) and the guiding resolutions on ministry policy (2009 Churchwide Assembly) by Rev. Dr. Roger A. Willer, Director for Theological Ethics, ELCA. (Visit www.elca.org/socialstatements for further information)

<u>What does the ELCA teach about homosexuality?</u> (HS:GT, p. 18)

1) We as a church *oppose all forms of violence or legal discrimination* against people of a same-sex orientation.

2) We as a church are committed to *welcoming all people into our congregations and ministries, regardless of sexual orientation.*

3) On the matter of whether or how to regard publically accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, we recognize four broadly representative conviction sets or "conscience-bound beliefs" as set forth in the social statement. These four describe the range of accepted convictions and each are "bound to" (based on) strongly held but differing understandings of Scripture, church tradition, science, and pastoral care as each seeks to serve the neighbor. (HS:GT, p. 20)   There are other conviction sets that this church does not recognize.

Conviction 1: "On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that same-gender sexual behavior is sinful, contrary to biblical teaching and their understanding of natural law. They believe same-gender sexual behavior carries the grave danger of unrepentant sin. They therefore conclude that the neighbor and the community are best served by calling people in same-gender sexual relationships to repentance for that behavior and to a celibate lifestyle. Such decisions are intended to be accompanied by pastoral response and community support."

Conviction 2: "On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that homosexuality and even lifelong, monogamous, homosexual relationships reflect a broken world in which some relationships do not pattern themselves after the creation God intended. While they acknowledge that such relationships may be lived out with mutuality and care, they do not believe that the neighbor or community are best served by publicly recognizing such relationships as traditional marriage."

Conviction 3: "On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that the scriptural witness does not address the context of sexual orientation and lifelong loving and committed relationships that we experience today. They believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same-gender relationships are honored and held to high standards and public accountability, but they do not equate these relationships with marriage. They do, however, affirm the need for community support and the role of pastoral care and may wish to surround lifelong, monogamous relationships or covenant unions with prayer."

Conviction 4: "On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that the scriptural witness does not address the context of sexual orientation and committed relationships that we experience today. They believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same- gender relationships are lived out with lifelong and monogamous commitments that are held to the same rigorous standards, sexual ethics, and status as heterosexual marriage. They surround such couples and their lifelong commitments with prayer to live in ways that glorify God, find strength for the challenges that will be faced, and serve others. They believe same-gender couples should avail themselves of social and legal support for themselves, their children, and other dependents and seek the highest legal accountability available for their relationships."

1

The following is a summary of ELCA teaching in the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift & Trust* (HS:GT) and the guiding resolutions on ministry policy (2009 Churchwide Assembly) by Rev. Dr. Roger A. Willer, Director for Theological Ethics, ELCA. (Visit www.elca.org/socialstatements for further information)

What guides ELCA ministry practices for same-gender couples?

General directives were established by four resolutions adopted at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly of 2009. (Just below) Resolution numbers one and two, taken together, mean that individual congregations or ministry sites are to determine the nature of their ministry with and to same-gender couples, dependent on the context. For instance, whether and how a wedding or civil union or other ritual will be carried out is a matter for the local Christian community to determine within the legal setting of a state. Resolution three permits congregations or ministry sites who choose to do so, to call individuals as rostered leaders who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. Resolution four urges upon Christian brothers and sisters to respect those with whom they disagree and commits the ELCA to allow structured flexibility in decision-making about candidacy and the call process.

Resolutions adopted by CWA 2009

Resolution 1:

"Resolved, that in the implementation of any resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all."

Resolution 2:

"Resolved, that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships."

Resolution 3:

"Resolved, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church."

Resolution 4: (Summary)
- called upon members to respect the consciences of those with whom they disagree;
- declared the intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making about candidacy and the call process;
- eliminated the prohibition of rostered service by members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships;
- recognized and committed to respect the conviction of members who believe that the ELCA should not call or roster people in committed same-gender relationships;
- called for development of accountability guidelines;
- directed that appropriate amendments to ministry policy documents be drafted and approved by the Church Council;
- And urged that this church continue to trust congregations, bishops, synods and others responsible for determining who should be called into public ministry.

Appendix B: 2013 Churchwide Assembly Action and subsequent Church Council Action

Working Group Background Documents
Churchwide Assembly and Church Council Actions

From the 2013 Churchwide Assembly
Memorials Category A4: Same-Gender Couples and Their Families (CA13.03.12)

To receive with the gratitude the memorials of the Eastern North Dakota, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Saint Paul Area, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Metropolitan Chicago, Minneapolis Area, Metropolitan New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana-Kentucky, Southwestern Minnesota, Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods regarding Conversations about Ministering to Same-Gender Couples and Families;

To affirm the commitment made in the social statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust for "pastoral responsibility to all children of God," recognizing "familial relationship as central to nurturing and sustaining trust and security in human relationships and to advocate for public policies that support and protect families" (pp. 19, 24);

To invite and encourage conversations and resource sharing among this church's congregations, rostered and lay leaders and the Conference of Bishops on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church; and

To request the Church Council, in keeping with the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force, to authorize a group to explore this concern and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families.

From the November 2013 Church Council
Ministering to Same-Gender Couples and Their Families (CC13.11.64)

To affirm the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action to invite and encourage conversations and resource sharing among this church's congregations, rostered and lay leaders, and the Conference of Bishops on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church;

To authorize a working group to explore this social concern and to bring recommendations regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families;

To request a sub-group of the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Office of the Presiding Bishop, to identify and recommend individuals to serve on a working group, with voices representing the breadth of viewpoints identified in the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, and including, specifically, representation by members of the LGBTQ community;

To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint a working group; and

To request that the working group bring progress reports to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council beginning in fall 2014 and that a final report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2015 Church Council meeting.

Appendix C: Short biographies of Working Group members

Ms. Tempie Beaman (Diaconal Minister)

Ms. Tempie D. Beaman, a member of Ascension Lutheran Church, Los Angeles for 25 years, is a Diaconal Minister and a graduate of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary '11. In 2014, she was called to serve as the Executive Director of My Friends House, Inc., a community organization working to end hunger and promote healthy living. Diaconal Ministry is a ministry of Word and Service and Ms. Beaman lives out her call in each of the expressions of the ELCA--Churchwide, Synod, and congregation and her community. On the Synodical level, Ms. Beaman served two terms on Synod Council and one on Executive Committee. Over the years, she has served on the synod's nominating committee, reference and counsel committee, African Descent Strategy Team, as synod representative on the Lutheran Social Services of Southern California board, and as conference representative to the Mission Table for Evangelical Outreach. While attending seminary, Ms. Beaman was on the staff of the Disaster Services Division of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest as the agency's primary disaster preparedness and response person for Southern California and Hawaii. She was instrumental in training faith-based agencies, institutions and congregations of all denominations to develop emergency plans and led the Inter-Lutheran Emergency Response Team (I-LERT) in developing a coordinated response strategy.

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Christine Blice-Baum

The Rev. Christine Blice-Baum is a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force serving as a Deputy Joint Base Chaplain, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. Chaplain Blice-Baum received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Youngstown State University in Ohio. She also holds an M.T.S. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary, a M.Div. in parish ministry from Wartburg Theological Seminary, a Doctor of Music Arts in Church Music from the Manhattan School of Music, New York and a Master of Military Art and Science from Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Chaplain Blice-Baum began her service in ordained ministry as a parish pastor at First English Lutheran Church, Oshkosh, Wisconsin and St. John Lutheran Church, Albany, New York. After her calls in those congregations, she served as campus Pastor and music faculty member at Thiel College, Greenville, Pennsylvania before transitioning to the USAF Chaplain Corps where she has served at nine assignments at military installations in the United States, Europe and Asia as well as three deployed locations in Turkey and Iraq.

Bp. Mary Stumme Froiland

Bishop Mary Froiland serves as bishop of the South Central Synod of Wisconsin. She graduated with a BA in Philosophy and English from Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and received an M.Div. from Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Bishop Froiland served three parishes, the first in Petersburg, Ohio, one in Beloit, Wisconsin, and prior to being elected Bishop in 2013, served Luther Valley in Rural Beloit for 13 years.

The Rev. Aaron Fuller

The Rev. Aaron Fuller, born in Pusan, South Korea, was adopted and raised on a family-sized dairy farm near Staples, MN. The Rev. Fuller is a bi-vocational pastor serving two congregations in Portsmouth, VA. He is a Chaplain (Lieutenant) in the U.S. Navy Reserve. He holds a B.S. in Naval Architecture from the U.S. Naval Academy and a M.S. in Secondary Education from Old Dominion University. The Rev. Fuller completed his M.Div. with a concentration in Children, Youth, & Family Ministry (emphasis on Young Adults & Vocation) from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Previous to his entry to seminary, he served for more than eight years on active duty in the U.S. Navy as a submarine warfare/nuclear power officer.

The Rev. Amsalu Geleta

The Rev. Amsalu Geleta, a native of Ethiopia, graduated from Mekane Yesus Seminary in 1995. He served as a teacher and Dean at Christian Education College in Nekemte, in Western Ethiopia. The Rev. Geleta earned an MPHIL in Religious Studies at the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology, an MTH from the Virginia Theological Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry in Missional Evangelism from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington. He served as the interim director of Pastoral Care at Inova Alexandria Hospital and as Chaplain at UMMC. His first call was to St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Springfield, Virginia where he served for almost seven years before accepting a call to Christ Church in Baltimore, Maryland. The Rev. Geleta has been active in both Synodical and Churchwide ministries. He served as a member of the ELCA Church Council and its Executive Committee.

The Rev. David P. Gleason

The Rev. David Gleason is a retired pastor living in Delaware. After receiving his B.S. in secondary education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the Rev. Gleason graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg with a M.Div. in parish ministry. He served as a parish pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, East Berlin, Pennsylvania; Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, Maryland; and Palm Lutheran Church, Palmyra Pennsylvania before serving 24 years as pastor of First Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Rev. Gleason contributed in the working group until March 2015, when he stepped away for health reasons.

Mr. Cliff Haaland

Mr. Cliff Haaland was an operations coordinator and emergency response leader for an oil refinery. Upon retirement, he served as Caring Ministry Director for his congregation and coordinated Lutheran Disaster Response for the Montana Synod. For many years he and his family were active members of American Lutheran in Billings, Montana, and he has also participated on the synodical level. In 2014, Mr. Haaland moved to Madison, Wisconsin to be near family. They are members of Luther Memorial Church in Madison, where Mr. Haaland is currently serving on the congregational council.

Mr. Smith "Smitty" Heavner

Mr. Smith Heavner is from Simpsonville, SC, where he lives out his bi-vocational call to healthcare and ministry. Mr. Heavner is a registered nurse and a graduate student studying clinical and translational research as part of an inaugural class seeking to build a research cohort inside the healthcare system he serves. During his undergraduate studies, he became active in Lutheran Student Movement-USA (LSM) and ultimately served as National President, seeing the organization through the ELCA's major restructuring in 2010. Mr. Heavner also represented LSM to the North American Regional Council of the World Student Christian Federation and helped to re-launch the decades dormant US chapter of Student Christian Movement. More locally, he has long lent his professional skills and amateur talents to his childhood and home congregations (University Lutheran-Clemson and Christ the King-Greenville, SC, respectively) providing blood pressure screenings and health education and offering music in worship.

Ms. Kayla Koterwski

Ms. Kayla Koterwski is a youth representative on the ELCA Church Council from Tea, South Dakota. Her home congregation is Peace Lutheran. She was a voting member at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly from the South Dakota Synod.

Bp. S. John Roth

Bishop S. John Roth serves as bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod. Before becoming bishop, he was pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, Illinois, for 23 years. Bishop Roth has a M.Div. from Christ Seminary-Seminex, a Th.M. from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, a M.A. and a Ph.D in New Testament studies from Vanderbilt University.

Mr. George Watson (Chair)

Mr. George Watson is an attorney in the Detroit area and has been the Secretary of the Southeast Michigan Synod since 1991. He also serves on the Churchwide Committee on appeals and is a member of the ELCA Attorneys Association. Mr. Watson received a B. A. in History from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctor from Wayne State University. He is a member of St. Martin Lutheran Church - Port Huron and an Associate Member of St. James Lutheran Church - Grosse Pointe Farms where he sings in the Choir and serves as an Assisting Minister.

Ms. Suzanne Wise

Ms. Suzanne Wise was chair of the Communal Discernment Task Force and a member of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force (ASCR). Before retiring, she was President of Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas. Ms. Wise has a strong passion about actual service to others as a way of "addressing social concerns" that often is taken for granted or neglected or forgotten.

The Rev. Erma Wolf

The Rev. Erma Wolf is currently pastor at American Lutheran Church in Hawarden, Iowa. She graduated with an M.Div. in parish ministry from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Prior to her call as a pastor at American, the Rev. Wolf served three congregations in Nebraska, Minnesota and South Dakota.

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Carol Yeager, US Air Force

The Rev. Carol Yeager is a Lieutenant Colonel reserve chaplain in the US Air Force serving as the IMA to the Deputy Commandant at the AF Chaplain Corps College at Fort Jackson, SC. Chaplain Yeager also serves Friendship Lutheran Church in Taylorsville, NC. She received her B.S. in Political Science from the University of Illinois. She entered the US Air Force and served 10 years as a line officer before attending seminary. She attended Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa and was ordained in 2002. Chaplain Yeager has served as a parish pastor at Grafton Lutheran Church, Grafton, ND, Luther's Lutheran Church, Richfield, NC, and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Elizabeth City, NC. Her Air Force Chaplain assignments include Grand Forks AFB, ND, Langley AFB, VA, Seymour-Johnson AFB, NC.

Appendix D: Working Group charter

Charter for Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and Their Families Working Group

I. Organization and Purposes
    A. Church Council authorizing action (CC13.11.64)

    To affirm the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action to invite and encourage conversations and resource sharing among this church's congregations, rostered and lay leaders, and the Conference of Bishops on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church;

    To authorize a working group to explore this social concern and to bring recommendations regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families;

    To request a sub-group of the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and Office of the Presiding Bishop, to identify and recommend individuals to serve on a working group, with voices representing the breadth of viewpoints identified in the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, and including, specifically, representation by members of the LGBTQ community;

    To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint a working group; and

    To request that the working group bring progress reports to the Conference of Bishops and Church Council beginning in fall 2014 and that a final report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2015 Church Council meeting.

II. Background Information
     (Excerpt from Memorials Committee Recommendation, 2013 CWA Pre-Assembly Report, Part VII)

    The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a social statement on human sexuality that recognized the ELCA's "pastoral responsibility to all children of God," including specifically "to those who are same-gender in their orientation and to those who are seeking counsel about their sexual self-understanding." (*Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, p. 19).   Moreover, the statement reaffirmed the ELCA's commitment to support "same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection," including "legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services."

    In this statement the ELCA "draws on the foundational Lutheran understanding that the baptized are called to discern God's love in service to the neighbor. In our Christian freedom, we therefore seek responsible actions that serve others and do so with humility and deep respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of others." (p. 19)

    The social statement also noted that "consensus does not exist concerning how to regard same-gender committed relationships, even after many years of thoughtful, respectful, and faithful study and conversation" (p. 19). Four different "conscience-bound" beliefs regarding same-gender sexual behavior were identified. Nonetheless, despite these different convictions the ELCA "draws on the foundational Lutheran understanding that the baptized are called to discern God's love in service to the neighbor. In our Christian freedom, we therefore seek responsible actions that serve others and do so with humility and deep respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of others." (pp. 19-20)

    The actions requested by the group of synod memorials concerning "conversations about ministering to same-gender couples and families" are built on commitments made by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in adopting the social statement on human sexuality.

III. Charter of Responsibilities

A. This working group shall explore ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families and the impact of that ministry on society and the ministry of this church in order to bring recommendations regarding next steps for conversation and resource sharing within the ELCA. Being grounded in Scripture, faith, prayer, and the understanding of the body of Christ, the means to accomplish this work includes:

   1. Attending to what social science is discovering regarding changing family configurations including the increase in legalization of same-gender marriage, attitude shifts within this church on same gender couples and the impact of these changes on the ministry of this church.
   2. Identifying the diverse ministry efforts and resources already available within the ELCA and discovering what may be missing in terms of efforts and resources experienced within the ELCA.
   3. Developing specific recommendations that address all four convictions *[identified in the sexuality social statement]* to foster conversation and sharing of resources throughout this church through such means as:
      a. Identifying or making available a variety of enhanced resources, such as stories or ministry practices arising from various contexts, for individual, congregational and synodical engagement with pastoral ministry (including resources developed by others).
      b. Providing guidance for means to create conversation within the Conference of Bishops.
      c. Expanding communication and information distribution efforts among all elements of the ELCA ecology, especially through the use of new and emerging media.
   4. Developing specific recommendations that address all four convictions for "appropriate next steps in carrying out commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families." This may include:
      a. Guidance for pastoral expectations for how we work with, walk with and minister to same-gender couples and their families as well as minister to clergy who serve in this church.
      b. Guidance for lay persons for how we work with, walk with and minister to same-gender couples and their families.
      c. Guidance for identifying and equipping resource persons who can enable and encourage conversations about this church's ministry with and to same-gender couples and their families.
      d. Guidance for what should be said, if anything, to those who choose not to participate in conversations and resource sharing.

B. Throughout its work, the working group shall:
   1. Consult with the Conference of Bishops and the Program and Services Committee of the Church Council.
   2. Attend and listen to all four bound-conscience convictions regarding human sexuality.
   3. Engage the full diversity of experience, expertise and wisdom among ELCA members in how to understand and provide pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families.
   4. Consult with synods and congregations who are already providing pastoral care to same-gender couples and families, and sharing resources.

IV. Membership and Leadership

1. The working group shall be composed of 10-15 members, consistent with the ELCA's representational principles, and represent the breadth of the four bound conscience convictions, including representation by members of the LGBTQ Community.
2. The working group shall be appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Program and Services Committee.
3. Staff members shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop.
4. The term of service for all members shall be until the completion of the group's work.
5. The working group may invite additional staff, advisors, consultants and guests.

V. Meetings and Funding
1. The full working group shall meet in person up to two times during fiscal 2014 and up to two times in fiscal 2015, as needed.
2. Additional meetings of the working group or sub groups may be held either in person or by conference call.
3. The work of this working group shall be funded by strategic initiative funds.

VI. Timetable for Actions
1. A progress report shall be presented to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council. Progress reports may be presented to subsequent meetings.
2. A final report and possible recommendations shall be brought to the Church Council at its fall 2015 meeting.

**Appendix E: Report of the Working Group survey
by the ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation**

**Conversations and Resources Regarding
Ministering To and With Same-Gender Families
John Hessian, Research and Evaluation
Office of the Presiding Bishop
January 2015**

A questionnaire evaluating the current context of conversations and resources in ministering to and with same-gender couples and their families (M2SGF)[1] was available for six weeks in the fall and early winter of 2014. The evaluation was promoted virally and initiated through the following channels: the ReconcilingWorks network, Lutheran CORE, elca.org and by the members of the M2SGF working group. The intent of the survey was for the members of the M2SGF working group to learn more about the breadth and scope of the diverse ministry efforts and resources throughout the ELCA. The questionnaire is Appendix 1.

A total of 626 responses were received to the survey. The setting for the vast majority of the respondents was a congregation (577 people or 92%). The other 48 respondents (8%) were in various settings (campus ministry, hospitals, seminary, synod offices, churchwide organization, street ministry, etc.). As can be seen in Figure 1, the plurality of respondents are from large cities and their suburbs. This is in contrast to the ELCA's baptized membership, of whom less than a quarter are living in large metropolitan areas and over a quarter are in rural contexts.

**Figure 1:   Community Context of M2SGF Respondents and ELCA Baptized Membership**

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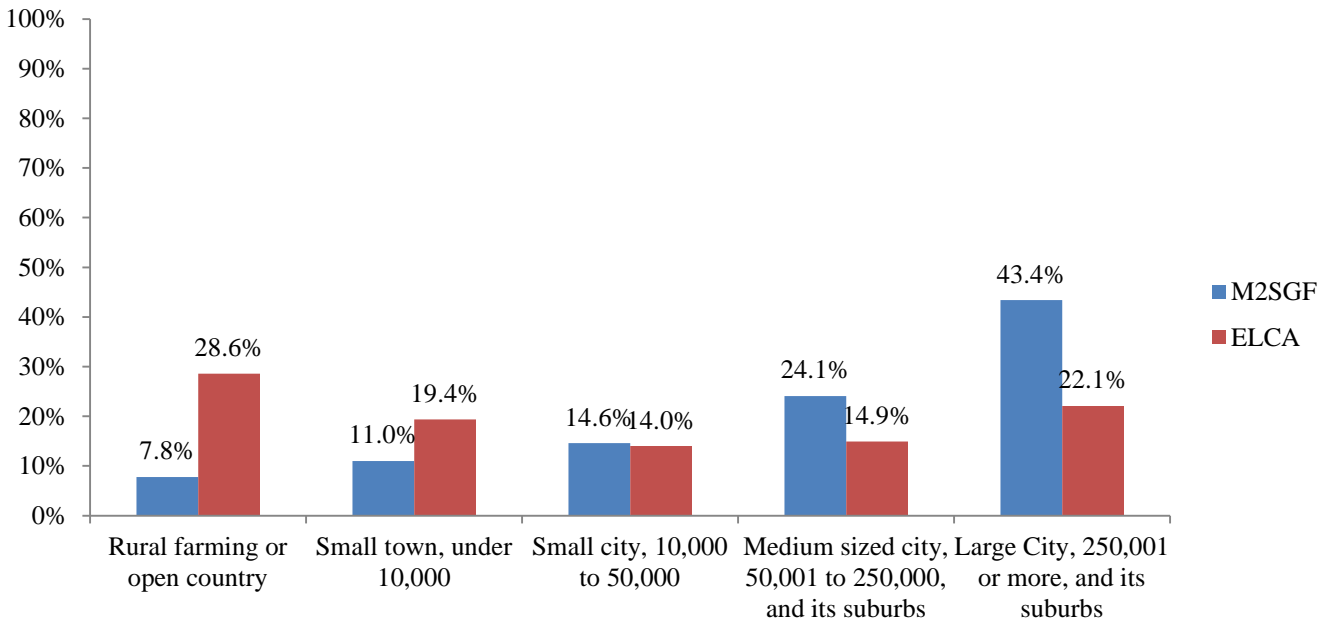
[1] The M2SGF group was formed out of Churchwide Assembly (CA13.03.12) and Church Council (CC13.11.64) actions "to explore this social concern and to bring recommendations regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families" and that "a final report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2015 Church Council meeting."

Figure 2 compares the weekly worship attendance of the congregations attended by the M2SGF respondents to typical ELCA attendees. For example, 16 percent of M2SGF respondents attend congregations with 50 or fewer in worship, and sixty-six percent attend congregations with 150 or fewer in worship. For worshipers as a whole, ten percent attend worship in congregations with 50 or fewer and 46 percent attend congregations with 150 or fewer in worship.

Figure 2: **Percent of M2SGF Respondents Compared to All Worshipers by the Size of Their Congregations (based on worship attendance)**
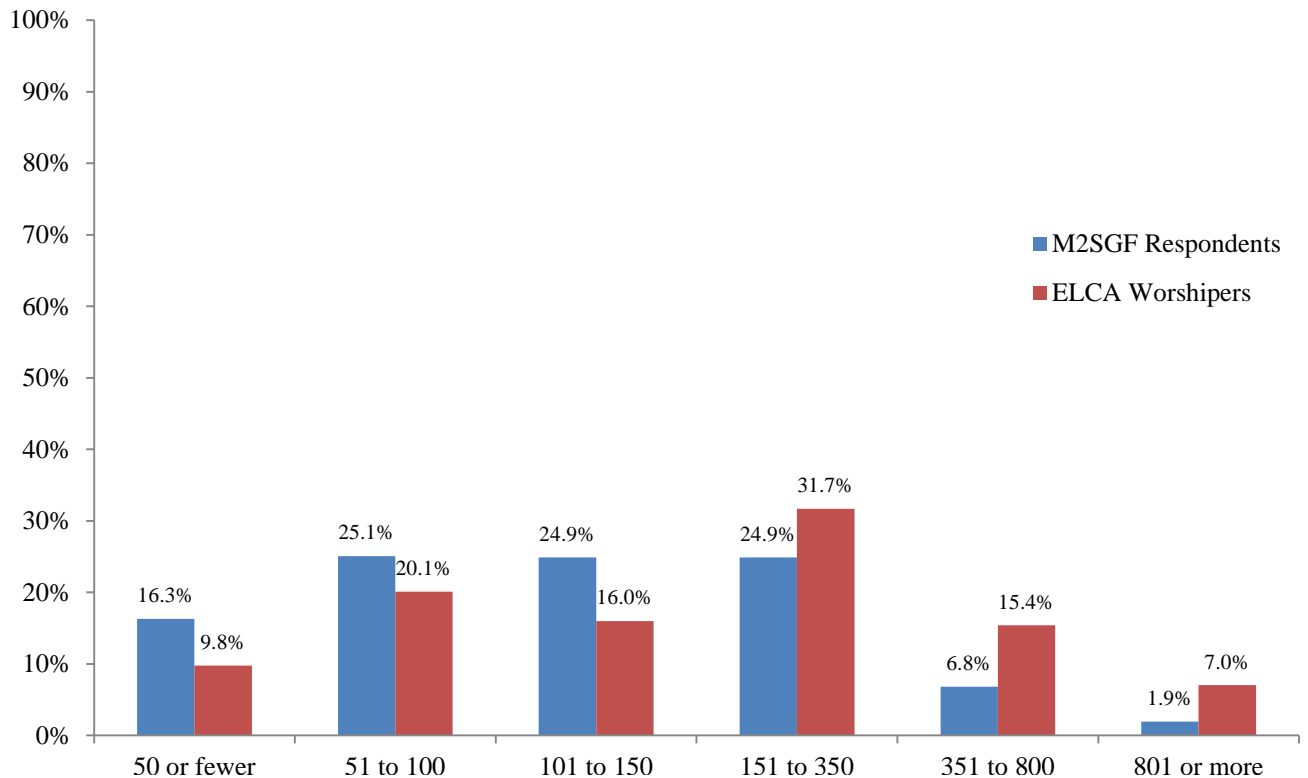
Figures 1 and 2 show that M2SGF respondents are largely from small congregations in medium to large cities and their suburbs while typical ELCA members are largely from small congregations in rural areas and small towns.

Question 2 of the survey asked the following question: In the last year, have there been noticeable conversations in your ministry setting (formally or informally) or organized study (adult forums, Bible studies) about ministry to same-gender couples and/or their families? The answers are almost evenly divided.

Question 2: **Were there conversations or study in the last year about ministering to same-gender couples and their families in your ministry setting?**

Yes	51.4%
No	48.6%

Questions 2a – 2c relate to those who answered "Yes" to question 2. Question 2a assesses the nature of the conversations (formal, informal or both). Question 2b identifies the initiator of the conversation, and Question 2c assesses the impact of the conversations.

Question 2a: Were the conversations formal (organized group study) or informal (occasional informal conversations between ministry staff and ministry participants or members)? (N = 322)
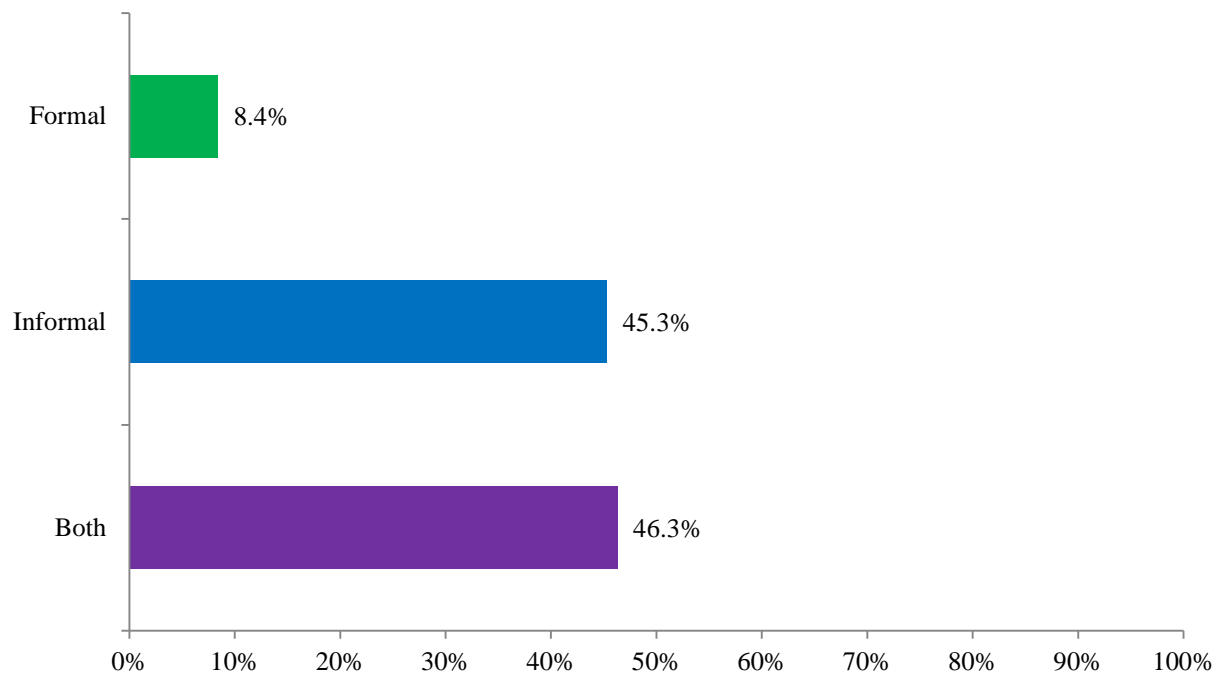
Question 2b: Who was the primary initiator of the discussion? (N = 320)
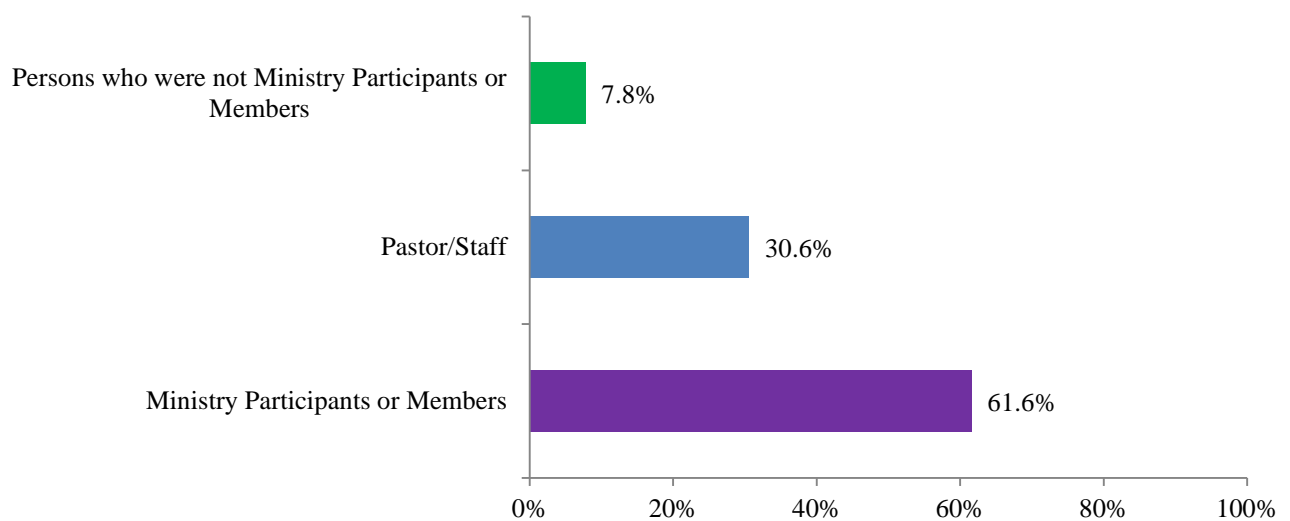
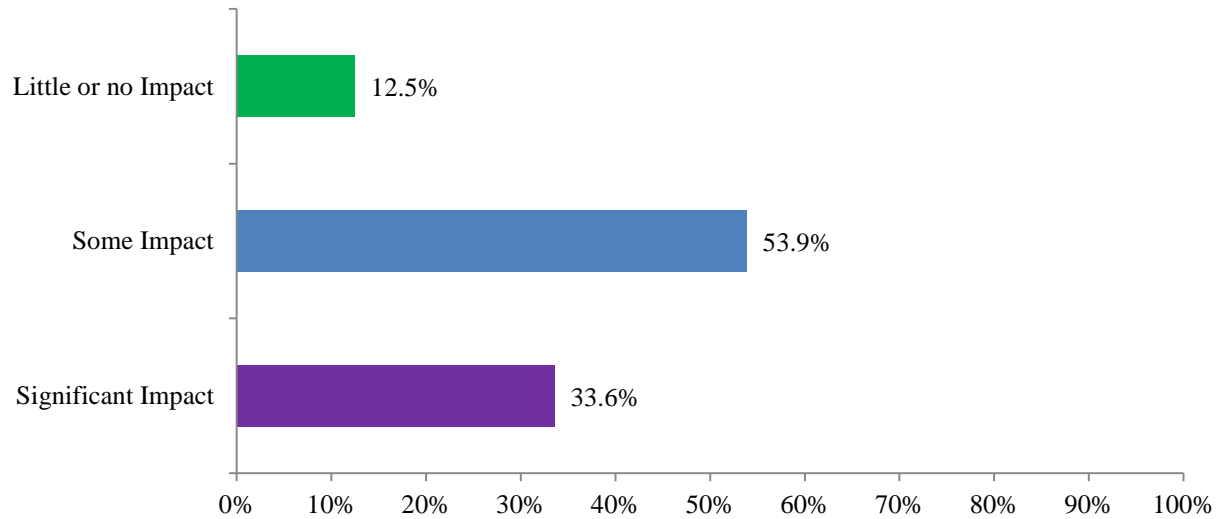**Question 2c:** **How much of an impact have the conversations had in your ministry setting? (N = 321)**

The primary initiators of these conversations are, more often than not, ministry participants or regular members. The conversations are typically not started by the pastor or outside people and tend to be informal. Also, members feel the conversations usually have some or even significant impact on their ministry settings. (Please see the comments in Appendices 4, 5 and 6 to get a sense of the impact these conversations have had.)

Question 3 asked if the conversations were among people of the same or differing convictions.

Question 3: **Were the conversations primarily among people of like minds or did the conversations involve people of differing convictions? (N = 319)**

|	
Primarily People of One Mind	58.3%
People of Differing Convictions	41.7%

Question 4 asked if formal printed resources were used in these conversations.

Question 4: **At any point in the conversations, were formal printed resources used to help facilitate?   (N = 320)**

No	64.7%
Yes	35.3%

The conversations are usually not aided by formal printed resources. However when the conversations utilize resources, a variety have been used. The responses to question 4a identify the diversity of resources used in the roughly one-third of conversations that utilized formal printed resources. (See Question 4a). The open-ended "other" responses to question 4a (n = 35) were varied as well. (See Appendix 2 for the full text of the comments.)

Question 4a: What resources were used? (Please check all that apply.)
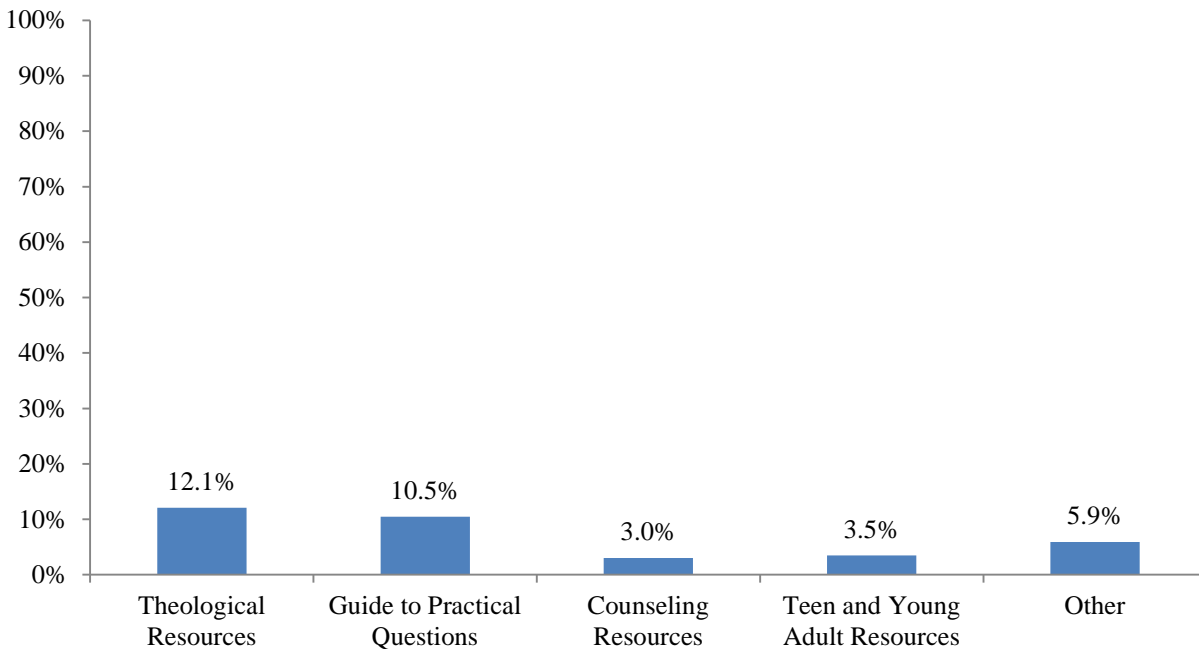
Question 5 was designed to find out what resources would be helpful moving forward. It is apparent that most of the respondents feel some resources should be developed. Only 10 percent of the respondents felt no resources would be helpful and two-thirds felt some practical resources could help their ministry settings. The responses themselves are included in Appendix 3.

Question 5:   **Please indicate what resources, if any, would be most helpful in assisting the people in your ministry setting to have productive conversations about ministry to or with same-gender couples and/or their families. (Please check all that apply.)**
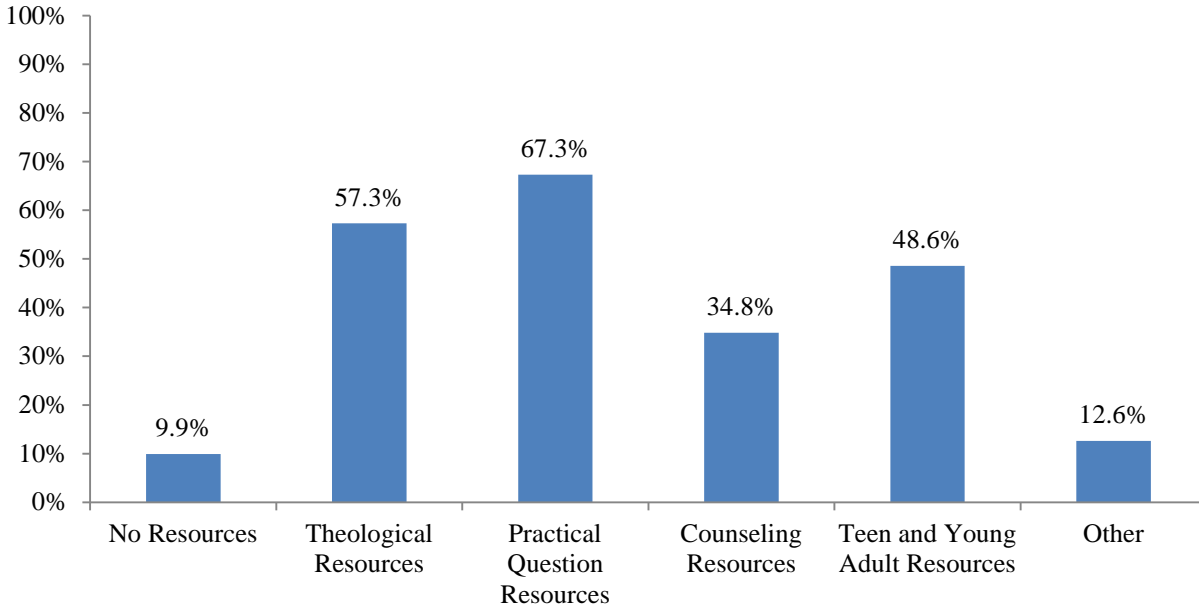
Question 6 asked if there were intentional ministry to or with same-gender couples. Of the 217 people who responded in the affirmative to the question, 199 provided open-ended responses. The overwhelming response related to being a Reconciling in Christ congregation (n = 112). This means their congregations/settings "invite people of all sexual orientations and gender identities to participate fully in their ministries' congregational and worship life together." Any response related to "welcoming all" or being "fully inclusive of LGBT people" are grouped with this response. Basically, this means that LGBT people are considered normal in the life of the congregation/ministry setting, and have the same experience and opportunities as all members. One respondent indicated, "I'm not sure what you mean by 'intentional.' Our gay and lesbian members and same-gender couples participate in all aspects of ministry, from council leadership roles to service ministry in the city." (See Appendix 4 for the full text of the comments.)

Question 6:   **Is your ministry currently engaged in intentional ministry to or with same-gender couples and their families? (N = 618)**

No	64.9%
Yes	35.1%

Question 7 surveyed if there was support for family members of those in same-gender relationships. Slightly more than half of the responses indicated they were not.

Question 7: **Is your ministry currently providing support to family members who have a relative that is in a same-gender relationship?**

No	55.3%
Yes	44.7%

Two hundred seventy-two people answered that their ministries were providing support to family members with a relative in a same-gender relationship, and 215 provided specific information about that support. The most frequent response (n = 56) was that these family members and couples were treated the same as all other members. The theme of having full and normal participation is repeated in the responses to question 7 just as it was to question 6. Here are some representative comments: "They are part of the norm." "[They are] part of the general ministry of congregational life." or "The support looks like the family support provided to any other congregant. Sickness, continuing ed, death, life, marriage."

The second most frequent response was about pastoral care/counseling (n = 44). There were 37 responses that went a little further and said that they were intentionally welcoming/affirming, an ally or "publicly intentional" in their welcome. There were 11 comments from respondents in non-affirming situations. In these contexts, they were helping "families struggling to understand the new reality" or family members who are "less supportive or in a challenging region of the country." One respondent said, "My church provides support to all people for all burdens. Reconciling the dissonance that is created when someone loves a relative but wishes they weren't gay can be a burden, and while other church members don't feel it is a burden… we are still there for each other. We are the body of Christ and the focus of the support is to help people realize that the 'we' means everyone." (See Appendix 5 for the full text of the comments.)

Other Comments
There were a total of 164 comments on how the conversation could be enhanced. (See Table 6.)

The most common response was that resources were needed to start conversations or for education (n = 27). Here are some comments. "We are just starting this process. I wish there were guides on having small group conversations. Something like sample questions." "It is very important that congregations have these resources so that folks who have not been intentional about learning about this kind of ministry have resources to utilize."

The second most common response was that having gay couples in church was normal or that they were a Reconciling in Christ Church (n = 26). "This congregation settled the issue several years ago, is open and welcoming to gay individuals/couples, has made that known to the community, and is ready to move on." "We're past the conversation. We've been welcoming since 1992."

Although they were not well-represented in the responses, a few people with significant reservations about the direction of the ELCA shared their objections. Ten respondents felt that promoting position four was hurting the church; five felt that they were being judged because they were against gay marriage but they still support and love all people (love the sinner, hate the sinful behavior). Following are some of their comments: "More needs to be done to integrate perspectives 1 and 2 (page 20) of the social statement into the total program of the ELCA." "This initiative is a great example of what's wrong with the ELCA and the direction it's heading – so far removed from the Bible. We need to focus on bringing people together and not labeling groups and catering to one group over another. Stop your liberal, divisive agenda. Focus on having real, Bible-based, discipleship-focused church. Communities will grow organically from authentic, meaningful relationships with the church and its people. They don't grow

from manufactured, man-made agendas." "Same-gender marriages are not normal; I don't think we should be promoting or stamping our approval on these marriages. I do believe we should work with same gender couples and have them in our church and love them like brothers and sisters." "Please quit shoveling this stuff at us. These people are welcome in our church but we do not need to condone their sins."

Fourteen responses were that their ministry settings do not discuss this and/or discussing it would possibly cause more harm than good. "I am, at this point, reticent to 'poke a skunk.'" "Church policy is strictly a don't ask, don't tell policy, [it] could still blow up into the congregation leaving the church if the pot was stirred about same gender couples." "Generally, people have avoided conversation about 'the gay issue' in attempts to avoid any more potential controversy from members who left our congregation and may be planning to return."

Table 6: **Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.**

We need resources/ways to start the conversation and/or educate people	27
We are all children of God. Same-gender couples are normal in our setting. We are Reconciling in Christ.	26
The ELCA is only focused on position 4. The ELCA needs to integrate positions 1 and 2 into the life of the church.	10
There are no conversations in our setting and/or these conversations could cause division.	14
Specific LGBTQ marriage rites/liturgies need to be developed.	6
We love and support all but believe homosexuality is sinful behavior.	5
More needs to be done for transgendered people.	3
Anxiety needs to be reduced.	3
There are no or very few gay people in our setting.	3
ReconcilingWorks resources should be used.	3

(See Appendix 6 for the full text of the other comments.)

Conclusion

An online questionnaire designed to help the members of the M2SGF working group better understand the breadth and scope of ministry efforts and resources about same gender relationships and families in the ELCA was available in the fall and early winter of 2014. There was intentional promotion of the survey to those in the church holding all four bound conscience positions regarding human sexuality. The respondents to the survey were often from smaller congregations in medium to large cities or suburbs. Only about half have known of any conversations in their ministry settings about same-gender couples/families, and the conversations were mostly informal, initiated by people in the pews and not aided by any formal printed resource. The vast majority of respondents would like some resources, and the most useful resource would be a guide "to answering practical questions." Currently, almost two-thirds of the respondents said they have seen no intentional ministry to or with same-gender couples and over half are not aware of any support for family members of gay individuals in their settings. This could be because no openly gay members attend their congregations or they are simply not aware of them. Of those with intentional ministry and support for families of people in same gender relationships, the common theme was that LGBTQ members have full and normal inclusion in the life of their congregations/ministry settings. Finally, there was a minority of respondents who felt that bound conscience positions one and two were not fully valued in the life of the ELCA.

Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families

This questionnaire was developed by the Ministry to and with Same Gender Families (M2SGF) working group. M2SGF was established in response to a 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly action. The working group is tasked with exploring the current context of conversations and resources in ministering to and with same-gender couples and their families. The questionnaire will, in part, assist M2SGF in learning more about the breadth and scope of the diverse ministry efforts and resources throughout the ELCA. We are intentionally seeking responses from each of the four convictions outlined in the ELCA's social statement on human sexuality. To learn more about the working group, please click here (<http://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/blogs/NewsBlog/56>). Thank you for your participation!

If you have questions about questionnaire content, please contact Jodi Slattery at Jodi.Slattery@elca.org. If you have questions about questionnaire functionality, please contact Adam DeHoek at Adam.DeHoek@elca.org. Thank you for your participation!

1. Is your primary setting for ministry a congregation or another setting?
   ○ A congregation
   ○ Another setting (Please describe): [   ]

[Next Page]

**Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families**

1a. Please describe the area where your congregation is located.

1b. What is the average weekly worship attendance of your congregation?

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Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families

2. In the last year have there been noticeable conversations in your ministry setting (formally or informally) or organized study (adult forums, Bible studies) about ministry to same-gender couples and/or their families?

○ No

○ Yes

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Conversations about Ministry to Same-Gender Couples

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Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families

2a. Were the conversations formal (organized group study) or informal (occasional informal conversations between ministry staff and ministry participants or members)?

- ○ Formal
- ○ Informal
- ○ Both

2b. Who was the primary initiator of the discussion?

- ○ Ministry participants or members
- ○ Pastor/Staff
- ○ Persons who were not ministry participants or members

2c. How much of an impact have the conversations had in your ministry setting?

- ○ A significant impact
- ○ Some impact
- ○ Little or no impact

3. Were the conversations primarily among people of like minds or did the conversations involve people of differing convictions?

- ○ Primarily people of one mind
- ○ People of differing convictions

4. At any point in the conversations, were formal printed resources used to help facilitate?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

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Resources

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**Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families**

4a. What resources were used? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Resources addressing theological matters

☐ A guide to answering practical questions

☐ Resources for counseling

☐ Resources for talking to teenagers and young adults

☐ Other (Please describe): [   ]

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Helpful Resources

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Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families

5. Please indicate what resources, if any, would be most helpful in assisting the people in your ministry setting to have productive conversations about ministry to or with same-gender couples and/or their families. (Please check all that apply.)

☐ I don't believe any resources would be helpful.

☐ Resources addressing theological matters

☐ A guide to answering practical questions

☐ Resources for counseling

☐ Resources for talking to teenagers and young adults

☐ Other (Please Describe): _____

6. Is your ministry currently engaged in intentional ministry to or with same-gender couples and their families?

○ No

○ Yes

What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

7. Is your ministry currently providing support to family members who have a relative that is in a same-gender relationship?

○ No

○ Yes

What is the focus of the support being provided?

8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Helpful Resources

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Would you be willing to share your contact information with the group working on this topic?
○ Yes, I'm interested in sharing my contact information with the working group

○ No, I'm not interested.

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Contact Information

Questionnaire on Conversations and Resources regarding
Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families

First Name: [   ]

Last Name: [   ]

Email: [   ]

[Submit]

Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust
Sermons disseminated through social media.
An article copied and distributed
voting information on marriage
resources on vocabulary
A two-page ouline that provided a historical context for our town hall style discussion of same-sex marriage.
RIC documents
synod statement on performing SG marriages in church
books
Rec Works brochures
GCN video
the Bible
Reconciling Works Training in Sioux Fal,SD in Sept.
The Bible
The study commissioned by the ELCA
historical info, quotes from bishops
Video chronicle of both sides of the issue
Book Study
ReconcilingWorks "Conversations about Marriage" resource
resources from reconciling works
RIC/ReconcilingWorks materials
sunday bulletin clearly welcomes all
Wedding resource by you all
The Welcoming Statement task force utilized resources from Reconciling Works. They then created resources of their own in order to engage and educate the congregation.
Drafted text for national synod vote
The Bible
Reconciling WOrks INformation/RIC program
Internal documents from rich history of advocacy within congregation
Building an Inclusive Church manual
Articles written by Phsycologists, Articles about Lutherans Concerned
Resources from ReconcilingWorks. See http://www.reconcilingworks.org/resources/ric-resources-menu-item. We especially used their resource called "Our Congregation Is Already Welcoming, Why Do We Need to Say So?" Also, we had a speaker from ReconcilingWorks present on marriage during our Adult Forum hour, with about 60 people attending.
Review of orders of blessing/marriage that have been used with same gender couples
liturgy, devotional book, videos, blogs
Mission statement and local newspaper
ReconcilingWorks literature

resources which assume positions 1 and 2 in the Sexuality social statement and how to minister to same gendered people from that perspective.

bible study

same gender marriage service

Ideas of what a congregation should cover including what it means to love your neighbors.

Resources regarding biblical matters

A gender non specific wedding rit

It's not an issue here- we have many same gender couples and families and it's not new

Resources for probing real, underlying issues behind opposition

we have moved on

Rites for celebrating same-gender weddings

pastoral care resources

I don't believe any resoures are necessary.

Marriage conversations resources

Resources for studying the issue.

resources to talk to kids. our cong is RIC for years.

Resources for describing how change happens

Formal liturgies for same gender life events

A guide to making church building queer- and trans-friendly

Not sure

Liturgical support for weddings, etc.

addresses with transgender individuals who could be contacted for talks in, for instance, a seminary

examples of other congregational experiences

Finding other queer people to share their journey of faith.

Marriage service templates

resources for families

resouce for conseling ministers

Reconciliation resources with deeply hurt lgbtq individuals

ACTUAL STATEMENT

Not sure what would be helpful

inclusive language for church forms, donor acknowledgement, etc.

coming home materials for LGBT families, and for LGBT college students

wedding service materials

worship resources

Resources specifically for pre-marital counseling for same-gender couples

Ideas for adapting or tweaking traditional aspects of worship, Christian community, and hospitality

Left ELCA for UCC Open and Affirming

resources for talking about this in our own congregation

Wedding ceremony resources

Curriculum that respectfully presents the biblical interpretations of both sides of the Christian spectrum to help people understand why their friends believe what they do.. and to help them discover their own beliefs.

N/A

parenting guide

where in the Bible is homosexuality condoned?

liturgical resources

preparing for transgender guests

Resources discussing how many people in one's own life are LGBT.

Divorce and Relationship Break-up issues
Guide to becoming a more inviting environment.
links to Youtube videos focusing on Christians who are LGBT
healthcare & end-of-life resources
our congregation already accepts same-gender couples and people we know are gay, lesbian, etc
Review of what the current policies of the ELCA are
Worship resources, Marriage Rite
Resources for liturgy, blessing of same sex marriages
Resources addressing the origins of homophobia
I do not believe in same sex couples
Marriage ceremony
development of marriage resources for same gendered couples
Materials to support biblical teaching and not promoting modern secular agendas.
Education on LGBT clergy
We are fully LGBTQ friendly
We do have same sex couples in the congregation but there are not discussions concerning
Rite for same-gender marriage ceremony, adult education resources
Resources for families with young children
stories of LGBTQ Christians
resources for consience bound congregtions
Resources supporting marriages versus holy unions
Marriage rites and other blessings
We need resources that relate personal stories from the perspective of GLBT couples and families themselves so we can hear FROM THEM about what sort of ministry would be most helpful. My congregation is not much interested in hearing from straight people tell others how to live their lives. Also, wee need liturgical resources for marriage that are appropriate for GLBT couples. The marriage rite included in the ELW could be used with only a few words changed, but copyright law does not allow us to make changes, even small ones.
Booklet to explain why some scriptures expired in the last 6 years, after thousands of years of applicability
Liturgical license to utilize the ELW marriage rite for same gender couples
liturgy and progressive language guides for older folk
Transgender resources advocacy groups
Resources around various cultural perspective on same-gender relationships
resources to provide up to date language to help folk understand terms like queer and questioning, etc
ELCA approved rites for same gender weddings for use in states where they are legal and rites for same gender relationships for those those who are in publicly accountable life long monogamous same gender relationships

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
The usual - visiting shut-ins, hospital visits, Bible study, etc.
The couple is active in our faith community. And they are treated as two in our congregation.
at this time just intentional pastoral care
Counseling, performing weddings, reaching out to LGBTQ community.
Same gender couples are fully integrated into our congregational life and ministry. All discussions and programs for couples fully include same-gender couples.
Reconciling in Christ Ministry
Same gender couples and families participate in ministry like everyone else. They get married here, they have children, they are baptized, etc. There's really no difference. We hang a rainbow flag outside to indicate to passersby that we are open in this particular way (since being RIC means nothing to a non-Lutheran).
Informal outreach to one same gender couple that has worshiped with us before and expresses an interest in returning in the future.
assisting LGBT Persia, families, caregivers address loss and grief.
RIC congregation
We are an RIC congregation with many active same-gender couples and families. They serve in leadership and can now legally marry in our state.
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation and our signage and website make it clear immediately that we are open and welcoming.
We live it.
We are a Reconciling in Christ Lutheran Church; we have an active ministry with very active LGBTQ members and in the community at large.
Reconciling in Christ... conversation and commitment to welcome..no intentional 'programming' at this point.
Reconciling in Christ designation
hiring a queer woman as pastor
We are a Reconciling congregation. I am an out, married, gay pastor. Through public sharing of that I have done a fair amount of counseling with people outside the congregation.
We are RIC. The pastor often has confidential conversations supporting individuals and families. The congregation regularly notes/advertises/attends events relative to LGBT families/concerns. Prayers and preaching reflect our RIC status.
Conducting marriage services for same-gender couples
Reconciling In Christ program through ReconcilingWorks. Our congregation has an intentional welcome and commitment to serving all of God's beloved.
welcoming, supporting relationships, marriage
As a person, a parent, and a straight ally, I am attending PFLAG meetings and local meetings regarding faith and sexuality issues.
Treating a family as a family and not as a token or "special case."
Music hunger relief winter relief for homeless mission support in El Salvador, Slovakia, Madagascar School Supplies for impoverished families Food pantry
Pastoral care with a married couple, of which the husband has come out Premarriage work with a same-sex couple
The church is skirting around the conversation because they are waiting from direction from the church wide office. We have LGBT families, and people who have family members who are LGBT who feel marginalized because the church is treating them like they are less then human
I wish we had an intentional ministry around this topic! I am brand new to this congregation, and it is not RIC. Some people would like to have that conversation, others are opposed. I fully support full inclusion of LGBTQ people and families into the church.
Reconsiling in Christ

12/17/2014

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
Although we are moving to an RIC vote in January after which efforts may be more intentional in and around our neighborhood. Right now our same gender couples are all childless.
Our congregation is Reconciled in Christ, and welcomes and supports people of all genders, gender relationship statuses, ages, social status, etc.
RIC information is available; RIC logo is present on all our publications and website
Have taken a formal vote for inclusion and have a welcome statement posted on all doors.
Being a Reconciling in Christ congregation, participating with Reconciling Works' local chapter.
we are an RIC congregation & the pastor does same-gender weddings
intentional inclusion; outreach activities; full participation within the congregation
We are just starting to talk about becoming RIC.
Welcoming them as Christ in our midst.
Reconciling in Christ sine 1987 LGBTQ play integral roles as participants, members and leaders of the church We perform and host same gender marriages.
Political advocacy for state-wide same-gender marriage initiative
I work with the United States Air Force, helping support their LGBT community on base. We provide space the LGBT Community Service projects and perform same-gender marriages for them.
We have a group in our congregation whose task it is to intentionally welcome community members.
Same Sex Weddings RIC Congregation Senior Pastor is President of local ReconcilingWorks Chapter
Pre-marital and post-wedding counseling
Outreach; AIDS ministry.
Our congregation is comprised of approximately 50% GLBTQAI individuals. Most of these people are in committed relationships. Every ministry we do includes the question of how this includes/embraces this community.
We are an RIC congregation. Everything we do is intentionally integrated.
We have a couple planning a wedding.
Many things. First, and primary is welcoming with specific activity to encourage welcoming all, posters, small group and informal discussion of lifestyle and Christian attitude.
-The chapel has been used for a same gender marriage and community members have attended earlier in October 2014.
Not that I am aqare of
This is a new ministry for me. Currently working with RIC congregations/pastors and will branch out from there.
It is a part of everything we do. A large percentage of the congregation is LGBT and we are at the forefront in working for equality in our community.
Active booth at Bend Pride, host PFLAG, and are public in our affirmation of marriage equality and full inclusion of the LGBT community
RIC; inclusive language in liturgy; Welcoming statement; acknowledging same gender weddings of church members;
Everyone is treated the same
I am currently a teacher, but have a masters degree from a lutheran seminary. I am simply answering questions about the small congregation I attend in the Ohio River valley.
We have at least one same-sex married couple in our congregation currently with three foster children.   Also some members of our congregation, including our Pastor, have helped to establish a local gay and lesbian community resource center for advocacy and support.
Our church is openly welcoming toward same gender couples and families including weddings.
We have been a Reconciling in Christ congregation since 1999 and have LGBT people who serve in all aspects of the life of the church
Counseling, pastoral care, weddings, blessings, etc. Many of the staff members and volunteers in the ministry I am involved are in same gender relationships. We have a deliberate outreach to the LGBTQIA community that is active and well known.
offer same-gender weddings (long history) former pastor wrote guide for weddings recognition in directory listings, anniversary prayers partnered lesbian pastor on staff; spouse received   benefits

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
WE are RIC, Pastor has posted Reconciling Works flyer in bulletin through October
many marriages after the legalization of same sex marriage working on transgender issues
RIC congregation; welcoming statement; welcoming SG weddings; welcoming SG couples and their families into the life of the congregation
Weddings. We have an out gay pastor.
Reconciling In Christ congregation performing same-gender weddings of couples who are members
intentionally seeking out to engage the LGBTQ community. Marching in Pride parades
My pastor is doing marital counseling with same-gender couples.
RIC
We have two same sex couples involved with our ministry and are open to same sex weddings.
Hosting same-gender marriages. It's been an RIC congregation since 1992 and marriage equality has been a reality here for at least two years. Holy Unions were hosted prior to that.
On leave from call. Part of this process will be getting divorced and coming out of the closet.
This is tricky to answer - we have been RIC for almost 30 years and same gender couples are an important part of our community and well integrated. I think we need some resources for people transitioning. We have forums on Queer theology, an annual forum by Reconciling Works staff, we include references to same sex couples in prayers, sermons, etc. We have been "marrying" same sex couples for about 15 years.
It's a book study at the Campus LGBT Center
Our church in suburban Detroit is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation that is truly welcoming to ALL.
I am a gay priest, married to my partner, called by two congregations. Our websites and some other materials specifically indicate that we're welcoming. Several parishioners have LGBT children or siblings.
I am an out lesbian pastor in a same-sex relationship. They are learning how to care for us as a couple/family. We also are attracting LGBTQ people, and I am an important point of contact/support.
We are RIC. We offer periodic learning events and actively reach out to the LGBTQ community
It is on the cusp and we are exploring what would be most helpful.
RIC for 7 years; 10% LGBTQ members; weddings/blessing services (not legal weddings in our state); supporting 2 out seminarians
intentionality is all are welcome. But we do not have a "group" or intentional ministry to or for LGTBQ.
We have a "Rainbow Ministry" focused on intentional welcome. We operate a booth during the local GLBT Pride Festival providing information about our congregation and inclusion in general. We also operated a "Sacred Space" booth this year. At that booth we did not advertise our church but we offered blessings, prayers, communion and conversation with anyone who wanted to stop in. Our state also addressed same-gender marriage this year and we provided adult education around this.
Advertised as RIC, connected with same gender couples
We have been RIC for 25 years and are fully inclusive and welcoming and society catching going down the path to where we've been for a couple of decades is great!
Providing a long-term, intentional worshipping community where same-gender couples and their families are welcomed into the wilderness to be called, equipped and sent by God.
The pastor publicly, through letters to the editor, makes sure the freedom of the Christian is taught so that others know gay marriage is acceptable to many Christians.
Reconciling in Christ
Conversations with fellow co-workers who are LGBT. Letting them know that I am a CLM and that my ministry is to let them know that, God made them exactly the way he wanted too and that God loves them. From that point the conversation could go anywhere.
nothing at this point
Inclusion and unconditional love.
we have several same gender families and are ministering to/with them just as we do with other families.
We are an RIC congregation and participate in Pride Events in our city.

12/17/2014

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
None on this topic
Welcome Statement scattered around Reno
Inclusiveness is a hallmark of our congregation's ministry.
Performing weddings
We have a "former ELM roster" pastor. Much of the "intentional" ministry is focused on the campus ministry. The ministry among adult individuals is primarily less formal and more relational. And, then we have our general family ministries, which includes, but does not specifically address, LGBT families and their unique factors.
working toward becoming Reconciled in Christ
Reconciling in Christ/Reconciling Works
We have been RIC for almost 20 years,we are located in a city open to a diverse population, we have a number of members both single and couples openly gay and in relationships. They are part of the congregation's ministry,active and involved.
NA
While our congregation does not have an intentional ministry for same-gender couples and their families, we have had same-gender couples in our congregation for many years, and they and their families are integrated into existing ministries. I don't have a good sense of whether an intentional ministry is needed at our church.
Being a Reconciling In Christ congregation that invites and welcomes LGBT
The same kind of intentional ministry that we do with all of our members and couples.
RIC congregation
Recently became an RIC congregation and looking how to live that out.
Support and counseling for same-gender couples in the "sandwich generation"--They have aging parents and adult children with medical, housing and income issues.
Meals on Wheels, Soup Kitchen, Sr. Companion, Communion delivery, driver, bible study.
There are a small group of us who firmly stand in support of diversification. Our minister, however, is reluctant to "make waves". Will not take a stand and remains neutral for political reasons.
weddings, welcome, and inclusion our pastor is gay and married we have been an RIC congregation for 14 years
Reconciling Congregation active in that purpose in varying ways
We have gay and lesbian members, including our pastor, but not couples.
We are welcoming of all
Publicize weddings, make sure our Sunday school materials show diverse families
All aspects of family and marriage counseling are available to all members, including LGBTQ.
hosting social events
Our congregation is an RIC congregation with a very explicit statement of welcome to LGBTQ people, who are involved in the leadership of the congregation at every level.
RIC ELM
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that advertises that fact liberally, participates in the local Pride activities with other RIC congregations, and has a lesbian staff person who organizes an LGBT gathering with the pastor once/month. We have had numerous gay and lesbian couples marry in our church, mostly members but some friends of the congregation.
I'm speaking about Advent Lutheran, NYC, where I've been part of the clergy team (but have now relocated to Minneapolis!) At Advent we have celebrated weddings for gay and lesbian couples, prayed for them in worship, honored their anniversaries, etc. Our full-time pastor has counseled same-gender couples, posts pictures of their weddings along with others in her office, baptizes babies born to same-gender couples, and all pastoral care available to any members.
Emphasis on welcoming all without mention, currently, of sexual orientation
We are, at this time, being publicly opening and welcoming. We have been hosting fundraising events for organizations that support LGBT youth in the city. We have had the opportunity to be featured in community newspapers.
We have same-gender couples who are members, and have had commitment ceremonies (before same-sex marriage was legal in PA) at the church. They are respected and well-liked members of the congregation.

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
There is a same-gender parents small group that meets regularly.
We are a radically inclusive and hospitable RIC congregation. We had a same sex wedding going on in the church at the same time we were hosting a Boy Scout campout! We have a huge sign that says "ALL ARE WELCOME!" and we mean it.
We participate in Atlanta Pride, some same-gender couples have received counseling
Welcoming, inviting and acceptance in our Church ministry
RIC
We are helping a couple who plan to marry in our church.
Reconciling in Christ congregation
welcoming to all, weddings, blessing services, watching use of "traditional" language
Music Worship
We have been a Reconciling in Christ congregation for 10 years. We are openly welcoming to all people. We had a movie night centered around "The Bible Tells Me So" with our members and members of another local congregation who wanted to further explore the issue. We walk in the local Pride Parade to show our support of the LGBTQ community. We have an RIC service every year and our special music is provided by a local LGBTQA choir. We are continuing to explore ways to further reach out to the LGBTQ a community with the message of God's unconditional love.
Discussion regarding our pastor's role and use of the church in same gender marriages in light of recent legislation allowing same gender marriages within the state.
all are welcome
Our congregation has had talks about same gender marriage in our church for the past year; we are now doing a survey which showed that 63% of the votes indicate fully supportive of same-gender marriages being done at our church. No formal changes have been enacted at this time.
Feeding the homeless.
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation
As the only out lesbian Lutheran pastor in the synod, and as a hospital chaplain, I"m involved in the LGBT community as a spiritual resource, and in the Lutheran and hospital community also as a resource. Pastors frequently call on me when they have questions or concerns.
We celebrate Pride month, do an annual National Coming Out Day service, support local orgs. working on full inclusion.
LGBTQ social group, congregation has hosted same sex marriage ceremonies, etc.
We have had several same-sex weddings
We're an RIC congregation with full inclusion well established. Our full welcome is on our website and everything we publish.
We are a reconciling congregation
My ministry is engaged in intentional ministry by being intentionally welcoming to all people, including explicitly welcoming LGBTQI people through welcome statements, having an out gay pastor with a husband in the congregation and treating LGBTQI people as regular members of the congregation, not a special interest group.
Our daughter is bisexual and living in NE Mpls. I would like to know of Lutheran churches in the area that may have a number of same-gender couples and also single people who are homosexual.
Active in local chapter of Lutherans Concerned, internship program for LGBTQ seminarians, pastoral care to LGBTQ persons and their families.
RIC congregation. Conduct union ceremonies.
We have many same-gender families in our congregation who have been fully welcome and present for years. We don't have any intentional ministry towards them, but this is not o say they are not present in our church.
Just accepting all who walk through the door
We have many same gender couples and we minister to all. Many of our church staff are in same gender relationships
Intentional outreach to Same-gender loving people and their families.
Promoting Reconciling in Christ Congregations

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
We proudly proclaim ourselves a REconciling in Christ congregation. We welcome sgc/families. Although I am a short-term Interim pastor (therefore no opportunity for knowing folks over a long period of time) I sense that people here are open and strongly supportive of all.
Several of our congregations have intentional outreach to same-gender persons and families. Our synod encourages such outreach.
Weddings, general congregational participation, support for ReconcilingWorks
welcoming as we do everybody
We have been blessing same-gender couples for years, before the state recognized their marriages, and before the ELCA's decisions in 2009. We have been an RIC congregation since 1987. About half of the weddings in our congregation are same-gender.
A Welcoming Statement is written (2012) and a core value of inclusion established.
HIV/AIDS ministry
Including and welcoming them in all aspects of ministry.
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation (for 20 years). Our pastor performs covenant ceremonies. We join with other ELCA congregations at the annual gay pride parade, and individuals are involved in legislative advocacy for LBGT individuals.
Same-sex marriages in a state that legally allows. Intentional call to gay pastor (2 years ago). Continued consideration/outreach to provide amnesty to GLBTQ immigrants or those seeking asylum.
We are a Reconciling Works congregation and have active LGBT members
LGBT worship once a month.
Word and Sacrament
The church is losing out.
Welcoming and affirming church
We hold same sex marriage services, mainly to the unchurched community.
RIC, Helping to start a LGBT center in our city
RIC congregation; participation in worship of same gender couples
Support group
Everything we do is designed to be welcoming of same-gender couples and their families. Especially because we daily encounter people who think they are not welcome in God's family. We work with an outreach program to homeless LGBTQ young adults and their families. We host gospel nights at which transgendered people perform gospel songs. We have done Bible Studies with applicable themes.
We hosted the Sonoma County Interfaith Gay Pride worship service this year. We observe RIC Sunday. We post wherever we can that we are an LGBTQ friendly congregation.
Same-sex couples are welcome to be married in our sanctuary - a duly voted upon policy by entire congregataion that is clearly noted on church web-site. Same-sex oriented persons are already a part of our staff and are openly welcomed for called pastoral positions.
We are intentionally welcoming: we are an RIC congregation. We have several members who are in same-gender marriages. (The other spouse in one case is a member of a congregation in a different denomination. In the other case the spouse is ordained member of clergy at another church, also different denomination. Our support is informal. We would like
LGBTQ youth and young adult of color - Gatherings and program called "cinema and conversation"
I'm not sure what you mean by "intentional." Our gay and lesbian members and same-gender couples participate in all aspects of ministry from council leadership roles to service ministry in the city.
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation.
Looking toward becoming a welcoming congregation with vote at upcoming annual meeting.
We will be voting to allow same sex marriages and to becoming a Reconciling Congregation

12/17/2014

Question 6: What is the intentional ministry you are doing?

Response
We host the ReconcilingWorks chapter, do outreach at the Pride Parade, and advertise as an LGBTQ-friendly wedding venue. We host a ministry to a neighborhood with significant numbers of people who are homeless or marginalized, and host an AIDS memorial interfaith service for people who have died of AIDS in the prior year.
My congregation presents a public welcome to all GLBT people, including couples and families, via the Reconciling in Christ program.
Children and youth
Political advocacy for human rights, outreach to couples to engage in social justice ministry.
ministry in San Francisco (ie weddings, pride festivals, justlutheran.blogspot.com, adoption blessings, blessing creating a new family, house blessings, transition blessings, name change baptism remembrance, etc)
We serve all in need as a non-profit organization.
We have been an RIC congregation (Lutherans Concerned / Reconciling Works) since 1999. We called an openly-gay/partnered Pastor in 2004 with a mandate to minister to those not being served in other churches, and specifically to LGBT people of faith.
We are an RIC community. Wearched in the SF Gay Pride Parde and are supportive of a new PFLAG Group recently ford on our city.
In process of becoming Reconciling in Christ
Outreach to all people and specific advocacy to and with lgbt people
Very, very, very beginning stages of intentional discussion again. This congregation was affected by the studies leading up to and the 2009 Churchwide action concerning changes to "Visions and Expectations." Our congregation is divided, I would estimate 80% supporting ELCA decision, 20% not.
Gay Men's group
We're a Reconciling In Christ congregation, Our welcome is printed in every bulletin, a rainbow flag hangs in our lighted sign, several same-gender weddings have taken place here
Welcoming new families and offering a church home to them.
English Handbell Choir
We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation. A significant portion of our membership/attendance comprises LGBT individuals, couples and parents of same. We are intentionally welcoming and affirming.
Reconciling
ReconcilingWorks
At this time our congregation is engaged in intentional ministry to the community--we are just beginning to make ourselves a part of the community. This includes intentionally welcoming all people.
We simply have a number of members (including one of our pastors) who are in same-gender relationships. They are not singled out for intential ministry, other than being fully included in the community.
Right now it is now really Intentional...however through our youth and children's ministry..we are providing support for children of same gendered couples...
Nothing formal. PAsgtors make fequent mention of LGBT people and divirsity
We have become a RIC welcoming church.
RIC congregation with same gender people involved in every aspect of church life. Membership might be 50-50% gay and straight.
New ministry for me. Currently working with RIC congregations/pastors and will branch out from there.
Gay people are integrated into every part of the congregation.
Ministry in the city of San Francisco
welcoming LGBT marriage with LGBT
Open welcome

Question 7: **What is the focus of the support being provided?**

Response
We do not provide support to them as having relatives of such people, but just as people.
Marriage counseling for heterosexual couples prior to marriage. I don't even know where to begin for a gay couple.
Affirmation
christian love and counsel, word and sacrament
To encourage continued engagement in the family with those relatives, and to listen to the concerns and questions of the family members.
consistent welcome worked with several of these families to become an RIC congregation
Word and Sacrament ministry, pastoral care
Our focus is full support and acceptance of same-gender relationships in society so that such relationships are no longer seen as anything other than a regular subset and variation on relationships and not needing distinct support as though they were odd in any way.
The support looks like the family support provided to any other congregant. Sickness, continuing ed, death, life, marriage.
Being supportive of family members who are supportive of their children.
Again, this implies that this is a special thing. I don't even understand this question. We do have a shelter for homeless queer youth who have been rejected by their families. In my experience, they are the ones who need the support. They are the most vulnerable. Their families are rarely open to reconciliation sadly.
Being there in a non-anxious presence.
We are unaware of any families in this situation, which says much more about our awareness than their realities.
Bereavement
People know those involved in same-gender relationships, want them involved int h community, but are uncertain about support for marriage, especially in the church.
Pastoral conversation; providing resources for families who are struggling to accept the new reality of their changing family.
a couple of people happen to be gay/lesbian. Nothing extra special is done beyond seeing each person as a beloved child of God.
We support all families and are host to a newly formed PFLAG group.
counseling and conversation
pastoral care/counseling modeling of acceptance
pastoral care
We have connected parents of children in same-gender relationships for mutual support.
Accompaniment
Our congregation is extremely GLBT friendly and has been for decades--support is for extended family members that may have other extended family members that are less supportive or in a challenging region of the country.
it is dependent upon the member's need
Sermons, individual conversations, adult forum
Pastoral counseling
love
Our focus is to create a place of welcome and comfort, a place to worship, and a place for them to, openly, be who God has created them to be. Our focus is also affirming the love that LGBT people share with their significant other by legally marrying them under God and the law in the State of Minnesota.
solid statements of support (RIC)
Treating people like human beings. (We use inclusive language, do an ALL encompassing welcome at the beginning of every worship, march in the PRIDE Parade annually, observe RIC Sunday, have RIC logo on our church signs, supported the Freedom to Marriage in our state publicly, etc.
Not sure how to answer this question. There's the ususal pastoral counseling and sometimes it involves how to support parents in geneeral. Sometimes those parents have LGBTQA children. There's also the usual home bound visits.
Pastoral care to support same-sex marriages (several).

12/17/2014

Question 7: What is the focus of the support being provided?

Response
talking about a person in a hushed whisper is not ministry. Further marginalizing people by creating a survey to see how to "minster" to them is not living God's love for all beloved children.
There is no formal ministry at this time, but as the pastor, I do provide support to all families, including those who have relatives in same-gender relationships.
Our substitute pastor is in a same-gender relationship and an associate member of our church.
But nothing formal.
Our congregation includes many members in same-gender relationships, and their families. They receive the support of our pastors and members, just like folks in opposite-gender relationships.
We celebrate weddings for same-gender couples
I don't know.
one-on-one conversations
Sharing experiences, creating a safe and welcoming community
Walking with the families giving whatever support they require as an ally and pastor
Encouraging them as they visit and worship with their children.
care for parents of newly 'out' GLBT youth
We host Rainbow Speakers, formally PFLAG of Monterey
Pastoral Care.
Pastoral Counsel
When needed. Our focus is to provide support for all family relationships, including same-gender. While we do not have a singular program focused in this area, our ministry is broad and established enough to include such focus without hesitation.
General support.
Counseling, fellowship, Bible study
Acceptance
The family is supportive of the engaged couple, who have been in committed relationship for 8 years.
Don't know... Confidential to recipients
Informal talks to same gender couples.
Not that I aware of
Same-sex relationships are integrated into the full congregation. Other than acknowledging discrimination they may face outside our community of faith, they are not treated any differently than mixed-gender relationships
The focus is to make them feel truly welcome in a place that is health and safe for them.
Celebrating significant milestones Being intentionally welcoming
We are so far beyond this that the questions hardly apply to us. Same gender relationships have become a non-issue for our congregation. As a pastor I do counsel people in the community who are struggling with this.
On a case by case basis, helping those that grew up up in non-affirming settings make sense of the scriptures, now that they are affirming.
my church provides support to all people for all burdens. Reconciling the dissonance that is created when someone loves a relative but wishes they weren't gay can be a burden, and while other church members don't feel it is a burden...we are still there for each other. We are the body of Christ and the focus of the support is to help people realize that the "we" means everyone.
Counseling with the pastor, informal support from selected congregational leaders
We have strong allies in all generations. If someone is struggling there is someone available that they can relate to
General ministry of congregational life.
Some members of our congregation, including our Pastor, have helped to establish a local gay and lesbian community resource center for advocacy and support.
pastoral care provided by pastor
Open conversation. Inquiring about wellbeing

12/17/2014

Question 7: What is the focus of the support being provided?

Response
Support only in being a welcoming community
Counseling, pastoral care, blessings, conversations, etc.
Keeping the like mindedness of each individual as a whole body of God's Love and not being judge and jury of their wants and beliefs of same gender situation,,
Pastor of congregation is gay, recently got married. A group of women from the congregation organized the reception.
general awareness and affirmation, encouragement
Pastoral care
pastoral counseling
conversation and acceptance
Our organist is part of a same-gender marriage. There are individual and small-groups who include the couple in fellowship, ensure that they are invited to gatherings, and pray for them on a reuglar basis.
We are open and affirming as are the members with family members in same-gendered relationship
caring for the pastor and her same-sex partner
I have talked and reached out to a member who is gay.
Constant affirmation to all kinds of healthy relationships is the norm here. Recognized and celebrated -- verbally and in written form, in congregational directory, etc.
Love, listening, care, attention, whatever is needed for the situation. There is openness and safety to talk about these things, as is evidenced in who we are together.
Pastor and members are all supportive of one another.
Being a sounding board and advocate for them and their family members
I believe so. On an "as needed" basis, I would imagine.
general pastoral care
conversation, friendship ("me, too"), hearty welcome for those family members when they visit
Providing a space where people can be honest about this experience. Providing a space of acceptance and relationship where their journey as a family member is listened too and honored.
general support through caring ministry
We normally are in a position where the type of counseling/support is warranted from an unchurched person or one who has turned away from their religion due to violence and inappropriate use of the bible being used to condemn and denigrate persons.
General pastoral counseling.
Reconciling in Christ
One to one and a gay men's group
Inclusion and unconditional love.
Pastoral Care
A support/advocacy group
counseling
Mainly counseling, prayer and verbal support.
we have a group called "the G men" who meet on a monthly basis, they bring to our attention areas of concern where we might be more welcoming and embrace those searching and in need.
open welcome into the worshiping community--no questions asked, no judgments made
We have same-gender couples in our church, and pastor meets with them as asked. The church is supportive even though we do not have intentional programming.
There are members who have relatives in a same-gender relationship. The support isn't anything major or official ... just the simple gifts of freedom and the safe space to talk about their relatives' relationships the same as anyone else.
Creating a welcoming and supportive atmosphere
Welcoming and sharing of info regarding our congregation's inclusivity focus/statement/actions. When appropriate, we share key congregational contact persons/groups. PFLAG meets at our church & is led by church members.

12/17/2014

Question 7: What is the focus of the support being provided?

Response
The same kind of support we strive to give all our members.
RIC and advocacy. We support those families just like all other families
My friend and I are trying our best to help with acceptance of the GLBT folks in our congregation and our community. My friend and I have been made to feel very uncomfortable in our church because of our beliefs.
understanding, unconditional love, open conversation, weddings, welcome
personal and congregational
I don't know.
I suppose. We support all our families. Gay, straight, those with GLBT children/family members.
Welcoming space in services.
Radical, constant support and modeling of inclusivity
marriage and inclusivity
Our congregation includes many people in same-gender relationships and with family members in same-gender relationships and those families are included in the general ministries of the congregation in ways that make it clear that their families are held in equal regard.
Depends on the need.
staff member who is in a same-gendered relationship.
I really don't know what support is available.
Pastoral care/private conversations
Our congregation has baptized the children of a same sex couple who is the daughter of a member.
The congregation accepts/supports the reality of our families. There is seldom open conversation about this, rather a live and let live kind of spirit....
for all parents, we provide caring conversation, grace-filled preaching, and life-encouraging gifts in the bread & wine of communion.
Inclusion into life of congregation and encouraging nonjudgmental.
We minister to each other during knitting group, church basement activities.
By providing support I mean we treat same-gender couples the same as anyone else.
Pastoral counseling
Conversation, listening, availability as they and their child figure out relationship, family, and community issues.
Informal
I am sure that we are but I don't know about specifics.
Open for the conversation
We love, welcome, and invite regardless of sexual orientation.
Opportunities for family members to talk.
Accepting and support to families with various definitions
12 week weekly exploration of what the Bible says about homosexuality.
working toward full acceptance
Unconditional support and affirmation
Basicly it is discussions/messages on Facebook with people on my Friends list who have LGBT family members and are stressed at the disclosure. i try to guide them away from the hate that certain segments of society wants them to inflict on theiir family member and show them how Christ dealt with sinners in LOVE.
We provide a worshipping community where people know that they are loved and accepted and where the conversation around LGBTQ issues is not avoided. As the Pastor I am involved in the local PFLAG group. We are currently looking at other ways to reach out.
Marital support & equity regarding healthcare & end-of-life care & decision-making for same gender couples.
Not positive, but I believe our pastors do offer conseling and support to those families who have a gay family member. I believe that is a great thing to do and I'm glad we do it.

12/17/2014

Question 7: What is the focus of the support being provided?

Response
Informal conversation and accompaniment.
unstructured except for affirmation
Listening, offering emotional and spiritual support, as well as community resources (printed materials, PFLAG, people for this person to talk to)
We are in community with each other, praying for and with each other, eating together, etc.
Being supportive and listening to concerns of the family.
We have many students who are in Same Sex relationships. Their families are welcome on campus.
Acceptance
Individuals to talk to
we have no openly LGBT members
Yes, in the sense that the ministry supports all its members, including ones whose family members are in all kinds of relationships and family situations.
general care and thoughtfulness
As a mother I am concerned about the recent separation of our daughter and her partner for 6 years.
Pastoral care, blessing of unions.
Personal counseling
Ministering to them
We accept these relationships as part of the norm
Encouraging parents of LGBTQ people
Conversation, answering questions, addressing fears and concerns
Informal support. No programs have developed specifically to address same-gender relationships.
Informal support. Support for everyone, including people in same gender relationships.
Long-term acceptance
Most of our congregations don't find a need to do this in an intentional way.
I am the Gay family member and I am married to my partner. Our congregation has long been accepting of us and others, but I always do what I can to encourage everyone. We can also offer valuable support to heterosexual couples, as our experiences are really quite similar.
Conseling
informal
We publicly and intentionally honor same-gender relationships. We also recognize that God does not call everyone into marriage as a normative state.
Listening and pastoral counseling.
Pastoral conversation...and one wedding!
Nothing specially targeted for "family members who have a relative"....but the Welcoming Statement has drawn into the congregation parents of gay sons and daughters.
pastoral support and counseling
congregational support
Pastoral care and a focus on inclusion in all aspects of ministry.
As it would be for other couples.
Christian love that neither Jesus nor God (or my congregation) judge GLBTQ as other than loved children of God.
We show empathy to those family members and explain to them that, contrary to popular secularism, the "same-gender" participants are indeed still sinning.
It's shameful the church is so judgemental and medieval in its attitude that it doesn't reach out to those people.
Pastoral care.
Listening ear.

12/17/2014

Question 7**: What is the focus of the support being provided?**

Response
We have same sex members with children in our congregation. They were part of our worshiping family before Church-wide ever knew such folks existed. Our support is as friends.
personal support
Personal contacts
COLAGE
We provide a place where they can talk, ask questions, and express themselves openly.
They are fully welcomed in our congregation
Emotional support in the form of frequent socializing with families who have same-gender relationships very much in evidence.
Not sure
Our support is informal. As an RIC congregation, we are intentionally inclusive and welcoming. Simply being a part of the congregation provides support to those who have a relative in a same-gender relationship. We do not have formal support (such as a support group.) Pastoral counselling is always available.
Still in the beginning stage. But have reached out to some parents,
It is the same support given to all families in the community of faith, i.e., prayer, compassion, love.
Unknown
preaching the good news of Jesus to transform lives
Pastoral conversation
Non anxious Pastoral care
For many in my congregation who have family members who are GLBT, it's very important to them that we are a welcoming church and we are willing to say so out loud and in public.
Hope not. Why should we encourage people to continue sinning. Everyone of us is a sinner, but it is rare that a sinner will claim God's Word suddenly doesn't apply anymore.
Materials and consultation with pastors who are working with same-gender couples in pre-marriage counseling.
love and care - it's a normal thing here, so the care is the same as any family
We provide food and health screenings to all
All usual congregational support to individuals. For example, we have gay and lesbian couples in the membership, some of whom have or currently do elder-care.
Meaningful worship which is GLBT welcoming.
none that I am aware of - shouldn't that be private anyway?
Housing advocacy and resources for counseling to those who have a need for gender resources or abuse issues
Pastoral support to LGBT individuals and familes. Pastoral support to "anti-LGBT" individuals and families. Theological discussion and prayer. Continued followup and discussion.
Yes and no. We're supportive of such family members in terms of pastoral care needs but have no formal support system.
Holy unions, church support, inclusion...
Unconditional acceptance for people in general! We are a Reconciling in Christ Congregatiin
All are welcome. All are considered God's children. Parents have become a part of our congregation and have referred others to it for this reason.
Reconciling
LGBTQ outreach coordinator providing referrals
Loving acceptance, gentle guidance, open conversation
I believe this support happens informally.
Support and prayer
Individidual contacts and sujp[ort. No organized program
One on one, pastoral care, flag meetings, openings -- an ecumenical support group.

Question 7: What is the focus of the support being provided?

Response
love - the same as everyone else in the congregation
providing a listening ear; being very clear that everyone is welcome; letting family members know that if anyone is rude or mean to come directly to the pastor and I will have a conversation with the rude/mean individuals. Providing various resources

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
More needs to be done to integrate perspectives 1 and 2 (page 20) of the social statement into the total program of the ELCA.
recognize that we are all not in the same place on same gender matters
I think it's important that our conversations include talking about ways of love and support without affirming what many still deem as sinful behavior. I think we also need to talk about ways to minister to celibate homoseuals as well.
My congregation needs first to encounter a same-gendered couple before they are going to need resources to minister to them.
It is difficult to talk with other pastors and synod folks about these conversations. The assumption is that because I and my congregation were opposed to the 2009 decisions, we must be against acting in Christian love to those who are LGBT, or in same-gender relationships. I wish I could have more constructive conversations with my colleagues when these pastoral questions come up. I feel like I am on my own.
Currently I am on a team in the Montana Synod to create a teaching document for the Human Sexuality Social Statement. Just being part of this process has helped me tremondously to speak about same-gender relationships.
The 2009 "vote" has caused much division, with the great majority initially acknowledging there is absolutely NO Biblical basis for so-called same sex "marriage"! If the "state" wants to set up civil unions, so beit, BUT to say that those engaged in homoerotica relationships can be "married" is an impossibility from a scriptural view!
I'm confused, should we treat same gendered relationships differently than others? Is not respecting each individual as a child of God, beloved by God not sufficient? Or am I somehow naive?
Right now we just need to get the conversation started. We are a major Don't ask don't tell style church.
I'm not sure. I guess my hope is that such conversations would help families to accept their children regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity (i.e. if they are transgender).
My brother has married his partner; my daughter has a partner. I work with people without judgment. But neither my brother nor daughter lives in my state, so the question of how to support is not immediately germane.
Need resources for managing anxiety, as some people believe just talking about these issues leads us down a path toward disunity
N/a
Mostly need folks to be more non-anxious on this issue. Hear often about the steady decline or slippery slope our nation is on. Anything to address the historical nature of homosexuality and bringing it forward into today would help.
this congregation had extensive dialogue, heated debate, voted on the issue, settled the issue several years ago, is open and welcoming to gay individuals/couples, has made that known to the community, and is ready to move on.
I'm not aware of anyone struggling with their sexual orientation or identity at this time.
We live as a family in our church community. We are not a "gay church" but a diverse community. We have families that contain LGBT members but they are members first. We attend to each others needs regardless of what they are.
It would be helpful if the ELCA actually were bolder in support of LGBTQ issues such as discrimination, violence, homelessness, etc.
My particular context is a consolidation of three congregations, one of which was terribly divided by the ELCA's decision on human sexuality, the other where there was nary a ripple and the third probably wasn't even aware there is such a thing as LGBT's. Because of the raw-ness still from the aftermath of the first congregation, I am, at this point, reticent to "poke a skunk."
More use of out, LGBT clergy! Most non-LGBT people, though of great help, have not walked in our shoes.
This initiative is a great example of what's wrong with the ELCA and the direction it's heading -- so far removed from the Bible. We need to focus on bringing people together and not labeling groups and catering to one group over another. Stop your liberal, divisive agenda. Focus on having real, Bible-based, discipleship-focused church. Communities will grow organically from authentic, meaningful relationships with the church and its people. They don't grow from manufactured, man-made agendas.
ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation has a marriage resource, and other resources on ministering to same gender couples. I know that they are always wishing to expand resources, make resources better and get those resources in the hands of pastors and lay leaders along with the corresponding training. I would be in close contact with them if you truly wish to minister to same gender couples using appropriate language and practices.

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
In the congregation where I am a member, the pastor believes that orientation is not wrong but intimate relationships are. I disagree with him but do not wish to undermine his pastoral authority.
We're pasted the conversation. We've been welcoming since 1992.
My husband--we are a same-gendered married couple--is out as a gay and married pastor of the ELCA and serving as interim to a large suburban congregation with many young families. I am present as would any other pastor's spouse and attend every service and function. Our presence has provided the Quiet Witness, and it has been powerful. This has been our third congregation to do this.
The human dignity and worth of LGBT people and families have been on display and up for debate for far to long. LGBT can be evicted from their homes and fired from their jobs in 29 states and we as the church question how to minister to them. We are called to care for and love our neighbors not drag them into the public square and put their human worth up for debate. The Church should be a place of sanctuary, not a vessel of harm and shame for LGBT.
I think framing the question of inclusion around families is a good way to start the conversation. People in my congregation are hesitant to talk about LGBTQ issues, but may engage easier around how to support families. It may be helpful to have someone outside the community come lead these conversations.
All believers are part of the body of Christ. It's crucial that the ELCA become a force for sharing Christ's inclusive message, and welcoming all sisters and brothers.
I think its really important to address why some people are against LGBTQ inclusion if it doesn't involve them...there's usually a pastoral care issue therein...maybe something that requires professional counseling.
We are just starting this process. I wish there were guides on having small group conversations. Something like sample questions.
We could use resources on becoming a queer- and trans-friendly congregation (in addition to materials on same-sex couple households). Queer people and families come in a lot of forms and we do not want to exclude anyone by assuming that all queer families include two parents - who want to be married - and kids.
The Recinciling in Christ program, Building An Inclusive Church, and other Reconciling Works resources have been very helpful in our decision to become a RIC congregation and to extend our ministry to include blessing all lifelong monogamous relationships regardless of gender. Resources to help congregations navigate those conversations in the midst of changing laws regarding same gender marriage would be helpful.
Pamphlets for family members addressing theological and practical questions
Conversations around establishing networks of same-gender families when an inclusive congregation still has a rather small yet growing number of such families. How does the "welcome" extend when a few families might still feel isolated?
Resources to encourage congregations to have the conversation.
Materials for guiding intentional, group discussions (including acceptance of Transgender persons) would be welcome. Our LCM college group is likely to have interest in open discussion topics like this. We currently have a young adult Transgender person who is a regular worship attender.
My congregation is mostly retired persons, but our pastor is open to working with same gender couples should the opportunity present itself.
My partner & I have been members of this church for years. We got legally married a few months ago out of state. Upon returning our pastor recommended a blessing of the rings service in our church to recognize us and invite our friends. It was a grand occasion.
I think it would be helpful to show more normalcy of same gender couples in the everyday life and to integrate them into the average parish settings.
Resources for same-gender wedding counseling would be great. Also, the way question 7 is asked it sounds as if having a relative in a same-gender relationship is equivalent to having a relative who is in a 12 step program.
As a new young adult pastor, one of the reasons that the congregation wanted to call me was to help them think about how to be more open to the needs of everyone in this community. On day 3 of this call, I'm still trying to figure out the game plan for how we do that but I know that ministry to same gender couples and families will be part of that.

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
the process is different for everyone. Some churches (mine) are in a great place. others struggle. you have to evaluate the specific community and assess what actions should be taken. In a welcoming inclusive church...it's not as necessary to talk about same gender relationships (unless you're also talking about opposite gender relationships). If you're at a church that is exclusive and doesn't welcome lgbt people, then its definitely appropriate to discuss those things.   Also, change doesn't happen over night. The more demanding you are that people be inclusive the longer it will take for people to genuinely get there. You have to be patient with them while they are patient with you...it's a tricky balance to find.
Respectfully. Also treat it like it is normal and not taboo.
"Safe" middle of the road people willing to tell their story of gentle transformation. People super committed to LGBTQ inclusion won't help our congregation. Normal people who can engage the conversation, hear and lower anxiety, and make it be no big deal. I don't have energy to fully lead this conversation as the Pastor. An alternative is to start conversations subtly within the congregation for those who are interested. A lot of folks are too unhealthy to actually engage it.   Another idea is to bring in a high profile speaker to the community to have dialogue and share stories.   For our conservative folks we have to find a way to value their faith and place in the world.
With tender loving care in an old struggling congregation.
Families know we are open and welcoming. We have not had an issue about it.
The ELCA needs to continue to take the lead on LGBT Equality issues in America.
Conversations are very divisive and there are many people that are not educated on the issues.
PLEASE EXPLICITLY INCLUDE THINGS THAT AFFIRM TRANSGENDER PEOPLE! The acronym LGBT includes the T as well, and for trans folks, marriage rites are NOT the most critical need. Affirmation of transgender people could include rites for new names, annointings/blessings/prayers to affirm a gender different than one's birth, etc. I pray that the church will think more broadly about its outreach to all of the LGBT community and can be a place that welcomes and affirms trans people - who don't have a lot of safe places out there.
As a long-time RIC congregation our LGBT members and guests are fully integrated into the life of the congregation, and no special actions are being taken at this time. However, the sermon frequently mentions LGBT (along with other minority/marginalized groups) and if pastoral care is requested it is provided.
church policy is strictly a don't ask, don't tell policy, could still blow up into the congregation leaving the church if the pot was stirred about same gender couples.
I think for sure that teens and young adults should not be talked to about it,, but have resources available to them when they become curious about it,, and a confidential situation between all involved whether adult, teen or elder,,
For what it's worth, we're a Reconciled in Christ congregation with a number of LGBT members. When I first started there, the new pastor was lesbian, and was there for 17 years before retiring to take a Seminary position. Gay is considered normal.
I am the only out person in my congregation--and recently married my wife. Everyone is very welcoming and supportive. Yet now what? Not great being the only person even so....looking for ways to be more intentional beyond MY presence!
Our congregation is enriched by the presence of our same-genedered couples. Together we uphold one another.
Just need resources we can use to begin having these conversations in our congregation
Keep it in the forefront. Be affirming and supportive.
I believe my congregation has deliberately avoided having this conversation given other divisions. More "upper level" discussions such as articles in The Lutheran and synod rsolutions would keep the topic active while we work out other issues.
We need to stop tip toeing around the whole bound conscience thing.
Resources on how to start and continue the conversation - congregation is largely supportive but afraid to "make waves" - how to overcome that hurdle
Although we have been actively RIC in practice for 7 years, it's mostly been welcome and inclusion of those who come to us, less an intentional outreach to those who may be marginalized.
Our council president is a married gay man. We have been blessed to do baptisims for same sex couple's children. For us it is a way of being not a ministry.

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
Invite people representative of the LGBT population to share their story and reach out to LGBT non profit organization to receive education about proper terms and recomendations to make church forms, materials, etcl friendly to the population. Ex: Spouse/partner; Married/committed relationship
As a pastor, my personal view and my congregations' view do not always match. Nor, do I believe they necessarliy must. Just because we are not having the conversations (congregation's choice) does not mean that it is not desired on my end. But it has been slow.
This seems to be for staff not members of the congregation
The biggest conversation is in regards to rites for blessings or marriages and blessings of families.
Council recently approved unanimously a statement on same gender marriage to include this ministry.
1) It is important for the ELCA to be "God's Grace" (surprising, joyful/tickled, embracing, utter and genuine) expressed and recognized by its work/practice throughout the World (local as much as Global) in contrast to what today's population sees as "Religion."   2) LGBT couples and families, which may include non-Church and "recovering, formerly-Churched" along with "by nature" and adopted children/young adults, heavily reflect our society and its challenges. 3) For me, the humble, self-evidence of (Lutheran-styled) Grace (as social justice/action and interpersonally), and the fact that Lutherans' God is not "too small" (to reference JB Phillips) bound to single interpretation, or leader, or creed have been a welcoming change from the norm. That said, I think the intention should be more "adoptive," emulating God's adoption and yet also drawing parallels to and from society and the practice throughout time.
I'm wondering about a rite of marriage for same-sex couples. We have included gay clergy on our roster in committed relationships, but we still have not resolved the issue of a more inclusive marriage ceremony. That is an issue in working with gay couples, which we are trying to do as an RIC congregation.
I'm not sure. We gained new members after the church's big vote a few years ago, when 2 local churches left the ELCA, but we are not a RIC congregation, which I find unfortunate. It's a slow process.
Another congregation renting space in our building decided to find another place when rainbow flags were hung by the doors. This might have been an opportunity for conversation, but we didn't know how ... and the others might not have chosen to engage in dialog.
Please, as you all work on this issue, do not assume this issue is resolved for all congregations. This has potential to rip the proverbial scabs off of wounds.
I believe the ELCA has made a mistake by following a secular lead. The church is supposed to lead, not follow.
We will be having one on one conversations with church leaders & long time active members in the coming months based upon our RW training.
A same-gender couple with a child attend our church
Our town and congregation are very accepting as a whole. We've been RIC since the 1980s. I think recourses for counseling and liturgies to celebrate their milestones and life passages would be helpful. I have seen the ELW marriage rite used with some adaptation for same sex couples and both services were lovely. However, lists of readings/hymns/prayers/prefaces that aren't so man/woman focused would be helpful. I also think prayers and possible liturgies for youth as they make sense of their sexuality and come out would also be meaningful. Also resources to talk about the gift of sex with youth that go beyond sex is only for procreation. For both straight and LGBT youth this would be incredibly valuable. They would learn that their bodies are a gift from God and they should share them with others carefully, intentionally, and lovingly.
Our church has been RIC for over 25 years.
As a small congregation, most of our conversations are congregationally informal, with discussions in various moments in the life of the church. We are not a programmatic church, so it is difficult to have "intentional" ministry as we attempt to support each other in all avenues.
Our (Texas) congregation's boomers and silent generation members need basic help associating with same-gender couples: vocabulary, relative degrees of privacy and out-ness, aspects of parenting, etc. Most have never met a same-gender couple, to their knowledge.
I am no longer in a position to influence an ELCA church. As a council member I motioned to become RIC 7 years ago another person said "people vote with their feet." This year my wife and I did just that and am now a member of an O & A UCC church. Upon arrival a former Methodist said she had done the same. It is not relevant that there are no GLBT-Q members in our families. What is relevant is to love one's neighbor. Perhaps the great commission in the sense that there are GLBT-Q believers that just need to be assured that they are safe and welcome.

12/17/2014

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
Our minister has initiated conversations almost with an apologetic demeanor. I think if she had more conviction regarding the issue, it would be extremely helpful. I'm not all that sure how she feels.
It is very important that congregations have these resources so that folks who have not been intentional about learning about this kind of ministry, have resources to utilize.
reconciling congregation has this in the forefront
Any ideas you offer would be so appreciated.
The conversations have stopped in the last two years, prior to that there was a lot discussion.
Openly lesbian pastor
We are all sinners and all children of God. All people are welcome in the church to seek salvation. But- we must repent of our sins. Being told that we must accept a sinful behavior is wrong.
My primary setting for ministry in the past 17 years has been as professor in an ecumenical seminary. I have presided at several same-gender weddings (and before weddings, commitment services and holy unions). When we offered workshops on weddings, I always included same-gender resources, liturgies, and counseling materials. Unitarian Universalists have some of the most in-depth resources in print. Of course these would need to be modified for use in Lutheran settings, but we don't need to do everything from scratch. Many couples want a marriage rite that is close to the service available in ELW; some want changes including more feminist language. I think we need suggestions for honoring couples' anniversaries, counseling for gay and lesbian couples considering parenthood, resources for parents whose children come out, and theological resources. In my wedding workshops I have often used the theological statement developed by Paul Tiedeman and Anita Hill at St. Paul Reformation Church many years ago. It's not a bad place to start. I'd be happy to talk to the working group about my experience at Union, at Our Saviour's Atonement and at Advent (both congregations in NYC).
We have recently become officially RIC. We have had families with LGBT children in the past and have some LGBT members at this time. While we have no specific ministry our congregation is fundamentally welcoming.
Our congregation experienced significant membership loss after the ELCA social statement on Human Sexuality in 2009. Our previous pastor seemed to agree with the members who left our congregation and picked favorites with them. A new called pastor began ministry in September of 2013. Generally, people have avoided conversation about "the gay issue" in attempts to avoid any more potential controversy from members who left our congregation and may be planning to return.
We have a number of same-gender couples in the congregation, though they are mostly childless. We have one couple looking to adopt, and we also have a a couple with a young daughter where one member of the couple is transgender. For us, it would be helpful to have resources regarding how to structure family ministries creatively, getting away from the mom's group/dad's group assumptions. Also resources for helping kids with same-gender parents feel prepared to answer questions from their peers about their family situation.
Need info on the biology, physiology, psychology, continuum of LGBTQ individuals and couples.
Loved Nadia Bolz-Webers recent video on FB. We need clear leadership from the ELCA. Now that marriage is legal in Iowa, our pastor should be able to perform the ceremony.
We need support material and understanding for those members who believe that same sex sexual active is a sin. We also need support for those who are gay and do not want to be involved in sexual relationships because of their faith.
While there are many issues and conversations to have. But as a gay person who is involved in the church I feel like sometimes I am either not supposed to talk about being gay because of the setting or am specifically pointed out for being gay.
The first thing would be to publicly confront the passages randomly selected from Leviticus that are commonly used in many Christian congregations to denounce and disparage homosexuality. These same "Chistians" carte blanche ignore bordering passages of which they are all guilty and which they conveniently ignor.
I would like to see a guide for a group of people, open to anyone in the congregation and community, whatever their beliefs about same-gender relationships, to talk openly about issues and concerns, hear from others who see life differently, and work toward Christlike care for all. (Similar to anti-racism workshops?)
It would be helpful to have one resource (perhaps drawing from Journey Together Faithfully, the social statement on sexuality, through Reconciling in Christ process, the work of Matthew Vines and others from the evangelical welcoming movements) that could make the biblical, theological and psychological/mental health pastoral care case for "position four" that spoke not in lofty and complicated nuances but in plain, down to earth, accessible language that would help those who want to move from "positions three to one" to "position 4".

12/17/2014

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
The conversation was during the call process and subsequent visiting the community while searching for housing. I know that conversation has taken place in the past and know that it will continue, now with me, the new pastor in place. I'm not sure where to start or where to go in the conversation.
I love how inclusive my congregation is. The more loving we are, the more people show up. We now have a gay married couple and a lesbian couple expecting a baby. And everyone loves these people.
My congregation is of the "don't ask, don't tell" variety and I think that these conversations need to be brought out into the open. I have tried to start an LGBT support group but have not received any support from either my senior or assistant pastor
Conversations about the similarities between same-gender and opposite gender couples would help. We are all one.
I wish my congregation would start this conversation, but they haven't!
It's time to abandon this focus that has no biblical support and move back to supporting ministries that have the biggest impact. This is a distraction and has negatively affected our membership and our ecumenical relationships.
Take the whole story before judging a biblical passage - and consider when it was written before thinking that homosexuality is sinful.
Well there is the ministry of Matthew Vines called The Reformation Project which I would love to see the ELCA support in its goal of affirming same sex LOVE. Meaning commitment to each other not wanton sex outside marriage. Also if the ELCA could make clear its stand on passages of scripture he feels are being misinterpreted. If I could cite that the ELCA is onboard with the goal of that group it would carry a LOT of weight to convince people there are Christian churches who will accept their LGBT family member and also will not judge them as failures for not preventing the life the family member has.
Start & end all conversations in prayer. Constant reinforcement that conversation be respectful of those with differing opinions.
How do the four positions speak biblically?
I don't know why we bring this topic into our church. I feel that a small group has "hijacked" the church I grew up in and has pressed the congregation into performing same-gender marriages in our church. Same-gender marriages are not normal; I don't think we should be promoting or stamping our approval on these marriages. I do believe we should work with same gender couples and have them in our church and love them like brothers and sisters.
Same-gender couples are loved and supported as all couples are. We forget sometimes that ongoing conversation needs to be had as new members arrive. For us there is a broader dialogue about hospitality, inclusion, and diversity that helps, but intentional theological and practical conversations still need to happen.
Our congregation is led by an out lesbian pastor--these conversations are natural and integrated into many aspects of our work together. It would be helpful to have lgbtq welcome integrated into other materials, rather than always being specifically distinct. Though, we do need (NEED) marriage rites that are endorsed by the churchwide entity. Other worship materials that recognize the spiritual toll of injustice would also be helpful (and this would serve a far larger audience that the lgbtq community).
These questions are somewhat awkward and don't seem to be getting at anything important. It's unclear what this data will do for the working group...
We're probably ready for more info on political advocacy.
While I understand that people all over the country are in different places about LGBTQI ordination and same-sex marriage, I think the most positive thing the ELCA could do for this conversation is to include LGBTQ people in the church by treating them as normal members of their church communities and their relationships and families as valuable. This can be done in ELCA publications, conversations and on a congregation-by-congregation basis. Treating LGBTQI people as an issue instead of as our friends, neighbors, pastors, family members and selves only perpetuates the problem we have as a church of making this group of people (who are not alien, but are among our congregations already and have been for many years) seem alien and threatening to those who are fearful of change.
I cannot give her advice directly, but I'm interested in helping her find a Lutheran church that would give her support at this time.
Raise up voices of LBGTQ people both inside and outside the church when developing these resources.

12/17/2014

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
My church formally voted to allow same-sex marriages to take place at our congregation, following the state's decision to legally allow same-sex marriage. Our vote was unanimous, but we're probably an enigma in the ELCA. As more and more states legalize same-gender marriage, churches need resources on what their options are with regards to the changing laws.
our congregation is way ahead of the curve
The conversations about LGBTQ inclusion/welcome should be paired with conversation that is relevant and helpful for people of every gender identity and sexual orientation. Comprehensive sex-education.
Please quit shoveling this stuff at us. These people are welcome in our church but we do not need to condone their sins.
In the e-mail, there was a question about changing ELCA marriage liturgy. Let's wait until same gender marriage is legal in all states. And, same gender couples wanted to have the same rights as traditional married couples. I believe they would be insulted if the marriage liturgy was dramatically changed.
The only resources I can think of that we might need are ones that will enhance the welcome of same-gender couples in congregations in which not everyone agrees that they should be welcomed. It is very difficult to say "You and your spouse are welcome here, but not everyone you meet may feel that way." Our challenge is not how to work with same-gender couples as much as it is how we work with congregations where some members are welcoming and some are not. Sometimes all it takes is one negative comment to sour the welcome a congregation makes a great effort to express.
I rather disagree with the premise of this survey that LGBTQ should somehow be treated differently or require a separate ministry from "regular" people.
we have one same gender couple who are members.
For congregations still wrestling with this issue, I think getting to know real people in real situations is the most effective tool we have.
printed resources would be helpful
I am strongly against the ELCA developing and voting on a separate liturgy for same gender weddings--or an new liturgy that could be used for both hetero- and same-gender weddings. We never voted specifically on the current ELW marriage liturgy. I don't think the Churchwide Assembly should ever vote on specific liturgies.
There is a very warm welcome to lgbt folks in our congregation, but we need liturgies available for same-sex couples to more formalize our support. (Both couple blessings for those states not currently allowing gay marriage, and inclusive marriage rites for those that do.)
We are an RIC congregation and could benefit from resources on next steps/living into being RIC - having a welcoming, accessible building and ministry.
I agree we are just beginning with the bulk of the ELCA congregations unsure/uncertain and afraid to proceed when dominated by a blend of the four convictions.
We have had very good discussions in a few of our adult forum offerings over the past few years on this topic. I believe those discussions have served to bring our congregation together and support the goal of full participation and inclusion of all couples and families, irregardless of sexual orientation.
Please deeply consider how to reinforce all four convictions with the same vigor. Since the 09 decision only one of the four has received any attention. Further we have many other blended families and those need care as well.
The ELCA needs to have leadership that support and promote the teachings of the bible instead of modern secularism.
I look forward to having the council address the "continuing resolution" added to "get them through" the difficult time they were having prior to my arrival, used in an attempt to "appease" those members threatening to leave, who left anyway.
As I would like more same sex couples to join the church, I would find it hard to focus on this area, at the exclusion of the hetero families with children that need and desire recognition for their children.
More written info of acceptance from ELCA
We have published a small catechism that is directed at the LGBTQ community. It has proved a valuable resource to people who come asking questions and looking for a message of hope, love, and mercy.
I know through previous casual conversation that there is a wide range of opinions regarding this subject in this community of faith. I am wondering whether opening a conversation would be prudent at this time, or is it better to let sleeping dogs lie?

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
Your intro states that you are "intentionally seeking responses from each of the 4 convictions in the ELCA Social Statement." Based on the past 5 years watching the ELCA, and the loss of 1 million members, I really don't think you are concerned about 3 of the 4 convictions. If you ever truly want to listen, I believe there are many members who would like that. However, I don't believe you are honestly concerned about reconciling with the 1 million souls who have left the ELCA in the past 5 years.
We have had an early position of support and advocacy for GLBT individuals, spouses, couples, and families. However, now this focus has been reduced, as we turn to other issues of social justice.
This congregation has been at the forefront of advocacy for LGBTQ persons since 1984. That support has neer wavered in the past 30 years.
We need strong leadership from the Presiding Bishop, Conference of Bishops, and Synodical Bishops to define how we are going to implement our social statement and revised ministry policies. Otherwise, pastors have no "cover" to do anything and we are subject to everyone's individual feelings on the matter.
If we had resources to help with adult education or youth education on the topic of same-gender relationships, that would be helpful. It's not clear that a support group is needed. As the congregation as a whole becomes more supportive, our members in same-gender relationships are regarded and treated in the same way as a member in an opposite-gender relationship. Experiencing this is in and of itself providing support to members who have a relative in a same-gender relationship.
I am gay pastor of color with a loving family. I do not have many model leadership to learn from. But I find some support which is helpful. My interest is in the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality. I learned that sometimes LGBTQ of color feel not fully welcome in the progressive predominantly monocultural churches. I know that it will be a challenge for me to find a call, but I believe in the centrality of the gospel and its practice in our church. I hope that the outcome of this survey will be useful into making gospel a reality or experienced truly by many in our community!
I feel like many (NOT all) in my congregation are decades back in time...and happy to be there. It does not seem likely that this conversation will take place in the near future, though I would welcome it.
I think it will be important for this task force to make it clear that we are talking about same-gender COUPLES. The church needs to be proceeding from the FACT that these couples are couples, and not be in the business of supporting anyone who is trying to break up these couples or somehow pretend they don't exist as couples. We need to be welcoming. Yes, there are differences of opinion in our church about these things, but there is still a need for leadership, and we must choose to do what is best for families. The task force's work isn't about everybody finding their own opinion represented, but rather should be about supporting GLBT couples and families.
Be honest to people and let them know that what they are doing is wrong and help them to overcome their predispositions. We know it will be hard for them, but they can do it!
While my congregation simply includes same-gender families into the congregation without additional or specific intention, our experience when we travel is very different. We often are not welcomed in ELCA settings when we travel, which is offensive. While our daughter is two young to note it yet, the fact that this would happen in the ELCA or any church preaching the Gospel is quite the abomination.
I understand that there may be a need to minister to same gender couples. However we have many other types of blended families and some members who feel strongly that the most conservative expression in the CY09 be also reinforced. Please deeply consider why only one of the four expressions gets attention. We have many traditional marriages that could use some focused ministry too.
I do not feel materials representing positions 1 or 2 can really be supportive of same-gender couples and their families. I am not pleased with this direction from the Task Force.
Don't assume people are against it or need to change their mind. Our conversations are about sadness of other church spaces that discriminate -in and outside of the ELCA. Also, the word gender is being used incorrectly in your language. Some transgender education, might help to understand how this language can be harmful to individuals outside of the group I think you are trying to talk about. I understand why this word is chosen as a better choice than some others... but it's also harmful.
We could use smaller/shorter resources that may be helpful to visitors as to why our congregation and the larger church are open to same-gender individuals, couples and families.

Question: 8. Please include any other comments you may have on how the conversations could be enhanced.

Response
Practical resources for pastoral leaders -- specific support materials for adolescents. We've only lost two famlies specifically over "the ELCA decision." However, the topic is constantly under discussion in unhealthy ways. I want guidance (beyond my own personal instincts) on how to bring this to the forefront of conversation knowing that just doing that will add more anxeity to a struggling conversation. I would like the LGBT issue to not to be the scape-goat for people to blame for leaving this congregation, when they have been in the process of leaving for the last 20 years. People have other issues that they fundamentally won't address.
My Pastor and my church family are very welcoming and loving. They make us feel we are part of the congregation in every way. I'm not sure there is any way to improve the conversations. We are very pleased.
Emphasize character, values, and talents rather than sexual orientation!
Partner with ReconcilingWorks. There is nothing to be gained by reinventing the wheel regarding study materials and human resources.
By encouraging the pastor and congregation council to permit open discussion of same-gender relationships in adult and youth study sessions.
The issue is NOT sexuality, but marriage. The issue is not 'same sex in monogamous relationships" but a cogent, theologically sound set of norms for ordination.
Make sure that bisexual and transgender folks are included the welcome, too. Things have changed radically for same-sex couples in the past decade--including welcome in many congregations. People who are transgender still face so much hostility--and we desperately need the church to be a place of compassion and understanding for them, too.
Need Help dealing with children and middle school youth in a same-gendered family...particularly the bullying they have experienced
help find ways to talk about it without alienating people who are adamantly against same sex couples
A year-lomg intentiional program of ec ducatgion and stgories to move forward. The pasgtores and concil are probablyo afraid of too rapid a pace of moving becuase of losing more memebers when we have already droope\ped a lot.
stop assuming people are against the issue or need their mind changed
We have welcomed gay and lesbian members for some time, but there were more questions and inflamatory comments with our first openly transgendered person. The difficulty for me as pastor was conducting conversations around transgendered persons without making the transgendered person in our assembly into an object or example for everyone else. These conversations would have been good to have had along with the formal conversations we had around welcoming people who identify as lesbian and gay from the beginning.

Appendix F: Resource Bibliography List

The Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families (M2SGF) working group utilized the following resources in its comprehensive study. These resources have been grouped into 3 general categories: 1) resources on how to hold conversations on difficult topics. (these are general and not necessarily tied to the topic of sexuality); 2) resources more specifically on ministry to and with same gender families; and 3) resources related to same gender couples including premarital counseling and liturgical resources. These resources have been drawn from a variety of sources including the ELCA's ecumenical partner denominations, other denominations, and the US Military Chaplaincy.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Internet searches will lead to more resources as they are being developed continually. No attempt has been made to categorize these along the lines of the four convictions referenced in "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." In searching out additional resources, it is important to remember that there are resources available that are not consistent with any of the four convictions of the social statement (such as resources that talk about reparative therapy or call the fluidity of sexuality an "abomination".) Such resources should be avoided.

This list of resources has neither been endorsed nor authorized by the ELCA:

<u>Resources on how to hold difficult conversations</u>

1. *Our Congregation is Already Welcoming. Why Do We Need to Say So?* –article from Reconciling Works discussing why congregations would want to be part of the RIC network.
2. *Your Congregation is Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Now What? –*booklet from Reconciling Works with practical ideas to move forward with inclusive ministry.
3. Building an Inclusive Church; A Welcoming Toolkit 2.0—helping congregations become a community that openly welcomes people of all sexual and gender identities. http://www.welcomingresources.org
4. *Freedom to Marry 101*: *What's it all about?* Study conducted by the Oregon Synod of the ELCA.
5. *Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education*. Textbook on sexual education for grades K-12.
6. *Our Whole Lives (OWL) Curriculum*. Sexual education materials for grades K-12, young adult and adult students.
7. *Affirming Word*: *Gay and Straight Conversation.* Bibles study offering LGBT affirming readings from the Bible.
8. Transcript of the TED talk delivered by Rev. Brenda Bos, pastor at Christ Lutheran in San Clemente, California, on welcoming LGBTQIA members into a congregation.
9. http://www.mnchurches.org/respectfulcommunities/respectfulconversations.html. Minnesota-based project that gives video instruction on how to have a respectful conversation.
10. Report from the Episcopal Church's Task Force on the study of Marriage.
11. www.gaychristian.net. Website which encourages discussions past the usual rhetoric among gay Christians who either believe committed same-gender relationships are possible, or that gay Christians are called to celibacy.
12. Joe Dallas, When Homosexuality Hits Home: What to Do When a Loved One Says They're Gay. (Harvest House Publishers, 2004)
13. "Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministries." (1997) A publication of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.
14. Tom Eckstein, Bearing Their Burdens. (lulu.com, 2011)

15. Barbara Duquid, Extravagent Grace: God's Glory Displayed in Our Weakness. (P & R Publishing, 2013) Not specifically about homosexuality, but was recommended for its strong message on God working with grace in and through where one feels weak, shame, fear, etc.
16. Robert A. J. Gagnon and Dan O. Via. Homosexuality and the Bible: Two Views. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003)
17. Katie Day. Difficult Conversations: Taking Risks, Acting with Integrity. (Alban Institute, 2001) On talking about difficult issues.
18. Stanley J. Grenz. Welcoming But Not Affirming: An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality. (Westminster John Knox Press, 1998)
19. *Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues;* Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, produced by the Department for Studies of the Division for Church in Society. August 1999.
20. Talking Together as Christians Cross-Culturally: A Field Guide. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, written by Ronald W. Duty. Revised edition, 2009.

Resources for ministry to and with same gender families

1. September 3, 2013 memo from Howard D. Stendahl, Chaplain, Major General USAF on issues relating to ministries with same-gender couples.
2. February 11, 2013 memo from the Secretary of Defense on extending benefits to same-gender domestic partners of military members.
3. You Shall be my People. Stories, Questions, and Resources for Conversations About Marriage for Same-Gender Couples. www.ReconcilingWorks.org/MarriageConversations
4. http://thenextfamily.com/ a diverse community where modern families meet.
5. *Your People shall be My People: Stories, Questions, and Resources for Conversations about Marriage for Same-Gender Couples.* From Reconciling Works.
6. www.religiousinstitute.org. A multi-faith organization dedicated to advocating for the sexual health, education, and justice in faith communities and societies. Stemming from the main website is *Acting Out Loud,* a guide for faith communities that want to move beyond welcome toward a wider embrace of LGBT people and their families.
7. www.Spiritualfriendship.org. website promoting discussion of celibacy, friendship, the value of the single life, and similar topics.
8. www.mudbloodcatholics.blogspot.com. Blog of a celibate catholic young man
9. www.livingout.org. website with discussions on the experiences of Christians who are faithful to traditional Biblical beliefs, but experience same-sex attraction.
10. www.aqueercalling.com. A blog written by two women who share their experiences of being in a committed celibate relationship.
11. http://www.newwaysministry.org/ A gay-positive ministry of advocacy and justice for LGBT Catholics, and reconciliation within the larger Christian and civil communities.
12. http://www.transfaithonline.org/engage/ Website led by transgender people and focused on issues of faith and spirituality.
13. A Plan for Ministry to Homosexuals and Their Families. The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, 1999. Can be downloaded at http://www.lcms.org Go to the website and search for the pdf by name. A number of those holding position 1 spoke of this document as being helpful, particularly in applying the Lutheran theological framework of law/gospel.
14. www.integrityusa.org largest grassroots organization for LGBT concerns in the Episcopal Church.

15. www.openingssc.org South Carolina based network of support for LGBT and straight allies coming from diverse spiritual traditions to open hearts, minds, and doors.
16. http://www.chicagoconsultation.org Episcopal and Anglican bishops, clergy, and lay people supporting full inclusion of LGBT Christians in the Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion.
17. Wesley Hill, Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010)
18. Eve Tushnet, Gay and Catholic: Accepting My Spirituality, Finding Community, Living My Faith. (Ave Maria Press, 2014)
19. Christian Sexual Morality Tracts, Set One and Set Two. Published by the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau. (ALPB, PO Box 327, Delhi, NY 13753) www.alpb.org
20. St. Gregory the Great. The Book of Pastoral Rule. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007) Especially Part III, "How the Spiritual Director Should Teach and Advise the Laity."
21. Pastoral Care Companion. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House. Page 104 ff. Prayers, Scripture to use in pastoral care with homosexuals.
22. Richard C. Eyer, Pastoral Care Under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House 1994, 2014) Chapter on "Bearing the Cross of Homosexuality." (Note: Each chapter begins "Bearing the Cross of ….")
23. *Enrich and Transform: Welcoming LGBTQ Candidates into the Call Process.* A guide offered by Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries in response to congregations and synods who have asked for resources to help open their doors more widely to the gifts of LGBTQ

Resources for same gender couples: premarital counseling and liturgy

1. United Church of Christ Order for Inclusive Marriage, adapted from the UCC Book of Worship Order for Marriage to provide language that may be used for any marriage, regardless of gender.
2. Services of Blessing of Relationships: Prepared by St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN.
3. *The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant: Liturgical Resources for Blessing Same-Sex Relationships.* Extracted from *Liturgical Resources 1: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing.* Authorized for provisional use by the 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.
4. Episcopal Church's resolution 2012-A049 regarding resources for blessing same-sex relationships.
5. https://goo.gl/iQwdWU Prepare-Enrich: relationship inventory and skill-building program.
6. *Going to the Chapel: A quick and Easy Guide for Attending the Ceremony of LGBT Friends or Family Members*. Written by the Rev. Michael Fick, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Chicago, IL.

Appendix G: Dwelling in the Word: Appendix A of the Communal Discernment Task Force report

Appendix A: Dwelling in the Word

Here are the steps for 20 minutes of Dwelling in the Word:

1. Pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your meeting that day.
2. Start with Philippians 1:27, 2:5–11, knowing that at some point, you may want to select your own passage, a story that is related to the story of your group's work. But start with Philippians 1:27, 2:5–11. It is a good piece for discernment together. Have Bibles available at every meeting so that the story can be read by different people each time you meet. Or make copies of the passage for everyone.
3. Begin your meeting with one person reading this passage aloud to the group. Then allow some silence to unfold as people let the words have their impact.

4. Find a person in the group you know least well (we call this person a "reasonably friendly looking stranger").

   Listen to that person as he or she tells you what they heard in the passage. They may mention something they'd never heard before, something odd or something comforting, or something about which they'd like to ask a Bible scholar.

   Next, instruct folks in this way:

   Listen well, because your job will be to report to the rest of the group what your partner has said, not what you yourself said. Some people even take notes to help them focus and remember.
5. Then, turn folks loose with their partners for 6–10 minutes. Notice how they are paying attention. When you draw them back together to report what they have heard, ask for what they learned from their partners.

   Now, wrestle together as a group with what God might be up to in the passage for your group on that day.

Philippians 1:27, 2:5–11

1:27
Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

2:5–11
"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(As of July 16, 2013)

Appendix H: Link to ELCA social statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust
From the ELCA website www.elca.org:

"Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" expresses the ELCA teaching on human sexuality. The statement is grounded in the biblical witness to the relationship God establishes with creation as a model for relationships between human beings. God is absolutely trustworthy and faithful, and therefore, with regard to sexuality, both human behavior and social structures are considered in relation to how they foster trust, commitment and protection for the flourishing and wellbeing of all people. In light of human sexuality as a gift and a trust, the statement considers the ways social structures and institutions shelter, sustain and protect personal, family and social relationships of trust and trustworthiness.

The statement provides guidance on key matters such as marriage, family, homosexuality, protection of children and youth, sexuality and the self, sexual intimacy and cohabitation. It addresses sexuality in relation to society, the work place and within the church.

Full link: http://elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Human-Sexuality

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Appendix I: Reflections on the Theology and Character of Disagreeing Well
by Bishop S. John Roth, Ph.D.

I have grown to deeply appreciate the members of the Working Group. All of us were asked to come to this Working Group committed to work together collegially and to strive to be mindful of the spectrum of convictions on same gender relationships reflected in the four convictions presented in *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (HS:GT). The members of the working group took that charge to heart and bent over backwards to be gracious toward and sensitive to the concerns of those whose convictions differed from theirs – and this shows in the proposed recommendations themselves. This was genuine caring, genuine striving to find a way to be church together with a view to ministry to and with same-gender couples and their families. I cannot overstate how impressed I am with the Christian love and care displayed in our Working Group meetings.

If there is any forum in which consensus on recommendations on ministry to and with same gender couples and their families could be reached, this Working Group is the forum. We could reach consensus on Recommendations 1 through 8. But even in this forum, we struggled with reaching consensus on Recommendation 9.

My take away from this is that if we reach this impasse even in this Working Group, the best of conversation environments, we need different lenses through which to look at complex social/ethical matters including ministry to and with same gender families in order to be church together.

Let me say a few words about lenses.

There is not a practical solution – a process, a technique, or a resources solution – to properly address complex social/ethical matters. In my view, the solution begins with recapturing two truths dear to Lutheranism; these are the lenses: (1) the proper distinction between Law and Gospel and (2) the truth of *simul iustus et peccator*.

Most of my adult life in the church has been characterized by denominational conflicts. It began with the upheaval in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in the 1970s. Many know that I am a graduate of Christ Seminary – Seminex.

One reality in that history stands out: as right about the gospel as I believe I and those on our side were at the time on those issues, I have to say that neither we on the one side nor those on the other side learned how to disagree well. And the fracturing continues.

Potentially divisive issues will always come up. We cannot live as church together unless we disagree well.

It seems to me that disagreeing well has at least three characteristics.

1) *Fairness*. I am disagreeing well when I can state the position of the person I am disputing with accurately enough that that other person recognizes that position as genuinely his/her position.

2) *Intellectual integrity*. I am disagreeing well when I can state the strongest, most compelling argument <u>against</u> <u>my</u> position. In other words, I am disagreeing well when I can recognize and acknowledge where my own position is most vulnerable and where a contrasting position makes valid points.

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3) *Honest humility*. I am disagreeing well when, after thinking through my position and expressing it with true conviction, I acknowledge that as a fallen, flawed human being I myself may be wrong.

This third characteristic is essential. And living this third characteristic – to be able to say honestly "I may be wrong" – doesn't happen unless I fundamentally entrust my righteousness to Christ, because I am *simul iustus et peccator*.

But being church together across human sexuality convictions requires more than disagreeing well.

The four HS:GT convictions are in some respects mutually exclusive. Anyone identifying with conviction number 1 necessarily is maintaining that anyone identifying with conviction number 4 is wrong; and vice versa, anyone identifying with conviction number 4 necessarily is maintaining that anyone identifying with conviction number 1 is wrong.

How can we be church together with people whom we conclude are wrong about human sexuality?

The question comes down to this. Can I grant that a person can be wrong about human sexuality and yet be fully trusting in Christ and Christ alone for forgiveness and reconciliation with God? In short, do I believe that a person can be wrong about the human sexuality and right about the gospel? If my answer is "yes" – if I am convinced in my bones of "yes" – then I will willingly, gladly, be church with the person who shares my trust in Christ alone for forgiveness and reconciliation with God and yet whom I believe to be wrong about human sexuality.

But if I cannot answer that question "yes," i.e., if in my heart of hearts I believe that to be wrong about human sexuality necessarily contradicts the gospel, that if someone is wrong about human sexuality, that someone cannot be right about the gospel, then I will at best be only grudgingly willing to be church with the person whom I believe to be wrong about human sexuality.

The proper distinction between law and gospel drives us to the conclusion that a person can be fully trusting in the "happy exchange" of Christ's righteousness for my unrighteousness and be wrong about human sexuality. And be church together. As AC (Augsburg Confession) 7 says, "For this is enough for the true unity of the Christian church that there the gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word[1]." *Simul iustus et peccator*: we are church together.

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[1]Kolb, R., Wengert, T. J., & Arand, C. P. (2000). *The Book of Concord : The confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (42). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Appendix J Part 1: ELCA resource "Talking Together"

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Ground Rules for Conversation

To fulfill the hopes people have for conversation in their congregation, and to lessen their anxieties and fears about it, certain ground rules for conversation are helpful. These will help to build trust among participants and create a safe space in which good conversation is possible.

The purpose of this honest sharing is to open up discussion of things that need attention, rather than to close off discussion.

Follow the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"—even when you disagree with them.

Listen respectfully and carefully to others. This is your best way to begin to understand them. This also helps keep the "public space" of this conversation safe for candid conversation. By listening carefully to others, you help to build relationships of trust. You also move beyond our private feelings and thoughts to public space where it feels safe to share your differences, and where you can probe for values and positions that you hold in common.

Speak honestly about your thoughts and feelings. Honesty about your thoughts and feelings expresses respect for others. Personal thoughts, feelings, values, and experiences are as legitimate a part of the conversation as factual information. Conversation can be quite passionate and still be respectful, civil, and constructive.

Speak for yourself, rather than as a member of a group. You do not necessarily know what everyone else in the group is thinking or feeling—even if you've known someone for a long time and think you know them well. Use "I-statements" rather than "You-statements." Likewise, it is not fair to expect other conversation partners to represent a whole group. Remember that they are only speaking for themselves.

Realize that the Holy Spirit is present and active in the conversation and has given each participant a part of the truth you are seeking to discern. But you won't hear that if you judge too quickly what is being said!

A true conversation needs give and take. Give others plenty of opportunity to speak and respond. Help keep the discussion focused by sticking to the subject at hand.

Maintain confidentiality about matters people share with the group when it is asked or obviously appropriate. This helps to build and maintain trust.

Keep an open mind and heart. Try to understand others as much as possible from their point of view as they express it. Even those who disagree with you are not necessarily your enemies. Christ has broken down dividing walls of differences and hostilities (Ephesians 2).

Exercise care for group members who become upset over what is said during the conversation.

The outcome, quality and safety of the conversation is *everyone's* responsibility.

In a conversation of this kind, listening is as important or more important as talking.

Genuine listening is not a passive activity, but an active, demanding one. Listen not only for the content of what is said, but for the way it is said—such as the language used, the tone of voice, the kind and level of feeling expressed, the body language and facial expression of the person speaking, whether they make eye contact, and so on. Also be attentive for what is not said. Being more conscious about this kind of deep listening will help us to hear and understand better what other people are saying.

Copy this page as a handout.

Appendix J Part 2: The United Methodist Church covenant guideline example

"What We Can Do" Planning Team

Rules of Engagement

- actively engage in hospitality
- practice active listening for understanding
- while different Biblical and pastoral understandings remain among us, we can still be Christian colleagues; in fact, as we grow to better understand our differences, we can grow in our appreciation of one another
- treat everything you hear as an opportunity to learn and grow
- we assume everyone has Christian integrity and seeks to be faithful
- practice collegial respect
- care for yourself (use chaplains if necessary)
- [agree to disagree in love]
- we are not here to debate who is right or wrong
- ponder what you hear and feel before you speak
- use "I" statements (i.e., share your own experience, not others')
- what is shared in confidence at the table is to stay at the table: please do not tell another person's story
- be sensitive to differences in cultural and gender communications styles, body language, and silence

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t Adapted from Mennonite Peace Center; Eric Law/Kaleidoscope Institute; Disciple Bible Study Leaders' Guide

Appendix J Part 3: Minnesota Council of Churches Respectful Conversations Initiative

Respectful Conversations Project

"Conversations about divisive issues can sometimes be emotional, pick-a-side and fight-it-out discussions that leave us feeling worse about the people we disagree with, and sometimes worse about ourselves. But there is a way to talk that feels open, honest and impartial, where you can actually be heard and learn about the people with whom you disagree.

Respectful Conversations are designed not to change minds, but soften hearts."

https://vimeo.com/40730696

"As part of the Minnesota Council of Churches Respectful Conversations Project, we demonstrated the "do's" and "do not do's" of having a civil discussions. They are hosting events around the state where congregations will come together to talk about the upcoming Marriage amendment. These are set up for people to share their ideas and understand one another."

Appendix K: Link to Report of the Communal Discernment Task Force

[Report of the Communal Discernment Task Force](#)

Communal Discernment is:
- *Prayerful*
- *Discerning, discriminating*
- *Undertaken as fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 4:22-23)*
- *Impassioned, enthused*
- *Visionary, curious, imaginative, playful, creative*
- *Vulnerable, honest*
- *Transparent, genuine*
- *Compassionate, merciful, courteous, respectful*
- *Hospitable, welcoming*
- *Appreciative, loving*
- *Relationship focused*
- *Spacious, leisurely*
- *Comfortable with silence*
- *Appropriately detached*
- *Intentional, habitual*
- *Conversational*
- *Undertaken with a good sense of humor*
- *Process (not outcomes) oriented, but courageous and patient with implications and consequences*
- *Circuitous, non-linear*
- *Fair-minded*
- *Sensitive to timing*
- *Attentive to group dynamics*
- *Studied, well-reasoned*
- *Like all human involvements, captive to sin*
- *Undertaken with astute self-knowledge*
- *Patient with conflict*
- *Steeped in tradition, and attentive to contemporary contexts*
- *Fluid, organic, emergent*
- *Ecumenical and conversant with wider worlds beyond the church*
- *Global and diverse in perspective*
- *Mission-minded and focused*

Appendix L: 2007 Churchwide Assembly action receiving Evangelical Lutheran Worship

ASSEMBLY ACTION: **CA07.02.04**   *YES-965; NO-71*

 1. To remember with joy that one of the six primary purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to "worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service" (ELCA constitutional provision 4.02.d.);

2.   To applaud the 1997 statement of this church, *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament,* for the way that statement has contributed to the development of worship resources and continues to provide guidance for the ministry of Word and Sacrament;

3.   To recall with gratitude the action of the Church Council in 2000 that authorized the "ELCA Next Generation of Worship Resources," the churchwide effort that came to be known as Renewing Worship;

4.   To acknowledge the subsequent action of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly regarding the ways in which the Renewing Worship effort:
     a.   reinforced the importance of widespread participation in the ongoing work of worship renewal;
     b.   affirmed a collaborative approach to the development of worship resources, drawing on the wisdom of individuals, congregations, pastors, musicians, synodical bishops, teaching theologians, and other leaders, institutions, and agencies;
     c.   demonstrated this church's commitment to thorough liturgical and theological review of materials intended for use in worshiping assemblies; and
     d.   encouraged and allowed for the completion of the new primary book of worship, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;

5.   To express gratitude for:
     a.   those who have provided leadership and oversight for the various facets of the development of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship;*
     b.   the widespread participation in introductory events; and
     c.   the many individuals and synodical teams who have provided leadership in introducing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;

6.   To convey appreciation—through the national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada—to the pastors, bishops, and many individuals and congregations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who contributed to the development and introduction of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship;*

7.   To receive with thanksgiving *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and celebrate the ways in which it:
     a.   bears the rich tradition of Christian worship practiced among Lutherans and, at the same time, seeks to renew that tradition in response to a generation of change in the Church and in the world;
     b.   reflects a body of prayer and song that are worthy to hold in common, consistent with the commitment to the treasury of Christian worship affirmed in the Lutheran confessions;
     c.   is grounded in Lutheran convictions about the centrality of the means of grace;

d.   continues to emphasize that freedom and flexibility in worship is a Lutheran inheritance; the book, therefore, is designed to make more transparent the principle of fostering unity without imposing uniformity;

e.   represents the gifts of the breadth of the Church of Christ, and prizes the words and songs Lutherans hold in common with other Christians, while at the same time extending the particular accents of the Lutheran heritage as gifts to the whole Church; and

f.   reflects the understanding that worship is fundamentally about what God does, bringing to expression how God nourishes the people of the Church for mission and accompanies them as they bear the creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world; and

8.   To commit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ongoing work of renewing worship, understanding that:

a.   worship takes place in particular assemblies within particular contexts, yet every assembly gathered by the Holy Spirit for worship is connected to the whole Church;

b.   each Christian assembly worships in the midst of an ever-changing world; and

c.   worship is renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the Church is called to serve.

Recommendation on ELCA Church Council Action regarding TEAC

Recommend the ELCA Church Council take the following actions

1) receive the TEAC report and express our appreciation for the work of the Theological Education Advisory Council

2) recognize and embrace this Sprit led convergence of new possibilities for theological education for this church

3) affirm the innovation and collaboration already underway by the seminaries which recognizes the changing climate of theological education

4) make available the TEAC report to synods, congregations, agencies, institutions and our ecumenical partners

5) create a comment period inviting all the expressions of this church to provide feedback and engage in on-going conversation about the future of the theological education enterprise in the life of this church

6) appoint a working group of Church Council members, TEAC members, and appropriate Churchwide staff to receive feedback from around the church, craft possible specific implementing strategies to operationalize the recommendations in the TEAC Report, and make a report to the Church Council prior to the April 2016 meeting.

7) direct the Budget and Finance Committee of Church Council to give preliminary thought to funding implications of the recommendations contained in the TEAC report.

Respectfully submitted:

Maren Hulden

John Lohrmann

James Utt

Oliver Thul

Marjorie Ellis

Bishop Herman Yoos, co-chair of TEAC

President Robin Steinke, co-chair of TEAC

Stephen Herr

Resolution: Commitment to becoming a racially and ethnically diverse church.

Whereas, this church strives to be racially and ethnically diverse and is committed to dismantling racism, which the church articulated in its 1993 social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, and

Whereas, the 2016 Churchwide Assembly will consider a continuing resolution to reaffirm this church's commitment to being a racially and ethnically diverse church, and

Whereas, as we recommend reaffirming this commitment in our governing documents, we as the Church Council acknowledge that living out this commitment requires the church and its members to truly welcome all of God's people. We also acknowledge that the work of dismantling racism in ourselves, our church, and our society is extraordinarily challenging, and

Whereas, this church acknowledged in *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, "[b]ecause of sin and indifference, intentional measures are necessary for vision to become reality" and such measures will require active commitment and effort throughout the entire church, and

Whereas, as issues of racism have come onto the contemporary stage, the Presiding Bishop has called this church into reflection, conversation, and action around issues of race and racism, and

Whereas, the ELCA Church Council has a leadership role in calling the church to conversation and action to live out this church's commitment to ending racism and becoming a diverse church. As this church said in *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, "[w]e expect our leadership to name the sin of racism and lead us in our repentance of it" and "[w]e expect our leadership to persevere in their challenge to us to be in mission and ministry in a multicultural society."

Therefore, be it resolved that the ELCA Church Council:

1. Recognizes and affirms the extensive efforts by the Presiding Bishop to call the entire church to confront racism and adds our voice to that call, and

2. Invites the Presiding Bishop to include the current efforts in a broader, comprehensive strategy towards becoming a racially and ethnically diverse church committed to dismantling racism.

Submitted by:
Marjorie Ellis
Maren Hulden

Portico Benefit Services
Submitted by: The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO

This summary from Portico Benefit Services provides a brief overview of several topics, including: 2016 rate and plan changes, ELCA social purpose investment program, legal update, stewardship, new Portico trustee, investment market news, strategic planning, and amendments to the ELCA medical and dental benefits plan.

2016 Rate & Plan Changes
In August, Portico announced adjustments to 2016 contribution rates, deductibles, and wellness incentives for the ELCA Health Plan. In response to rapidly increasing health care claims, I spoke before the ELCA Conference of Bishops in early October, calling for a renewed commitment to physical and emotional health as a way to reduce health care costs and raise up leaders more fit for the rigors of ministry. You can watch this 21-minute speech here; it will be on our member and sponsor websites in late November.

Social Purpose Investment Program
Seven of our eight social purpose funds will be able to include Social Impact First investments, which began November 1, 2015. These investments seek to prioritize social impact over financial return. With a modestly lower return/higher risk possible, they will represent no more than 10 percent of each social purpose fund.

Portico continues to work with the ELCA Corporate Social Responsibility review table regarding shareholder advocacy and screening. In November, Portico's board of trustees will consider a screen prohibiting investment in private (for-profit) prisons, as well as an enhancement to the current environmental screen, which would prohibit investment in companies with coal reserves used to produce electricity.

Legal Update
On March 5, 2015, a purported class action lawsuit was filed against Portico Benefit Services in Minnesota State Court (Hennepin County) — *Pastor David Bacon, Pastor Timothy Hepner, Ruth Dold, and Sharon Hvam v. Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (D/B/A Portico Benefit Services)*. The claims in the lawsuit relate to services provided to the ELCA Retirement Plan and the ELCA Retirement Plan for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society. The lawsuit alleges and seeks remedies related to the fees for investment and administration of the plans and the selection of ELCA investment funds. While the occasional lawsuit is a reality in any industry, Portico disagrees strongly with the allegations in this complaint and is vigorously defending itself. On June 8, 2015, Portico filed a motion to dismiss this lawsuit under the Federal and Minnesota State Constitutions, asserting that the court's evaluation of the claims would constitute government entanglement in the free exercise of religion. On July 16, 2015, there was a hearing to argue the motion before Judge Abrams, Hennepin County District Court. On October 13, 2015, Judge Abrams issued an order granting Portico's motion to dismiss. The plaintiffs have 60 days to appeal this decision.

Stewardship
Portico's operating and capital expenses were under budget through the period ending June 30, 2015. As a result, the:
- Retirement Plan Expense Ratio forecast is on target at 0.63 percent, well below the 0.88 percent benchmark.

- Health plan expense ratio is 10.1 percent, under the 12 percent benchmark. When compared to external benchmarks, we continue to be among the most efficient stewards of health care dollars in the U.S.

New Portico Trustee

The Board of Trustees will welcome a younger "Gen X" leader at its November meeting — John Hoffman, a Regional Managing Director in the Principal Financial Group.

Investment Market News

Volatility in the financial markets spiked during the third quarter due to uncertainty over the timing of a possible interest rate increase by the U.S. Federal Reserve, concerns about slowing growth in international markets, and the prospect of a global recession.
- While the U.S. stock market produced modest gains through the first half of the year, third quarter declines pulled the return to -5.5 percent through September.
- Stock markets outside the U.S. also declined during the quarter, bringing the return for developed markets to -4.9 percent and emerging markets sharply lower to -15.5 percent year-to-date.
- Short-term investor moves into investment-grade bonds increased the return for that market to 1.1 percent, while high yield bonds sold off for a -2.5 percent return so far this year.

Short-term market declines have pulled the returns for many of our retirement funds into negative territory for the year. Despite market downturns, however, we can report that:
- More than 60 percent of Portico's active portfolio managers have exceeded their performance benchmarks so far this year.
- The Select Series balanced funds, Participating Annuity Fund, and global stock funds have benefited from diversification, including allocations to 'alternative investments' such as private equity and real estate that have performed strongly this year.

The ELCA 60e Balanced Fund (the default fund for the ELCA Retirement Plan) provides a representative example of fund results: Performance has exceeded market benchmarks by 1 percent, and it has also performed better than its mutual fund peer group[1] year-to-date[2].

Strategic Planning

We continue to focus on our strategic plan, "Build a Foundation for Growth." The key drivers are the health of the plan, affordability, and member satisfaction/engagement. As we look ahead, we seek to:
- Expand lay employee participation
- Encourage greater engagement with present members
- Expand work with the ELCA foundation and endowments
- Expand partnerships and services with other Church Benefit Association members

Amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan

In November, Portico's board of trustees will consider a proposal to "remove exclusions for services and treatment for gender dysphoria, including surgical sex reassignment surgery when such surgery is authorized by the Plan's medical and mental health benefits administrator (Blue Cross Blue Shield), and mental health therapy for transsexualism." Coverage for these services is mandatory in nine states and is in line with the ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality, which affirms "equal protection … and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity." (part VI, p. 17)

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1 As of Dec. 31, 2012, Portico began using Lipper fund classification comparisons. These comparisons use the median (middle) return of mutual funds classified by Lipper and exclude the "I" institutional share class. Lipper fund classifications are more widely known and provide a more common comparison to other funds with similar investment mandates to the ELCA funds for purposes of comparing investments available to retail investors, such as investments available to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Like the ELCA funds, the Lipper returns are net of all fees.
2 Please see ELCA Investment Fund Descriptions for additional detail. Also, past performance does not guarantee future results.

Portico Benefit Services Digest of Board Actions
Submitted by: The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO
Meeting Dates: July 30 – August 1, 2015 and October 30 – November 1, 2015

Category I: **Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.**
   None

Category II: **Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.**

June 2015 Electronic Vote
Approved the resolution relating to (1) the use of up to $510,000 of the contingency fund to pay for fees and expenses associated with the litigation pending against Portico Benefit Services and (2) adjustment of the Reserve Target to 15-20 percent of Portico's annual operating budget.

August 2015 Resolutions/Actions
Elected the following Board of Trustees Officers for 2015-2017:
Gregory W. Heidrich, Chairperson
Peter J. Enko, Vice Chairperson
Leon J. Schwartz, Secretary

Approved the resolution relating to the Appointment of the Treasurer to be Stacy A. Kruse, Chief Operating and Financial Officer.

Elected the following At-Large Members for 2015-2017:
At-Large Member #1: Lisa A. Kro
At-Large Member #2: Raye Nae D. Nylander

Elected Committee Chairs for 2015-2017:
Pr. Martha E. Stevens, Appeals Committee
Raye Nae D. Nylander, Audit Committee
Dianne Witte, Board Development Committee
Peter J. Enko, Finance Committee
Pamela S. Moench, Investment/Corporate Social Responsibility Committee
Pr. Paul W. Stumme-Diers, Products & Services Committee

Approved amendments to:

   ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan – Sections 2.19, 4.08, 4.11 and 9.01 (beginning in 2016, members must incur health care expenses during the same calendar year in which the FSA is funded).
   ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Sections 10.05 and 10.07 (effective for the 2016 plan year, individual out-of-pocket limits cannot exceed a specified amount ($6,850 for 2016).
Received amendments approved by the President to:

Signed/dated: March 2, 2015
   ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Section 1.01 (amending the reference of "ELCA Health Benefits Plan" to "ELCA Health Plan" for consistency of language – retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

Signed/dated: June 30, 2015

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Section 17.11 (initiation of amendments – removes specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions – retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Disability Benefits Plan – Section 10.04 (amending to align plan language to the administrative process regarding the appeals procedure - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Disability Benefits Plan – Section 10.12 (removes the specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan – Section 8.25 (amending to align plan language to the administrative process regarding the definition of "Separation of Service" - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan – Section 9.12 (removes the specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan – Section 7.08 (removes the specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Retirement Plan – Section 2.38 (amending to align plan language to the administrative process regarding the definition of "Separation from Service" - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Retirement Plan – Section 12.12 (removes the specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolution - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Retirement Plan for the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society – Section 2.08 (amending, as requested by GSS, to exclude severance from the definition of "defined compensation" - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Retirement Plan for the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society – Section 11.12 (removes specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan – Section 11.12 (removes specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

ELCA Continuation of the ALC and LCA Minimum and Non-Contributory Pension Plans – Section 4.08 (removes specific section reference to the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions - retroactively effective January 1, 2015).

Adopted the resolution approving the 2016 Contribution Rates for the Survivor, Disability, and Medical and Dental Benefits Plans, and Retiree Support.

Approved the resolution relating to lending $5M from the Undesignated Contingency Reserve Fund to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, and adjusting of the Reserve Target to 6-12% of Portico's annual operating budget.

November 2015 Resolutions/Actions

Adopted the resolution relating to the approval of the 2016 Budget.

Approved the resolution establishing the annuity adjustment (1.4%), dividend (9.5%) and interest-crediting rate (5.0%) for 2016 for the ELCA Participating Annuity of the ELCA Retirement Plan.

Approved amendments to:

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Sections 10.11, 12.05 and 12.08 (effective January 1, 2016) specifies coverage allowed for transplant services related to a member's participation in the Mayo Clinic Living Donor Kidney Program.

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Section 10.08 (effective January 1, 2016) limits access to a local Wisconsin network that offers an opportunity for savings beyond the broader BlueCard PPO network.

ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan – Sections 12.07 and 12.08 (effective January 1, 2016) provides coverage for services and treatment for gender dysphoria and removes the exclusions for sex reassignment surgery when such surgery is permitted under the Plan as reviewed by the Plan's Medical and Mental Health Benefits Administrator (Blue Cross Blue Shield) and mental health therapy for transsexualism.

Received amendments approved by the President to:

Signed/dated: October 15, 2015
ELCA Retirement Plan – Section 9.06 effective January 1, 2016) provides a member with the option to waive the 30-day waiting period for withdrawals made upon separation from service.

ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan – Sections 3.07 and 4.06 (effective for January 1, 2016) clarifies that eligible dependent care flexible spending account (FSA) expenses may be incurred through the end of the plan year, even if there is a mid-year employment termination.

Category III.   Other procedures and board actions.

May 2015 Electronic Vote
Approved the retention of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the independent auditor for the year ending December 31, 2015.

August 2015 Resolutions/Actions
Received the updated report on the 2015 Trustee Conflict or Duality of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Received Portico's 2Q15 Management Report and all Committee Reports, en bloc.

November 2015 Resolutions/Actions
Approved the resolution designating a portion of 2016 remuneration as rental/housing allowance for the following Portico Benefit Services employees:

Pr. Paul E. Aebischer
Pr. Shelley K. Cunningham
Pr. Jeffrey D. Thiemann
Pr. Harold L. Usgaard

Approved the resolution designating retirement and disability payments as rental/housing allowance for 2016.

Approved the Board of Trustees committee assignments for 2015-2017.

Approved the Slate of Committee Vice Chairs for 2015-2017.

Approved revised Charters and Calendars for Executive Committee, Board Development Committee, Audit Committee, Investment/Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, and Products & Services Committee, en bloc.

Received Portico's 3Q15 Management Report and all Committee Reports, en bloc.

November 2015 Resolutions/Actions
Adopted resolution proposing a partial Slate of Candidates for the Twelve (12) Trustees to be elected at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2016, and directing staff to forward same to the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA.

CERTIFICATE OF RESTATED

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INC.

(formerly National Lutheran Campus Ministry)

PROPOSED CHANGE:

CERTIFICATE OF SECOND RESTATED

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INC.

(formerly National Lutheran Campus Ministry)

The undersigned, being the President and Secretary, respectively, of **National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. (NLCM, INC.),** a Minnesota nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the provisions of the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act and having membership with voting rights with respect to amendment of articles of incorporation, do hereby certify that the Board of Directors of the corporation proposed the following **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation of **NLCM, INC.** and submitted the following **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation for **NLCM, INC.** for adoption by the members of the corporation, that the members of the corporation unanimously approved and duly adopted the following **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation of **NLCM, INC.** by written resolution dated **October 5**, **2015**; and that the following **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation of **NLCM, INC.** supersede and take the place of the **Restated Articles of Incorporation dated December 21, 1987 and the prior existing Articles of Incorporation of National Lutheran Campus Ministry.**

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD PRINT

ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation shall be:

NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INC.

ARTICLE II

The purposes of this corporation shall be to carry on as an agency of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (**ELCA**), **or its successor,** in maintaining, developing and promoting **ELCA-related** Christian

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ministry in academic communities located within the states of the United States of America, and in those Commonwealths, Territories and Islands voluntarily associated with the United States or which are under its administration.

In furtherance of its purposes, this corporation may engage in, advance, promote and administer charitable activities and projects of every kind and nature whatsoever in its own behalf or as the agent, trustee or representative of others, and may aid, assist and contribute to the support of corporations, associations and institutions which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes and which are described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, as amended.

For its purpose and not otherwise, this corporation shall have only such powers as are required by and are consistent with the foregoing purposes, including the power to receive funds and property of every kind and nature whatsoever, whether by purchase, conveyance, lease, gift, grant, bequest, legacy, devise, or otherwise, and to own, hold, expend, make gifts, grants, and contributions of, and to convey, transfer, and dispose of any funds and property and the income therefrom for the furtherance of the purposes of this corporation hereinabove set forth, or any of them, and to lease, mortgage, encumber, and use the same, and such other powers which are consistent with the foregoing purposes and which are afforded to this corporation by the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act, as now enacted or as hereafter amended. All the powers of this corporation shall be exercised only so that this corporation's operations shall be exclusively within the contemplation of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, **as amended.**

All references in these **Second Restated** Articles of Incorporation to sections of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 include any provisions thereof adopted by future amendments thereto and any cognate provision in future Internal Revenue Codes to the extent such provisions are applicable to this corporation.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE PARAGRAPHS ARE IN BOLD PRINT

ARTICLE III

This corporation shall not afford pecuniary gain, incidentally or otherwise, to its members, and no part of the net income or net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, private shareholder, or individual, and no substantial part of its activities shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. This corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

This corporation shall not lend any of its assets to any officer or director of this corporation or guarantee to any other person the payment of a loan made to an officer or director of this corporation.

Nothing herein shall be construed to establish or prohibit the payment of reasonable compensation to officers or directors of this corporation for services actually rendered by them to this corporation.

ARTICLE IV

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The period of duration of this corporation's corporate existence shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE V

The registered office of this corporation shall be located at **100 South 5ᵗʰ St, Suite 1075**, **Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402**. **The principal office of this corporation shall be at 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL, 60631. The corporation may also have offices at such other places as the Board of Directors may from time to time appoint or the activities of the corporation may require.**

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD PRINT

ARTICLE VI

This corporation shall have no members with voting rights. The Board of Directors may establish a class or classes of nonvoting members upon such terms and conditions as it from time to time deems appropriate.

ARTICLE VII

The management and direction of the business of this corporation shall be vested in its Board of Directors. The number, terms of office, powers, authorities and duties of the directors of this corporation, the time and place of their meetings, and such other regulations with respect to them as are not inconsistent with the express provisions of these **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation shall be as specified from time to time in the Bylaws of this corporation.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD PRINT

ARTICLE VIII

The number of members of the Board of Directors at the time of adoption of these **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation is **five (5),** each of whom shall serve until the **2016** annual meeting of the Board of Directors and**/or** until his or her respective successor has been elected and has qualified. The name and address of each such directors is as follows:

Name	Address
Robert Wollenburg	180 Cabrini Blvd., Apt. 106 New York, NY 10033
Karen Sumner	603 Tuten Trail Orlando, FL 32828
Wayne Hanson	6101 North Sheridan Road, 35A Chicago, IL 60660

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Galen Hora   2358 151st Avenue NW
                                        Andover, MN 55304

Linda Boston   175 Schooner Court
                                        Richmond, CA 94804

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE ARE IN BOLD; DIRECTORS UPDATED TO CURRENT ROSTER

ARTICLE IX

This corporation shall have no capital stock.

ARTICLE X

The directors, officers and members of this corporation shall not be personally liable for the debts or obligations of this corporation of any nature whatsoever, nor shall any of the property of the directors, officers or members be subject to the payment of the debts or obligations of this corporation to any extent whatsoever.

ARTICLE XI

These **Second** Restated Articles of Incorporation may be amended from time to time in the manner provided by law.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD PRINT

ARTICLE XII

This corporation may be dissolved in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota. Upon dissolution of this corporation any surplus property remaining after the payment of its debts shall be disposed of by transfer to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or its successor, to be held and used exclusively for charitable purposes; provided, however, that if the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or such successor organization is not then in existence or is not an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, **as amended**, then said surplus property shall be disposed of by transfer to one or more corporations, associations, institutions, trusts, community chests or foundations organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes of this corporation, and described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, **as amended**, in such proportions as the Board of Directors of this corporation shall determine. Notwithstanding any provision herein to the contrary, nothing herein shall be construed to affect the disposition of property and assets held by this corporation upon trust or other conditions, or subject to any executory or special limitation, and such property, upon dissolution of this corporation, shall be transferred in accordance with the trust, condition or limitation imposed with respect to it.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD

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ARTICLE XIII

Except as may be otherwise provided in this corporation's Bylaws, none of the following actions shall be taken by this corporation without the prior approval of the Church Council of the ELCA: amendment of Articles of Incorporation; amendment of Bylaws; merger or consolidation with any domestic or foreign corporation; sale, lease, encumbrance or other disposition of all or substantially all of this corporation's property; and voluntary dissolution. This corporation shall adopt any amendment to these **Second Restated** Articles of Incorporation or this corporation's Bylaws that may be prescribed by the Church Council of the ELCA, and procedures to effect any such prescribed amendment shall be instituted promptly after adoption of such prescribed amendment by the Church Council of the ELCA. This corporation shall adopt any agreement of merger or consolidation that may be prescribed by the Church Council of the ELCA, and procedures to effect any such prescribed agreement shall be instituted promptly after adoption of such prescribed agreement by the Church Council of the ELCA. For purposes of asserting claims based on the powers and authorities granted to it pursuant to this Article, and for such purposes only, the ELCA shall be deemed to be a member of this corporation.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGES IN THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH ARE IN BOLD

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have subscribed our names as the President and Secretary, respectively, of said corporation this _____ day of _____, 2015.

_____
Robert Wollenburg, President

_____
Wayne Hanson, Secretary

(Note: Need to add notary language as prior document indicated it was signed and notarized)

AMENDED BYLAWS

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE: SECOND AMENDED BYLAWS

OF
NATIONAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, INC.

ARTICLE I – Purpose

This corporation has been established in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to assist in maintaining and developing facilities for Christian ministries in academic communities.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (in bold below)

This corporation has been established in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) **to assist ELCA and ELCA-related campus ministry agencies to provide for and maintain their facilities for** ministries in academic communities.

ARTICLE II – Location

The principal office of the National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. (NLCM, Inc.) shall be at 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. NLCM, Inc. may also have offices at such other places as the Board of Directors may from time to time appoint or the activities of NLCM, Inc. may require.

ARTICLE III – Board of Directors

Section 3.1   The Board of Directors shall consist of no fewer than 3 and no more than 7 persons.

Section 3.2   The directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee consisting of the ELCA Director for Campus Ministry or his or her designee, and two members of the Board of Directors and elected by the ELCA Church Council. A director shall serve for a term of four (4) years commencing at the next annual meeting.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (in bold below)

Section 3.2   The directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee consisting of the **appointee of the executive director of the program unit of the ELCA that relates to NLCM, Inc.,** or his or her designee, and two members of the Board of Directors and shall be elected by the ELCA Church Council. A director shall serve for a term of four (4) years commencing at the next annual meeting.

Section 3.3   Terms shall be staggered.

Section 3.4   Any director may be removed with cause, upon a vote of the majority of the Board of

Directors. Any vacancy caused by death, resignation, or removal of a director, shall be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired term of such director or until the next Church Council meeting, whichever comes first.

Section 3.5   No director shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Section 3.6   Each member of the Board shall serve in a fiduciary capacity to the corporation and shall perform his/her duties as a director, including duties as a member of any Board committee, in good faith, in a manner he/she reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the corporation, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, skills, and diligence, as a person of ordinary prudence would use under similar circumstances.

ARTICLE IV – Meetings of the Board of Directors

Section 4.1   Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least two (2) times each year at such place or places as may from time to time be fixed by the Board of Directors.

Section 4.2   The Annual Meeting shall be the first meeting of the fiscal year at the registered office of the corporation. If necessary, the Directors shall elect or re-elect Officers at this meeting.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 4.2   The Annual Meeting shall be the first meeting of the fiscal year at the **principal office of the corporation.** If necessary, the Directors shall elect or re-elect Officers at this meeting.

Section 4.3   Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called at any time by the President, or by a majority of the Board of Directors.

Section 4.4   Written notice of every meeting of the members, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, shall be given by, or at the direction of, the Secretary to each member of the board, at least ten (10) days prior to the day named of the meeting. If the Secretary shall neglect or refuse to give notices of the meeting, the person or persons calling the meeting may do so.

Section 4.5   With the exception of the annual meeting, a director may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors by any means of communication permitting all members present at or participating in the meeting to hear one another simultaneously, in which case this participation constitutes presence at the meeting.

Section 4.6   Action of the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting upon unanimous written consent of all the members of the Board of Directors and shall be filed with the Secretary of the corporation.

ARTICLE V – Officers

Section 5.1   The officers of the corporation shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers and assistant officers as the needs of the corporation may require.

Section 5.2   Officers shall be elected to serve for a term of two (2) years. A person may hold more than one office at the same time, but the President and Secretary shall hold no other office. There will be no limit to the number of terms a Board member may serve as an officer during his or her tenure as a director.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 5.2.   Officers shall be elected by **the Board of Directors** to serve for a term of two (2) years. A person may hold more than one office at the same time, but the President and Secretary shall hold no other office. There will be no limit to the number of terms a Board member may serve as an officer during his or her tenure as a director.

Section 5.3   Any officer may at any time be removed by the Board of Directors with cause. Vacancies by death, resignation, refusal to serve, or otherwise, shall be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Directors then serving.

Section 5.4   President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and shall in consultation with the ELCA Director for Campus Ministry or his or her designee have general supervision and direction of the affairs of the corporation. He or she shall execute all contracts, deeds, conveyances, and other instruments on behalf of the corporation when such action has been authorized by the Board of Directors.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 5.4   President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and shall in consultation with the **appointee of the executive director of the program unit of the ELCA that relates to NLCM, Inc.,** or his or her designee, have general supervision and direction of the affairs of the corporation. He or she shall execute all contracts, deeds, conveyances, and other instruments on behalf of the corporation when such action has been authorized by the Board of Directors.

Section 5.5   Vice President. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence or disability. The proper execution of any instrument by the Vice President on behalf of this corporation shall have the same force and effect as execution by the President.

Section 5.6   Secretary. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings and shall be custodian of the records, documents, and papers of this corporation. The Secretary shall have any and all duties and may exercise any and all powers imposed or granted by law, regulation, or action of the Board of Directors.

Section 5.7   Assistant Secretary. The Board of Directors in its discretion may elect an Assistant Secretary, who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Secretary as above set forth under the general direction of the Secretary or President. The Assistant Secretary need not be a member of the Board of Directors.

Section 5.8   Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have and may exercise such duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall present a full report at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors and shall make other reports to the Board as it may require.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 5.8   Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have and may exercise such duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall present a full **financial report** at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors and shall make other reports to the Board as it may require.

Section 5.9   Assistant Treasurer.   The Board of Directors in its discretion may elect an Assistant Treasurer who shall perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of the Treasurer as above set forth under the general direction of the Treasure or President. The Assistant Treasurer need not be a member of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI – Relationship of ELCA Director for Campus Ministry

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE

ARTICLE VI – RELATIONSHIP OF THE APPOINTEE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM UNIT OF THE ELCA THAT RELATES TO NLCM, INC., OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE

Section 6.1   The Director for Campus Ministry of the ELCA Vocation and Education program unit shall be the Director of NLCM, Inc. As such, the Director, or his or her designee, shall consult with the President and the appropriate officers and assistant officers when matters dictate such actions.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 6.1   **The appointee of the executive director of the program unit of the ELCA that relates to NLCM, Inc., or his or her designee,** shall consult with the President and the appropriate officers and assistant officers when matters dictate such actions.

Section 6.2   The Director for NLCM, Inc. shall have active management of the affairs of this corporation and may delegate such responsibilities to his or her designee.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE (IN BOLD BELOW)

Section 6.2   **The appointee of the executive director of the program unit of the ELCA that**

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relates to NLCM, Inc., shall have active management of the affairs of this corporation and may delegate such responsibilities to his or her designee.

ARTICLE VII – Indemnification of Directors and Officers

Section 7.1   To the fullest extent permitted by law a director of the corporation shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken, any failure to take any action, or liability for monetary damages.

Section 7.2   To the fullest extent permitted by law the corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, including actions by or in the right of the corporation, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director or officer of the corporation for any fines, taxes, and amounts paid in the settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding unless the act of failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is determined by a court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness.

Section 7.3   The indemnification and advancement of expenses provided by or pursuant to this Article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification or advancement of expenses may be entitled, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director or officer and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of such persons.

Section 7.4   The duties of the corporation to indemnify and to advance expenses to a director or officer provided in this Article shall be in the nature of a contract between the corporation and each such director or officer, and no amendment or repeal of any provision of this Article, shall alter the right of such a person to the advance of expenses or indemnification related to a claim based on an act or failure to act which took place prior to such amendment, repeal, or termination.

Section 7.5   This corporation may, to the full extent permitted by applicable law, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is a director, officer, employee, or agent of this corporation against any liability asserted against such person in any such capacity.

ARTICLE VIII – Miscellaneous

Section 8.1   The fiscal year of this corporation shall be February 1 through January 31.

BOARD APPROVED CHANGE

Section 8.1.   The fiscal year of this corporation shall be January 1 through December 31.

Section 8.2   The corporation shall have no seal.

Section 8.3   The corporation shall have no voting members and thus shall have no meetings of members.

Section 8.4   These Bylaws may be amended from time to time by a vote of a majority of the Board of Directors and ratification by the ELCA Church Council.

Section 8.5   Directors shall not receive any compensation for their services, except by resolution of the Board. The Board may reimburse any director for reasonable and ordinary expenses incurred on behalf of the corporation.

Section 8.6   The Board is authorized to appoint an administrator or other advisor who may receive compensation for his or her services, as determined by the Board of Directors in consultation with the ELCA.

Section 8.7   The Board is authorized to act by and through such committees as may be specified in resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors. Any such committee will at all times be subject to the control and direction of the Board of Directors.

Section 8.8   No officer, agent or employee of this corporation shall have any power or authority to borrow money on its behalf, to pledge its credit or to mortgage or pledge its real or personal property except within the scope and to the extent of the authority delegated by specific resolutions adopted from time to time by the Board of Directors.

Section 8.9   All funds of this corporation shall be deposited to the credit of the corporation in such banks or other depositories as the Board of Directors may designate, and such funds shall be withdrawn only in a manner authorized by the Board of Directors.

Section 8.10   In matters not covered by these Bylaws, each meeting of the Board of Directors shall be governed by the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 8.11   These Bylaws shall take effect upon a majority vote of the Board of Directors and ratification of the ELCA Church Council.

_____
President of NLCM, Inc.

_____
Secretary of NLCM, Inc.

Date of Adoption: September 23, 2006
Date of Adoption of Second Amended Bylaws: October 5, 2015

Date of Church Council Approval: November 11, 2006
     PROPOSED CHANGE: Date of Church Council Approval: _____

6

MEMORANDUM

To: Church Council and Conference of Bishops
From: Wm Chris Boerger
Date: September 1, 2015
Subject: Proposed Amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

INTRODUCTION

One of the responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly is to adopt amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.* The process for amending the governing documents is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution. The principal way that constitution amendments are adopted is in accordance with provision **22.11.a**. which states: "The Church Council may propose an amendment with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly." This is the only provision that authorizes adopting of constitutional amendments at a single meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. It means that proposed constitutional amendments for consideration at the Churchwide Assembly in 2016 must be considered and recommended by the Church Council meeting in November 2015.

Although the processes for adopting bylaw amendments and continuing resolutions at a Churchwide Assembly do not require similar notice, the historic practice of the Office of the Secretary has been to seek to provide a complete set of proposed governing document amendments at the fall Church Council meeting in the year before the Churchwide Assembly. Because many proposed constitutional amendments are accompanied by related bylaw and continuing resolution amendments, it is desirable to consider them at the same time.

With the proposed combining of what we currently call lay rosters into a single roster, the Office of the Secretary has been working on possible governing document amendments for over a year. Initial proposals for amendments to Chapter 7 of the ELCA Constitution were distributed to the Synod Bishops, Synod Vice Presidents and the Church Council in the fall of 2014. All of the amendments will be reviewed by the Conference of Bishops at its October 2015 meeting. The Legal and Constitutional Review Committee will recommend the final form of the amendments to the November 2015 Church Council meeting for action.

The plan is that the amendments to the governing documents will be considered in three actions. The first is to address Continuing Resolution **19.01.A15**, dealing with the election of the Vice President. If this process is to be used at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly the addition of the continuing resolution needs to be adopted at the November Church Council meeting. We also will be considering **16.1.C15.** This continuing resolution describes the responsibilities of the Mission Advancement Unit.

The second action would consider en bloc the amendments related to the unification of the Word and Service roster. This action would be the largest since it amends all three constitutions in numerous sections. The third action would be to consider en bloc the proposed amendments that are not related to the roster unification.

This summary is provided to facilitate and focus your review and analysis and is not intended to substitute for a thoughtful consideration of all of the proposed amendments.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

19.01.A15. This continuing resolution will allow for pre-identification of potential nominees for Vice President. It comes as a result of discussions that began at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and reflects the surveys of the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops. Voting members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly will be contacted by the Office of the Secretary in January to identify up to 3 persons who might be considered for the office of Vice President. Those identified will be contacted by the Office of the Secretary and asked to complete a biographical information form. Those forms received by May 1, 2016 will be distributed to the voting members 60 days before the assembly meets. Completing the form does not prohibit an individual from withdrawing after the first ballot. Other persons may be identified on the first ballot. These persons will be asked to fill out the same biographical form prior to the third ballot.

This continuing resolution will be acted on at the November 2015 Church Council meeting. It will require a 2/3 vote to be adopted.

16.12.C15. This continuing resolution recognizes the changes that have been implemented in the Mission Advancement unit. It gives the unit flexibility to develop strategies and resources to accomplish its mission. **16.22.D11** will be removed. The editor of the church publication is no longer elected by the Church Council but becomes part of the regular employment process of the churchwide organization. It also recognizes that all of the other advisory committees or program committees were removed from the churchwide structure at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. This action would also remove **14.32.B13.**

This continuing resolution will be acted on at the November 2015 Church Council meeting. It will require a 2/3 vote to be adopted.

WORD AND SERVICE ROSTER

The primary changes to the governing documents are in Chapter 7 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in Chapter S14 of the Constitution for Synods and Chapter C9 of the Model Constitution for Congregations. The effects of these changes are reflected throughout all three constitutions. Given the significant number of these changes, I have not listed all of them. I encourage your detailed review of these chapters as they contain the basis for the changes related to the proposal to unify the current three "official rosters of laypersons."

We have chosen to use the language of ministers of Word and Sacrament for those who are currently named in the constitution as ordained ministers and ministers of Word and Service for those who will be on the unified roster of what the current constitution speaks of as "official rosters of laypersons." Given the ongoing questions related to the entrance rite for the new roster, it seemed best to not refer to one roster by its entrance rite. The current constitution uses the term "pastor" primarily in relationship to those ministers of Word and Sacrament who serve in congregational settings. We have attempted to maintain that distinction for the sake of constitutional clarity. However, this is not an attempt to limit the use of the term "pastor" in other contexts. We have attempted to make the language related to the two rosters parallel; the

structure of each section is similar to the other including processes for calling, termination of call, discipline and other matters.

While the new roster will be titled ministers of Word and Service, the title does not imply that ministers of Word and Sacrament are not engaged in service. It instead lifts up the diaconal nature of this roster's ministry. There is one bylaw that identifies those on this new roster as deacons. That term has not been used throughout the constitutional documents; we have opted instead for the more general term "ministers of Word and Service."

Should the Church Council choose to recommend to the Churchwide Assembly a resolution that would unify the three official rosters of laypersons, that action will be placed before the assembly for action. If it is approved, then these constitutional amendments would be placed before the assembly for action. If the action to unify the rosters is not approved, these amendments would not go before the assembly.

OTHER AMENDMENTS

Please note that there has been an editorial change to Chapter 1. Part of the review this year noted that we had bylaws that were not directly connected to a constitutional provision. We remedied this in Chapter 1 by renumbering **1.21.01., 1.31.01.** and **1.31.0.2** and attaching them to provision **1.11**. This is an editorial change and will not be voted upon. The issue of having unattached bylaws will be seen in other chapters and will require adoption by the assembly.

3.02. The addition of this provision comes from the report of the Ecclesiology of the Global Church Task. It reaffirms this church's resolve to serve the unity of Christ's Church.

3.04. This new section affirms that our participation in the Lutheran World Federation is one way that this church lives out its commitment to be part of the whole Church.

5.01.A16. The previous language of the continuing resolution established a goal of inclusivity that this church did not achieve. The new continuing resolution changes a goal to a commitment by describing the ongoing work required to achieve it. The proposal also replaces an arbitrary percentage (10%) with an ongoing commitment to reflect the real diversity that exists in the places where this church is located.

This continuing resolution and the two that follow could be adopted by the Church Council by a two thirds vote. It is my belief that such a commitment as this should be acted upon by the Churchwide Assembly and would require a majority vote.

5.01.B16. This continuing resolution seeks to ensure accountability towards the commitment in each expression of this church.

5.01.D16. This continuing resolution would require accountability on the part of the churchwide organization and require reporting the vision of what this church is doing and the progress being made toward this commitment. This report would give opportunity to the Churchwide Assembly to respond and direct the work of the churchwide organization.

Chapter 7 As stated, there has been a significant rewriting of this chapter. Issues not addressed in this rewriting relate to the entrance rite for minsters of Word and Service. Since two of the current rosters uses the rite of consecration, that rite is retained for the new roster. The Church Council has deferred final decision about the entrance rite until 2019.

8.10. This title is amended to include the Lutheran World Federation.

8.13. The language that was in **8.21.** is in place in this provision. The addition describes one of the ways in which synods can accomplish the work given to the synod. The previous placement in the ELCA Constitution seems out of place in a section describing relationships with the churchwide organization.

8.18 and **8.18.01** This provision and bylaw recognizes the relationship established in **3.04**. and establishes a process for the exchange of ministers of Word and Sacrament.

8.72.11.e. This bylaw is removed at the request of the Conference of Bishops. It should be noted that the proposed change to **7.41.02**. recognizes service in a congregation of a church body with which a relationship exists with the synodical bishop's approval. Exceptions to serve in a non-congregation setting with a full communion partner would still require an exception being granted by the Conference of Bishops.

8.73. This provision is removed based upon the inclusion of the Lutheran World Federation in **8.18**. and **8.18.01.**

9.80. This is a title with no provisions or bylaws. Chapter 20 contains the necessary provisions.

10.01.01 This change reflects the pattern of removing titles that have no constitution provisions and makes the title part of the bylaw. The remainder of the changes incorporates congregations that are outside of the counties assigned to each synod and notes their inclusion in the synod. While used previously in the description of some synods, there was not a universal pattern. This attempts to remedy that omission.

10.31.02. Currently this bylaw is **10.81.01.** and is a bylaw that is not attached to a constitutional provision other than the title. This appears to be the appropriate placement after the bylaw dealing with the election of a synodical bishop.

10.32. This establishes a constitutional provision on which to attach the following bylaws rather than just a title.

10.32.01., 10.32.02. and **10.32.03**. The subsections of the previous bylaw are stated as individual bylaws under the new constitutional provision **10.32**.

10.41. This would allow synods to adopt a triennial synod assembly schedule. The change was requested by the Caribbean Synod.

10.71., 10.71.01. and **10.71.02**. This constitutional provision and bylaws establish a new method of determining mission partnership support. The Office of the Secretary was instructed by the Church Council to develop language that removed the percent established by the Churchwide Assembly as the standard percentage for mission partnership support. The new method recognizes that additional funding streams might be used by synods. Individual amounts or percentages will be established by consultation between the churchwide organization and each individual synod. The bylaws recognize the role of the synod assembly and the Church Council in approving the consultation agreement. If either the assembly or the council does not approve the consultation agreement, a new consultation will take place. **†S15.11.** is also amended to enable this process.

10.81.A16.e. This is redundant with **10.81.A16.c.**

12.31. We do not need the references to prior to 2013.

12.31.02. The addition of "on this church's website acknowledges that the website and the church periodical have become primary means of communication.

12.41.11. The amendment incorporates bylaw 12.41.22 into this bylaw.

12.41.20., 12.41.30. and 12.41.40. Removing this bylaw continues the pattern of removing titles as separate bylaws and places it in **12.41.21., 12.41.31, and 12.41.41.**

12.51.10., 12.51.20., 12.51.30., Removing this bylaw continues the pattern of removing titles as separate bylaws and places it in **12.51.01**, **12.51.02, 12.51.03.**

13.21.k. and **13.41.02.e.** Legal counsel was moved into the Office of the Secretary early in this church's life. This reflects current practice. **13.41.02.e.** is expanded to reflect this.

14.21.12 This amendment removes the confusion that might occur should a Presiding Bishop not retire at the end of their term.

14.31 The pairing of synods produces 32 positions to be elected following nomination by synods. This amendment recognizes that detail.

14.32.03. This would allow a member of the Church Council who had been appointed to fill an unexpired term of less than three years to be re-elected. This would only apply to those positions established by the Church Council in accordance with **19.02.**

14.32.B13. With the removal of the Advisory Committee for the Church Periodical, this continuing resolution is eliminated.

14.41.10. Removing this bylaw continues the pattern of removing titles as separate bylaws and places it in **14.41.01**

16.01.01. As the churchwide personnel policies have removed the distinction between executive staff and support staff, it seems appropriate to remove this terminology from the constitution.

18.01.01. – 18.01.04. The bylaws renumber and move what had been **18.11.11**-**18.11.14**. and place them under an appropriate constitutional provision.

Chapter 19 The bylaws of this chapter have been rearranged so that the practice of having bylaws attached to constitutional provisions also informed this rearrangement of bylaws and continuing resolutions. The various election processes are grouped accordingly.

19.01.01. This bylaw was 13.31.01.d.

19.01.12. This bylaw was 13.31.01.a.

19.01.03. This bylaw was 13.31.01.b.

19.01.04. This bylaw was 13.31.01.c.

19.01.B09. This continuing resolution was **19.31.A09.**

19.01.C94. This continuing resolution was **19.61.A94.**

19.01.D07. This continuing resolution was **19.61.H07.**

19.02. This amendment recognizes that the chair of the Conference of Bishops and the treasurer are not elected by the Churchwide Assembly and are members of the Church Council. The number of council members nominated by synods is changed from 33 to 32 in order to reflect the pairing of synods in **19.02.C05**.

19.02.A13. This continuing resolution was **19.21.A13.**

19.02.B11. This continuing resolution was **19.21.B11.**

19.02.C05. This continuing resolution was **19.21.C05.**

19.03.01. This bylaw was **19.11.01.c**.

19.04.01. This bylaw was **19.41.01.**

19.04.A91. This continuing resolution was **19.41.A91.**

19.06. This is the constitutional provision on which the following bylaws and continuing resolutions are attached

19.06.01. This bylaw was **19.11.01.a.**

19.06.02. This bylaw was **19.11.01.b.**

19.06.03. This bylaw was **19.11.01.e.**

19.06.04. This bylaw was **19.61.01.**

19.06.05. This bylaw was **19.61.02.**

19.06.07. This bylaw was **19.61.03.**

19.06.A02. This continuing resolution was **19.61.G02.**

19.06.B98. This continuing resolution was **19.61.I98.**

19.06.C13. This continuing resolution was **19.61.J13.**

19.11. This provision is an expansion of the title which was **19.20.**

19.11.01. This bylaw was **19.21.01.**

19.11.02. was **19.21.02** with the addition of the first phrase which allows for the exception in the proposed **19.11.03.**

19.11.03. This bylaw was requested by the CEOs of Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Portico Benefits Services and the Mission Investment Fund. Finding members for their boards with the required expertise would be easier if they could only nominate one person for each position. Floor nominations would still be in order.

19.11.04. This bylaw was **19.21.03.**

19.11.05. This bylaw was **19.21.04.**

19.11.06. This bylaw was **19.21.05.**

19.11.A16. This continuing resolution was **19.61.B11.** with modifications anticipating the creation of a roster of ministers of Word and Service.

19.11.C05. This continuing resolution was **19.61.D05.**

19.11.D16. This continuing resolution was **19.61.E05.**

19.11.E98. This continuing resolution was **19.61.F98.**

20.20. This provision was **20.71.11**. The "above categories" are identified.

20.21 This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached.

20.21.03.c. For constitutional purpose the word "parish" is only used to describe settings where multiple congregations have adopted a parish agreement.

20.22. This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached.

20.23. This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached.

20.23.01 The title is incorporated into the bylaw. The remainder of the changes anticipate the changes needed to move to two rosters of ministers.

20.31. This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached.

20.41. This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached.

20.51. This is a constitutional provision on which the following bylaws are attached. The bylaws that have been attached to this provision were constitutional provisions. The new bylaws establish a process for recalling or dismissing an officer of this church.

The continuing resolution (**20.52.A11**) addresses the recall or dismissal of a synod officer and properly belongs in the synod constitution.

20.62. This constitutional provision was **20.64**.

20.63. This constitutional provision was **20.65**.

20.64. This constitutional provision was **20.63.**

20.64.A13. This continuing resolution was **20.61.A13.**

20.64.B95. This continuing resolution was **20.61.B95.**

20.65. This constitutional provision was **20.62.**

20.65.01. This bylaw was **20.62.01.**

20.65.02. This bylaw was **20.62.02.**

20.70. The entire section **"ADJUDICATION"** is renumbered based on the relocation of the previous provision in **20.70.**

20.72. The Church Council is not a mediating body but a decision making body. Petitions to the Church Council request it to resolve an issue.

20.73. The language is being updated to reflect the current structure of the churchwide organization. We no longer have unit boards. The appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council is still appropriate in the case of significant disagreements in an office or unit.

CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

Chapter 5 has been amended to correspond with **Chapter 3** of the ELCA Constitution.

†S6.04.02. was a continuing resolution. We do not have required continuing resolutions so this has been changed into a bylaw.

S7.11.01. This bylaw is necessary for synods incorporated in states whose non-profit or religious corporation law require an annual meeting be held at the registered office unless there is a bylaw provision that allows for the time and place of the meeting to be established by the synod council. We know that Minnesota and Pennsylvania have this requirement.

S8.55. If a synod chose the option of synod council appointment of the treasurer in **S8.51.c**. the term of office when there is a replacement for a treasurer needs to be stated. This treats the term of the appointed treasurer in the same way an elected treasurer's term is treated.

†S8.57. This was a continuing resolution in the ELCA Constitution, **20.53.A11.,** relating to the recall or dismissal of a synod officer. It makes more sense to include the procedure in the synod constitution.

†S9.01. This provision establishes the authority of the synod assembly to elect members of the Churchwide Assembly. The ELCA Constitution gives this responsibility to the synod assembly.

†S9.10. This provision establishes the authority of the synod assembly to nominate two persons to the Churchwide Assembly for election to the Church Council consistent with **19.02.** and **19.02.C05.**

†S11.03.c. With the option of a triennial cycle for synod assembly meetings in **†7.11.**, the mechanics of this provision become problematic. The removal of this section allows synods to establish their own election cycle that fits their assembly schedule. Synods would still need a discipline committee of twelve persons.

†S14.12. This reflects the changes made in **7.61.02.**

†S14.18.   This reflects the changes made in **7.46.**

†S14.13.c. This change recognizes that being placed on the roster of disabled ministers of Word and Sacrament is the responsibility of the synod council.

†S14.22.b.   This church does not have "certificates of dismissal or transfer". When a call is terminated for whatever reason the minister may request "on leave from call status," "retired status" or "disability status." These requests require synod council action. This would require the fulfillment of financial obligations to the former congregation before the council would grant the request.

†S14.30.   This language parallels the provisions and bylaws related to ministers of Word and Service in chapter 7 of the ELCA constitution.

†S15.11.   These changes describe the process to establish the mission support from the congregations of the synod to be passed on to the churchwide organization. The proposed process is one of consultation between the synod and the churchwide organization. It also recognizes that the authority to establish the budget is the responsibility of the synod assembly. If a synod assembly does not approve the agreement of the consultation then there would be a new round of consultations and the synod council would have authority to modify the synod budget in this area only.   The Church Council would also need to approve and if there is not approval further consultation would be needed, **10.71.02.**

MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

Chapter 3 is modified to reflect the changes in the ELCA Constitution chapter 3.

*****C5.03.c.** The authority to call a minister of Word and Service is added to the powers of the congregation. The existing provisions are re-lettered.

*****C6.05.** The changes reflect that the congregation governed by these documents is seeking to terminate its relationship, not a generic congregation. Thus the change from "a" to "this".

*****C8.02.e.** At the request of the Grand Canyon Synod, we have drafted language that allows seasonal members to have some voting rights in the congregation. The responsibility and privilege of voting is granted to persons who are members of another ELCA congregation and is subject to specific limitations. It would require the authorization of the synod council for the congregation council to grant such a category of membership.

*****C9.21.-*C9.31.** These provisions establish the procedures for calling and/or terminating a call to a minister of Word and Service. The procedures are parallel to the ones related to ministers of Word and Sacrament.

C10.04. The recommended establishment of the quorum for a congregational meeting is to be a percentage of the voting members. Experience has indicated that those congregations

that name a specific number run into trouble when congregational membership declines. While not a required provision, it is important that congregations have realistic quorum requirements.

Chapters 16 and 17 This is a reordering of the chapters dealing with amendments.

*C17.02. Both the ELCA Constitution and the synod constitution establish a two thirds vote requirement to amend their bylaws. Congregations are establishing bylaws related to endowment funds in their constitutions. It seems wise to use the two thirds vote requirement to amend bylaws.

*C20.01. & ***C20.02**   This would require that the parish agreement establish which congregation/s would issue calls on behalf of the parish. ELCA polity allows only one call be accepted at a time, and only the Church Council, synod council or congregation may issue calls. The parish agreement could develop a process for rotating the calling congregation. Only one congregation issues the letter of call even though all of the congregations vote to call the rostered minister.

*C20.03. and ***20.05.** The procedures used for ministers of Word and Sacrament are extended to ministers of Word and Service.

*C20.06. This provision now applies to all ministers, not just ministers of Word and Sacrament. ample text here.

Report and Recommendations from the Theological Education Advisory Council

When the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) began its work in fall 2013 to fulfill its mandate from the Church Council "to consider how our interdependent network of theological education providers can best serve the church as it seeks to address in a holistic manner, issues in leadership development, theological education, candidacy and call, and the rosters of this church," (CC13.04.12) one of its first decisions was to conduct a "First Listening" survey. This survey asked a wide range of ELCA leaders to answer three questions: (1) What is the vocation of the Lutheran movement in our North American context? (2) Into what forms and context of public witness and service is God calling this church for which we need to prepare leaders? (3) What kinds of forms of education and contexts will best create the learning and equipping communities need to live faithfully into God's mission?

When TEAC reviewed a report on the survey responses at its subsequent meeting, it was clear that ELCA leaders see the work of renewing theological education as far more than finding solutions to specific organizational, financial and pedagogical challenges, but as a deeply theological matter[1]. As TEAC continued its work, it became increasingly clear that it was important to make explicit the theological framework that holds together its recommendations and points to how essential it is to consider, improve and act on them.

Theological Framework of TEAC's Report and Recommendations

TEAC comes to its recommendations out of a deep sense that God is calling us as Lutheran Christians to claim our distinctive theological voice in the world and an equally firm sense that often we do not feel equipped to pursue our callings. The recommendations that follow, therefore, lift up both the promising ministry of the faithful in God's world and the need for our church to strengthen its teaching ministry to equip the faithful.

What is the situation we are addressing?

Our public discourse and practices in the early 21st century are impoverished because the loudest voices tend to garner fear, exclusion, legalism and violence, and these voices often prevent us from naming a vision of life together that illumines God's intentions for God's people.

We need voices in the world that speak a theological language of hope, grace, inclusion, reconciliation and compassion that help us name and live into our deepest aspirations as people of faith. We need to equip and sustain those voices. We need to be those voices.

What are the challenges and opportunities we have as we respond to the dominant voices in our culture?

As Lutheran Christians, we have daily experiences in our congregations and organizations that illustrate both the challenges and opportunities that we face. Here are several examples:

"I was leading a Bible Study on Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus being tempted in the wilderness, when I realized that as Lutherans in a river of Cultural Christianity, we are paddling upstream against a current that has been in full force for longer than we would like to admit.

I had spent an hour teaching about Jesus in the wilderness. My colleague and I had both done faithful exegesis of the text and talked about Jesus' true temptation being to deny God's claim on his life – to shed the identity of "Child of God" and choose instead to live by the rules of this world. We talked about how it was dangerous to superimpose this text onto our own lives and experiences, because while we can try to deny temptations – we are not and never will be Jesus. This, we said, was part of Jesus' journey to show us that while he was 100% human and capable of being tempted, he was also 100% divine and capable of resisting temptation at every turn. I must have said 20 times, "This is not about US, this is about Jesus."

When we were wrapping up, I asked the final question – "Do you have any questions or comments about

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[1]For the "First Listening Report" by Kenn Inskeep and Adam DeHoek, see Attachment 1

today's study?" And the conversation immediately devolved into "How can I resist temptation like Jesus?" and "I need to show this story to my teenager – maybe it will help her resist the temptations she is facing – she needs to be more like Jesus…" and so on. I looked at my colleague and could tell she was feeling just as defeated and deflated as I was.

I get it. I really do. Tuning into the local Christian Radio station every day, my congregation members hear over and over about a God who wants us to try harder, be better, and live more moral lives. They hear a WWJD theology that soon becomes all about law and nothing about Gospel. To teach about a God of grace, who calls us "Child of God" despite our inability to resist the temptations of this world is a radical and counter-cultural message. To speak of scripture as first and foremost about GOD and not about US is a truly radical notion. How can our teaching be more compelling? How can we encourage people to tune into this "Free in Christ" theology that is so life-giving instead of tuning into the most popular notion of Christianity that is so deeply embedded in our culture?

We keep teaching, and we keep preaching -- about scripture that points us toward the one who died and rose again so we could be free. We search for more and more creative and innovative ways to move into the world with this message of grace that truly transforms hearts and lives. And we hope and pray that one seed planted at a time will grow into a garden of grace that is a gift to the world." (Pastor Kris Capel, Easter Lutheran Church, MN)

"At Augsburg College – like most of our sister ELCA colleges and universities – we serve an ever more diverse student body even as we seek to sustain our identity as Lutheran Christian institutions. All of our undergraduate students take two required religion courses, at least one of which is explicitly grounded in our Lutheran Christian heritage. As these diverse students, representing a wide range of religious and non-religious traditions, are asked to read the Christian scriptures and read Christian theology, the obvious challenge is the sense that we are imposing our theology on those who do not share our faith.

Our experience, though, points to a very different dynamic. After initial skepticism about these requirements, our students begin to engage the theological concept of vocation, with its focus on how we are called to lives of meaning and significance in the world. And instead of the sort of careerism that passes for a cultural understanding of vocation – the incessant call for an upwardly mobile trajectory – students learn about what it means to listen for a call, to see vocations as grounded in communities, to understand how all aspects of a life are part of a vocation, even to imagine that your call may require sacrifice. As our religion faculty often recount, these diverse students begin to imagine together a counter--cultural way of understanding their lives in the world.

For me, this is what evangelism looks like in the 21st century. In our colleges, we offer the gifts of our Lutheran Christian tradition to all of our students, no matter their own beliefs – gifts like the concept of vocation, the commitment to critical and humble inquiry, the openness to the other, a focus on serving the neighbor and building just communities, and the promise of a reconciling and loving God – not so that they might be converted to our faith, but so they might be equipped to live even more faithful and generous lives in the world. That is the power of our Lutheran theological voices in the 21st century." (President Paul Pribbenow, Augsburg College)

"We live in a post-denominational age where people arrive at our churches, not because they are Lutheran, but because we have music, programming, or a sense of community that they appreciate. As a result, the theologies we encounter in Bible studies and during informal conversations are varied; at times conditioned, or formed, by the traditions they come from or by the myriad of socio-cultural influences that promote fundamentalist religiosities. As pastors and theologians we become hypersensitive to our congregant's belief systems; to how they articulate, or not, their faith; to how they engage, or not, the world around them. We are consistently challenged to teach and articulate why and how Hollywood got it wrong and why and how that author got it right, "for the most part, but he or she

missed the mark when making such a generalization or absolute claims about God, salvation, sin, grace..."

As pastor of a suburban congregation that welcomes people of all backgrounds and religious experiences, I have become more and more aware of people's theological worldviews. There are women who hang on every word taught by Beth Moore in her books and Bible study series. I have youth and young adults that look forward to movies like, "God's Not Dead" and "Courageous." And we have members who frequently refer to what they heard told by Joel Osteen, Rick Warren, and Joyce Meyer on any given morning. While these can offer some insight on how to live out our faith on a daily basis, they do not provide a theology in keeping with our Lutheran heritage and therefore, can promote theological dissonance and confusion.

We understand our call to participate in Christian formation that is based on a theology grounded in gospel messages of unconditional love and grace, authentic reconciliation and transformation, and true justice and peace. If, and when, we teach and preach with this intentionality we can grow into a church that is theologically literate and able to resist the dominant culture and its seductive lure to conform.

Responsible and sound theological education is key to the spiritual maturity and, I would argue, the physical growth of our church. The more we understand, the more we'd be willing to share. The more we share, the more we're likely to flourish." (Pastor Leila Ortiz, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, PA)

Joining with our fellow faithful who share our vision of creation and communities characterized by reconciliation, compassion and hope, we come as Lutheran Christians with a theology grounded in the Gospel and a calling to speak a Word of love and grace in the world God loves so much.

How will we renew and recover this Word and our callings as the faithful?

Our spiritual ancestor, Martin Luther, called us to an understanding of the church as the "priesthood of all believers," a vision of the community of faith that pivoted away from the notion that there was a religious class that carried out the ministries of the church and instead proclaimed that all the baptized were called to be "little Christs" to our neighbors and to be God's hands at work in the world.

In the context of our 21st century lives, we contend that we have a special need to focus on our callings as Lutheran Christians to the ministry of witnessing theologically to a counter-cultural Word. To that end, we must explore with imagination and resolve how we can organize and unleash the resources of our church to equip the baptized to be voices that speak of love and grace, hope and reconciliation, inclusion and compassion – voices that call for us to heal the world God loves so much.

We call on our Church to reinvigorate its teaching ministry to equip the baptized for this ministry. Specifically, we propose a more integrated understanding and practice of theological education for all God's people – an ecology and a network of complementary, interdependent opportunities.

What is the Word we speak?

At the heart of this calling are our faith tradition's theological claims/charisms that both <u>ground the network</u> and <u>offer a perspective counter</u> to the dominant voices in our culture:

- The gift of <u>Gospel</u> in a world bound by law. We believe that we have been saved through the gift of faith alone and are thereby freed for service to the neighbor and the world. Our theological education network is grounded in the Gospel and should be organized to serve God's loving intentions for the world.

- The gift of <u>Abundance</u> in a world of scarcity. We are called to proclaim that as disciples of Jesus Christ, we believe that there is always more than enough to do God's work. Our theological

education network is framed by this sense of abundance, the belief that the many gifts of our church can be deployed with imagination and resolve to create a robust network of opportunities for all the baptized.

- The gift of <u>Hope</u> in a world of fear. We believe that God is in charge and that we have the gift of a horizon for our lives in the world that counters fear and anxiety and offers the promise of hope. Our theological education network embraces the horizon of hope and focuses on helping the baptized to be beacons of hope in a fearful world.

- The gift of <u>Neighbor-love</u> in a world of radical individualism. Over against the loudest voices in our culture that claim it is all about me, we believe that we are called to love and serve our neighbors around the world and all of God's creation. Our theological education network has, at the heart of its mission and work, a bias to loving and serving all of God's creation.

- The gift of <u>Reconciliation</u> in a world of retribution and division. We believe that we are called to forgive as we are forgiven and to build communities of reconciliation, inclusion and justice. Our theological education network intends to be a model of global inclusion, aimed to serve diverse audiences and to invite all people to God's overflowing banquet table.

What are the principles that must characterize a renewed network of theological education for our church?

A network of theological education for our church that serves to both proclaim and model these charisms will be characterized by the following principles:

- The network will itself be viewed as a vocation, a calling by God that is grounded in communities of practice and memory (at all levels), and that challenges us to make decisions and shape its work in ways that may call into question the status quo.
- It will be more of a "Lutheran movement" involving many partners rather than one more Lutheran organization, marked by flexibility, responsiveness and fluidity of boundaries.
- It will honor the mutuality that is at the heart of a healthy teaching and learning community, lifting up the fact that all of us can teach and learn from each other and resisting the hierarchy of the traditional academic culture.
- It will seek to undo redundancies of organizations and programs across the church, combining efforts that work best together, scaling good practices, stewarding well the gifts we have been given, finding consistency that counters one-off initiatives and builds common purpose.
- It will be an inclusive network, organized as a network of diverse people and programs to serve all God's people.

We humbly come with the following recommendations for reform and renewal of the theological education ministry of our Church in the belief that God calls us to <u>semper</u> <u>reformanda</u>, the call to loving reform that acknowledges that only God knows all and that seeks ways to discern God's will for God's people – our church – in this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TEAC TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL
(for first reading at Church Council's Nov. 2015 meeting and action at the
April 2016 meeting)

Consultations and Research Underlying TEAC's First Two Recommendations

Between fall 2013 and the summer of 2015, TEAC convened numerous consultations (and participated in gatherings convened by others) that included a broad range of ELCA leaders in congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, seminaries, colleges, universities, lay schools, campus ministries and outdoor ministers along with ecumenical and global partners. Through these conversations, TEAC gathered a sense of the range of existing and potential partners for our theological education network, what resources they bring to the table, ways the network is already a reality, promising measures to multiply and deepen connections, and crucial ways we need to expand the reach of theological education.

In addition to these face to face consultations, TEAC commissioned a modest asset-mapping project that has pointed to the value of making this a regular, on-going process.[2] TEAC members have been encouraged by what they have learned about the serious conversations already underway among seminary leaders concerning potential collaboration in a common on-line platform that could greatly strengthen and expand our theological education network.[3]

Recommendation #1

Claim and name the abundant gifts of our church to create and sustain a network of theological education that serves the mission of the gospel

Proposed actions of the ELCA Church Council:

A. To create a new advisory committee to the Church Council (hereafter the Advisory Committee) whose charge it is to sustain a robust network of theological education for the ELCA and to implement the TEAC recommendations.

B. To direct the Office of the Bishop to call on synods and congregations to join the churchwide organization in staffing and resourcing the ELCA theological education network in ways that recognize its centrality to the church's mission and future vitality.

C. To strongly encourage the seminaries in leading the development of a common learning platform that can serve to integrate and make widely accessible resources for theological education.

D. To direct the ELCA Research and Evaluation team to support the development of an ongoing robust asset-mapping process that identifies all theological education activity across the church, catalogs it and explores synergies, opportunities for scaling good practices and undoing redundancies, and that makes possible an interactive and widely accessible web-based depository of theological education resources across our church.

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[2] See Attachment 2
[3] See Attachment 3

Recommendation #2

Link vocational discernment and theological education for specific target audiences within and beyond the church, with a focus on those whose leadership will strengthen the missional future of the ELCA.

Proposed actions:

A. To direct the churchwide organization to call on synods, congregations and our theological education network to join it in encouraging young adults in vocational discernment by expanding model programs such as Project Connect and Youth Theology Institutes at the synodical level to serve as pathways for future leaders in the church.

B. To call upon the seminaries in collaboration with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Global Mission unit, the Lutheran World Federation and ecumenical partners to develop networked theological education programs, resources and opportunities for ethnic-specific communities (for example, a Latino theological education network with the capacity to reach a wide range of geographic locations with growing Latino populations).

C. To call upon the theological education network to organize and make available a variety of opportunities for education, training and certification of lay leaders for missional service in congregations and communities.

D. To authorize the Advisory Committee, in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops and the leaders of theological education network partners, to develop recommendations for how continuing education for rostered leaders can become the norm, widely recognized as essential if rostered leaders are to lead and exercise their teaching office faithfully and effectively in a changing church in a rapidly changing culture.

Consultations and Research Underlying TEAC's Third Recommendation

Following its October 2014 meeting with seminary presidents, deans, board chairs and synod bishops serving on seminary boards, TEAC began exploring the idea of engaging consultants to help with further exploration of the financial and organizational challenges and opportunities of our seminaries. The firm Baker Tilly was selected to work with TEAC and the seminaries to gather and analyze a wide range of data, to consult with seminary leaders on their campuses about their distinctive gifts, challenges and mission possibilities, to identify underutilized assets, and to generate a range of possible scenarios for moving forward the development of a theological education network that is more far-reaching, more connected and flexible, and more sustainable.

The Baker Tilly team shared draft report materials with both TEAC and seminary leaders over the past several months. They discussed their final report with TEAC in August. They also presented a summary at Bishop Eaton's consultation with seminary board leaders (two from each school) on August 28, 2015. The Power Point presented that day was also shared during the October meeting of the Conference of Bishops and the full report was made available electronically.[4] Key themes, findings and counsel in the Baker Tilly report (BT) are summarized in the following headings and expanded on in the accompanying excerpts from the full document.

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[4] See Attachment 4

We live in "interesting times" and need to respond to major ongoing changes in the culture, in the church, and in the economy of theological education

"Theological education across all denominations is facing challenges like never before as rapid cultural changes have made religious belonging and participation much less the norm. These include unprecedented decreases in mainline denomination membership, reductions in numbers of congregations, and reductions in those seeking careers in ministry and related fields. The ELCA theological education network and institutions also face serious challenges related to their current fiscal position, constrained resource levels, and resources that are tied up in underutilized assets.
(BT Final Report, p. 1)

In such a time as this, the renewal of theological education necessarily happens through experimental innovation—which requires calculated risks and open assessment

"The ability to experiment and innovate to meet emerging and ever-changing mission-based demands requires more flexibility in aligning assets and programs, a repurposing, if you will, of existing resources toward the most impactful and urgent opportunities. It also requires the ability to take calculated risks in trying new approaches, accepting that there is no guarantee that every approach tried will have the intended outcomes. In other words, having the financial bandwidth to have failed experiments is critical as the ELCA considers how it will respond to meet mission needs of the future." (BT Final Report, p. 1)

We are not currently putting our property assets and faculty resources to their fullest and most effective use

" . . . the level of physical assets currently committed is at a level which exceeds the optimal level for the currently enrolled student population . . . . There is too much space for current needs. This excess capacity should either be repurposed for expansion of mission, sold for one-time revenue, or rented for recurring revenue...

While it is recognized that each seminary has its own ethos and academic emphasis, our conversations across campuses identified faculty sharing as an approach to aligning resources to mission.

In many cases individual seminaries have right-sized faculty positions to the point where further reductions will harm their ability to be a viable quality education institution. However, there is still a need to align specialization with student demand to ensure that student demand is optimized." (BT Final Report, p.14)

Transformation will require collaboration that makes possible more productive use of currently underutilized resources

"The transformation of the delivery model needs to accomplish several things, most notably alignment of resources in a manner that expands the reach of theological education, is flexible in supporting the needs for rostered leaders, and is funded within recurring and reliable resources. Collaboration to optimize resources is a critical component of that transformation. Starting within the ELCA there are many opportunities to collaborate."
(BT Final Report, p. 11)

ELCA seminaries have been working hard to innovate and partner for the sake of mission

"The seminaries and their individual boards continue to work diligently to address issues of sustainability from both mission and fiscal perspectives. Seminaries have been entrepreneurial in locating partnerships across a variety of entities to enhance academic programs, foster academic and administrative shared services agreements, and offer combined degrees. Seminaries often look to local partners before ELCA seminary partners, and in fact, significant cross collaboration on shared courses occurs with non-ELCA seminaries (e.g., Graduate Theological Union, Association of Chicago Theological Schools, etc.).

Likewise, innovation is occurring relative to expanded or enhanced mission focus across all campuses building on the distinguishing attributes of each seminary. Specifically we noted the following innovations to be celebrated:

- *Revised Master of Divinity program approaches*
  - *Revised program length to address debt issues*
  - *Revised focus to enhance leadership development*
  - *Increased time in and/or changes in sequencing of onsite placements*
- *Increased partnerships for emerging ministries*
  - *Rural Ministries (e.g., cross seminary efforts)*
  - *Urban Ministries (e.g., nonprofit partnerships)*
  - *Emerging Population Ministries (e.g., TEEM)*
  - *Ecumenical/Interfaith Centers (e.g., Islamic Studies and Interfaith Relations)*
  - *Multi-vocational leaders*
- *Expansion of those educated, and strengthened congregation and seminary relationships*
  - *Seminary Advocates*
  - *Sponsored Congregational Leadership Development Events*
  - *Online Education for Lay Leaders*
- *Collaborative recruitment at ELCA Colleges and Universities*
- *Distance Learning offerings" (BT Final report, pp 15-16)*

The work of innovation needs to become more systematic within seminaries, more connected between them, and more reliably resourced

"However, these innovations are occurring in pockets and do not currently exhibit broad based sharing of either expertise for experimentation or results for effective implementation of effective practices. In fact, a lack of resources consistently available for innovative efforts restricts the ability to conduct meaningful and data driven experimentation in a manner that will have long-term impacts on the attraction and development of church leadership nationwide.

Thus, unfortunately, the potential for mission expansion is continually burdened for most by a required focus on financial challenges (e.g., structural deficits, overextended student debt, the constant pressure of fundraising, and burdensome reliance on endowment)." (BT Final Report, p.16)

Transformative change that expands mission requires all the stakeholders to come to the table and be responsible to each other

"The power to make significant change resides at the local (seminary) level. In fact, under the current ELCA bylaws, while the ELCA has authority to "sponsor, support, and provide for oversight of seminaries" . . . each seminary is a separately incorporated entity with a separate governing body that holds the power to make all strategic decisions.

The difficult challenge is that while the "power" resides at the individual board level, the desire for change impacts stakeholders throughout the entirety of the Church. As such, it is imperative that all stakeholders convene to develop an attractive strategic plan that promotes sustainability in the broadest sense. The level of involvement in a new strategy to transform theological education by ELCA churchwide is ultimately the decision of each seminary board; however, that being said, the tremendous benefits of a common vision, central oversight approach, consistent and reliable funding source, and convener of impactful initiatives should not be minimized." (BT Final Report, p. 17)

Baker Tilly's report offers a "model matrix" as a resource for considering what organizational structure(s) can best serve sustained innovation for the sake of mission

"One question is: can eight independent institutions find a way to individually or collectively achieve sustainability and contribute resources to help meet the educational needs identified by TEAC? That

question, in turn, leads to speculation that there might be a better way to corporately configure the institutions so that resources may be repurposed to meet those needs. There is no easy answer and until the model or paradigm shift is determined, executing on the logistics of the model is not feasible. However, understanding the impacts and risks of each potential approach is critical to finding the solution . . . (BT Final Report, p. 3)

"The governance options presented in this report provide a broad continuum of centralized and locally focused governance intended to drive discussion about the greatest point of sustainable impact . . . .The governance models offered provide the information required to objectively view various options towards sustainability of which the recommended solution may be somewhere in between or a combination of all of the above. (BT Final Report, p. 18)

The four action items under recommendation #3 have been developed during several TEAC meetings (going back to fall 2014) in an iterative process that has included conversations along the way with churchwide, synodical and seminary leaders. The work of the Baker Tilly team has been very helpful both in grounding these conversations and in opening up imagination to new possibilities. The following recommendation and action steps are modest in that they do not provide a fully definite picture of how our seminaries should be organized in the future nor a detailed roadmap for how to get there. At the same time, they are ambitious in that they call for something very new ("a common theological education enterprise") that achieves major outcomes on a short timeline that will require strong, persistent engagement both by the seminaries and by the rest of the ELCA.

Recommendation #3

Ensure the mission vibrancy and financial stability of the seminaries of the ELCA as they serve their crucial roles in our theological education network

Proposed actions:

A. To call upon the seminaries of the ELCA in the next three years to form a common theological education enterprise that has the necessary planning structures and appropriate decision-making authority to: (1) enable regular strategic sharing of the faculty resources of the seminaries along with other qualified teachers; (2) organize common recruitment and a common application process; (3) generate a common research agenda that serves the flourishing of the church; and (4) enable operational efficiencies that free up the resources needed for expanded work and new experiments in theological education.

B. To encourage the seminaries, as they pursue the development of a common online learning platform (as stated in Recommendation 1.C) that could bring together the theological education resources of seminaries, lay schools, colleges and universities and other partners, to include an experimental online portfolio that could support lifelong learning for all the baptized and a continuing education requirement for rostered leaders.

C. To support the efforts of the seminaries to balance their budgets and increase reserves while also reducing seminarian student debt by exploring alternative organizational models, exploiting underutilized property assets, sharing administrative infrastructure, testing alternative degree models and expanding coordinated scholarships and degree-accelerating arrangements that can make theological education more affordable for more persons.

D. To develop a process for making available synodical and churchwide funds for innovation in both academic and administrative practices as incentives to strengthen the work and financial condition of seminaries.

First Listening Report for the Theological Education Advisory Council

Kenneth W. Inskeep and Adam DeHoek
Research and Evaluation
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
December, 2013

Members of the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) were asked to distribute a set of questions to individuals (and groups) to help inform the work of the Council. As of December, 126 individual responses had been received by Research and Evaluation and this is an initial report on those responses. We have also reviewed the responses we received from five seminaries and provided a very short summary at the end of this report.

Question 1: What is the vocation of the Lutheran movement in our North American context?

While Lutherans have no exclusive claim to an emphasis on the graciousness of God, it is central to the Lutheran tradition and when asked about the vocation of the Lutheran movement in North American, many formed their response around this and other central Lutheran themes.

> The vocation is the *steadfast proclamation of grace, and boldly proclaiming and living out radical inclusivity and the celebration of diversity.*

> The vocation *is to bring the theology of grace to bear. For that we need both to continue to delve into a theological understanding of Grace and how it impacts everything we do and say and we need to develop a practical theology of grace that impacts our actions.*

> *When it comes to teaching the faith, it is increasingly my experience there is a hunger in Lutheran congregations for understanding our Lutheran Confession of faith–and not only historically and how it is our lens for understanding scripture, but also in relating to the world around us in ways that are not only meaningful and relevant, but are also acted upon and articulated with a Lutheran understanding of our faith . . . in sacramental ways . . . giving flesh and life to God's grace that we have in Christ Jesus.*

> *Our vocation is to live into the paradoxes of the Lutheran life: saint/sinner, law/gospel, etc. We are called to preach the gospel of grace through faith with both our actions and our words.*

> *We are called to live a life reflecting Christ's love alongside the people in the communities we serve by meeting them where they are in life, seeking to engage in authentic relationship, and living in a grace-filled way to accompany others in life.*

> *In short, to communicate and respond to God's grace.*

Our vocation is to serve boldly in the name of Jesus Christ, embodying His love, grace, forgiveness, and peace through daily ministry with and for a world in need. We are to seek out those places of brokenness and opportunity, sharing our gifts in community to the glory of God and for the sake of the world, inviting others to come to know the unconditional, redeeming love of our Savior.

In this context, what's the witness of Lutherans, which we speak best? And if we don't speak it well, it won't get said? Three things: 1) Incarnation: God loved us enough to become one of us; 2) grace: that love is utterly surprising, unconditional, ecstatic; 3) death and resurrection, that mysterious breaking and re-making that fashions a new creation that is really new, not the old creation warmed over.

The unique charisms of the Lutheran movement in the North American context involves bridging the catholic and evangelical traditions, i.e. honoring the scriptural and liturgical traditions we have inherited while maintaining a strong emphasis on God's saving work in Jesus Christ and a realistic assessment of humanity's limited capacity to save ourselves. With all Christians, we share the call to reveal God's saving work in every context in which we find ourselves, continuing Christ's ministry of compassion, healing, forgiving, liberating and reconciling.

Embedded in the responses were at least two additional components of the vocation which describe the great potential of the movement.

1. There was an emphasis on education—being a learning community including the use of approaches which are relational and which produced and are further informed by service. This Lutheran approach to education is a response to God's grace which, in turn, generates a vocation intent on contributing to a better life for all.

   I think the Lutheran church should work harder at being relationship-centered—in the context of building relationships through intentional listening and actively caring about individuals within the church community, whether churched or unchurched. Pastoral leaders are expected to care for their parishioners and they can help those they serve by being good listeners, and not necessarily problem solvers, while sharing God's love.

   To receive and hold Jesus' Word of Grace and build faithful Christian communities around it and to allow it to motivate us toward service and partnership with others.

   The vocation of the Lutheran movement is, along with other Christians, to offer others an experience of God's grace in a word of forgiveness, an unbidden act of kindness, in a cup of cold water, in food, shelter, clothing, in setting the prisoner free, in worship, fellowship, and stewardship. The particular charism of the Lutheran tradition is to be unrelenting about grace, which involves a radical commitment to telling the truth about what it means to be human and what we know about God. Although, we do not often talk about or practice things that reflect it, I also believe that the Holy Spirit is calling us to engage new people

who are not in church, who are interested in God. In this case, our vocation is to listen, learn and wonder and worship together with others who may not have as set an understanding of who God is.

I think an even more critical role for the Lutheran movement involves its local congregations. When Lutheran congregations cling to their own best traditions (including, at least in my mind, essential law and gospel distinctions, the transformative power of the preached Word, a deep love of sacramental worship, great freedom with regard to tradition, and a provocative, paradoxical understanding of Christian ethics) they provide powerful and significant "instances" of the Body of Christ. In other words, the Lutheran movement can make for some unique and vital Christian congregations. It's my hope that these congregations continue to survive in the 'marketplace' of North American organized religion—principally because they are a gift to their members, the broader community, and the Church of Christ in that place.

To connect people to God's grace in such a way that they are empowered to serve and love, rather than squabble and grasp at power.

We are a people that understand the promise and value of paradox (sinner and saint, ancient and future, right now and not yet), a gift to a North American society that is filled with ambiguities. As our society transitions from modernity into post-modernity (for I do not believe we are entirely post-modern yet), our ability to speak confidently and clearly about the nature of our loving God and God's use of paradox and grace will speak powerfully to this North American context.

2. There was also the perception Lutheran potentially offers a strong alternative many might find compelling if only more were aware of it. This alternative is based in a communal experience of God's grace which is not dogmatic but remains faithful to Lutheran theological convictions.

I think the specifically Lutheran understanding of Grace and Vocation are much needed in the North American context. The idea that God comes to us as a gift of grace and not as a result of our own achievement is a message US Americans desperately need. We need to equip our members to be willing and able to articulate this understanding in a clear and affirming way.

Time and time again I find people discover the radically open theology of the ELCA to be refreshing and warming; however, they seem unaware that such a theology existed. If I had to synthesize I would say that the vocation is to reach out to others, as it has always been. However, this is not meant to be a conversion, but more of a "witnessing through withnessing" to steal the language of Brian McLaren.

In a culture based on fear of the other, and fear of rejection, the Lutheran take on Christianity offers a God who accepts us unconditionally, freeing us from saving ourselves

and fearing others. It opens the door wide for us to equip all the baptized to live out their vocations in the world, serving others rather than saving themselves.

To bring the hope of the gospel, justification by grace through faith, to a continent in bondage to works righteousness and tit-for-tat living. To let the continent know that there is church where questions and doubt are accepted as part of the faith journey, and where faith is not expressed or practiced as in the judgmental way of the most visible forms of Christianity in North American—fundamentalist and cold evangelicalism.

Ultimately, the North American context reveals a deep longing for true relationship. Lutheran theology is well at home in this context, valuing dialogue over diatribe and paradox over pat answers. Therefore call and equip leaders who are comfortable in the messiness of life and faith, who are willing and able to engage in meaningful conversation. "Orthodoxy" may be seen as our trump card in the conversation, but we should perhaps lead from a position of serving and mutual respect. Lutheran folk have the theology that embraces the broken and the redeemed parts of life. Claimed and called in Baptism. This is as "real" as it gets! This certainly does not mean that we compromise our Lutheran identity. In fact, just the opposite - our Lutheran identity is perfect for this context. Be Lutheran to the core and not ashamed of it!

I believe our vocation is to be a voice for God's grace, unattached to our potential to earn, achieve, or purchase that grace. I believe that we are uniquely positioned theologically to offer food for the deep craving that many people express and seek to fill in a variety of ways. Our understanding of care of neighbor and creation because of our freedom speaks to generations who find meaning and truth in service and experience of community in what would be considered 'non-traditional' contexts.

We have an amazing emphasis on God's grace, and an amazing world-view that is, generally speaking, open-minded and open to differing views. We offer a different flavor of Christianity that does not fit into the stereotypes of American Christians. We need to claim this niche and use it to serve others and share Jesus' love with them.

To build and equip communities around the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a manner that connects to people who are increasingly suspicious or uninterested in institutional religious structures.

To be able to answer the question, 'Tell me about Jesus' with each other, and more importantly, with the people who are not presently Lutheran or even Christian. Could we dare suggest that our answers might be changed/affected by what we hear from each other, or (gasp) from the afore mentioned "Nones?" I believe the people of this North American context we seek to serve would be intrigued by such a witness.

These two components of a vocation grounded in traditional Lutheran themes suggest finding a compelling and functional answer to two related questions might be key to the future of the Lutheran movement in North America.

1. How can Lutherans be simultaneously non-dogmatic and faithful?
2. How can the truths or insights Lutherans hold be more available, more easily recognized, understood, and embraced by more people?

Working toward a better and wider cultural understanding of ELCA Lutheran commitments is ambitious particularly in a world which appears to be increasingly uninterested in the role of theology in making important distinctions. Or, put differently, it is an ambitious goal in a culture where many believe theological distinctions are more likely to produce maliciousness than good. This goal also challenges what appears to be the case for a typical ELCA Lutheran. For example, one issue is the extent to which ELCA Lutherans are willing to claim some level of "truth" for their beliefs especially in contrast to the beliefs of others. To illustrate, we have included the following from a 2008 survey of Lutheran congregational leaders from the survey panel *Lutherans Say . . . .*[1]

> *A Lutheran Theological Identity*
> *While these Lutheran leaders are typically not literalists, they also hold beliefs that are not clearly identifiable as Lutheran. These Lutheran leaders are, at best, ambiguous in terms of a Lutheran theological identity. They are not, for example, convinced Lutheranism as a theological system is better than any other theological system. Seventy-six percent "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that no Christian group can legitimately claim its beliefs are more true than those held by any other Christian group. Forty-six percent "agreed" or "strongly agreed" and 22 percent were "not sure" that "it is possible for a faithful follower of any religion, including Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism, to find the truth about God through that religion . . . . Perhaps most significant is the proportion of these leaders who accept a high view of the capacity of individuals, as individuals, to respond positively to God. Again, it is very difficult to sort out nuances among different theological points of view using a questionnaire, but when these leaders were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "Salvation is freely given by God but only to those who have made a decision to accept Jesus as their personal savior," 62 percent of the respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed." Nine percent said they were "not sure" while 22 percent "disagreed" and 7 percent "strongly disagreed." When asked to respond to the statement "It is possible by honoring God and with God's help to overcome sin and live a holy life," 73 percent of the respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed." When asked to respond to the statement "Those who honor God are often blessed materially," 31 percent of the respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed."*

Divergent Responses

There were very few divergent responses among the TEAC respondents. Perhaps the selection process produced a group of similar mind. Nevertheless, the following comments show somewhat divergent views.

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[1] *Lutherans Say . . . 6, 2009,* was a survey of lay leaders who receive the ELCA congregational resourse "Seeds for the Parish". A full report of the survey is *a*vailable from Research and Evaluation, ELCA.

It is unclear where the Lutheran movement is headed in our so called North American context. I am asked over and over again by Lutheran church members of diverse backgrounds, races and ethnic groups, "What is our Church up too and trying to prove"? Congregants are saying we seem to have lost our way. Some say the Good News has become watered down. Others say we need to market the Pentecostal staff driven model and worship style. I say the Church is in danger of letting the world dictate its future, as head knowledge seems to prevail over and above the foundational teachings of the Lutheran Church. No doubt, we the church must look at the culture and the masses, and ask God to help us share the message "GRACE" with Holy Spirit fire.

I would stay away from this kind of religious language! [Referring to how Question 1 was worded.] I do not even know what this questions means! Love God and love neighbor as yourself. Keep it simple. Emphasize the message of Jesus. Make the message relevant to our lives.

People are not looking for a Lutheran church, they are looking for God. Therefore, spend less time talking about what it means to be a Lutheran in a multi-denominational culture and more time talking about what it means to be a Christian in an increasingly skeptical and unbelieving culture. We do not witness to the Lutheran church but to Jesus. We need leaders who grasp this paradigm shift. We will learn this better from other denominations and expressions rather than our own.

I believe we are being called to open our minds and hearts, our theologies and liturgies and discover again what it means to reclaim faith as trust in the living God (and not a subscription to a set of beliefs). I believe we are being called to create ways in which seekers/nones/the lapsed can gain an experience of the living God (not 'learn' about God). I believe we are being called to find new ways to create genuine community (instead of fostering membership with a mug and a new member class). I believe we are being called to lay down our theological and confessional weapons and open ourselves up to how God might be at work in our world, changing not only those around us, but us, too. Leaders need to be conversant in the ways in which non-church people understand and come to faith, what sorts of communities they are longing for, and how to engage and build those communities.

Question 2: Into what forms and contexts of public witness and service is God calling this church for which we need to prepare leaders?

The responses to this question were overwhelming focused on preparing leaders to engage a social context in which traditional congregations are increasingly marginalized.[2] To a great extent, this may have been a function of the focus of the question on "public" witness and service assuming what happens inside a congregation is "private". In this case, leadership means having the ability and taking

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[2] Defining tradition as a community with a stand-alone building where worship is held weekly, with a professionally trained leader responsible for Christian education and the pastoral care of members.

the initiative to express and act upon, in everyday life, one's commitments as a Lutheran Christian. The focus of this church on leadership should be to assist in creating the conditions under which this happens.

We need leaders of all sorts, not just pastors and rostered leaders, but community leaders, parents, professionals who can speak in ways that are biblically literate, theologically sound, and free of jargon. We need to put the best resources of our tradition, biblical and confessional, in new language. Ears are hungry to hear, but we have to say it fresh.

We need to become a church that prepares its members to understand their home life, their work, their schooling, and their daily tasks as infused with meaning and God's presence.

We need to move beyond "inviting others to join us" (welcoming), and gain comfort in speaking a word of faith into our ordinary and daily lives and circumstances. Congregations that continue to thrive need to be encouraged to see themselves in real partnership beyond their own comfort and community –for accompaniment even more than for service.

Increasingly I think that we need leaders who can lead Eucharistic communities whose primary function is not necessarily to worship, but to serve in their communities and around the world. Such leadership might take the form of programs housed by larger congregations, or they might resemble non-profits in their structure. And, perhaps most importantly in the new age of Christianity, we need leaders in dialogue. We must be able to talk with our neighbors to come to common understandings, to work for the common good, and to heal each other's hurts. To this end, we need must prepare leaders who can engage in interfaith dialogue, intercultural dialogue, and constructive political dialogue. And we need to prepare leaders to listen so that they can start dialogue in their own communities about the shapes and directions of the future.

The entire Christian Church in North America (not just Lutherans) has focused much too heavily in the past 60 years on meeting the needs of its members. In that sense, denominations and their leaders have fallen into the same trap as politicians – giving people what they want in order to encourage and reward their financial support. It is vital to the spiritual health of congregations, synods, the wider church, and church leaders to focus the attention of congregations on mission and ministries that extend beyond the walls of individual congregations.

Our congregations have for too long been places where people had their needs met, without being sent out to meet the needs of the world. We need to form/equip leaders who can both cast a vision and help people own and live it. Those leaders will meet huge resistance, and thus they need to be well skilled in both systems thinking and Lutheran Theology. In addition, when people actually do begin to engage their communities, they

are unable to share how/why their belief in Jesus has freed them to be of service to others. They don't know the Biblical story well enough to actually speak with confidence about how their lives are a continuation of the Biblical trajectory.

Again, there was an occasional dissident voice questioning the very premise of the question.

Don't jump so quickly to public witness and service. Leaders need to be educated to welcome, orient, and incorporate people into communities of faith grounded in worship, study, and service. It is not at all clear that seminary education connects with these primary pastoral responsibilities. There seems to be little education in formation or education, little education in the central things of worship and prayer, little education in discerning service appropriate to one's location.

A good grounding in Bible, preaching, pastoral care and music will enable leaders to deal with just about any form or context they find themselves in.

According to a significant number of respondents, the qualities of these outward-focused leaders include:

- a deep concern for those who are on the edges or outside mainstream society
- a love for those being ministered with
- the ability to be inspiring
- the ability to ground pastoral work in a secular, complex, interdependent and emerging world
- being adept and passionate about worship leadership, Christian education, stewardship, pastoral care
- the ability to teach and articulate the faith
- the ability to equip the laity to understand and live out their ministry in their daily life
- the ability to understand, appeal to, and organize the 'nones'
- the ability to host respectful conversations

The prevalence of responses stressing an outward focus raises an important challenge. Recent survey work with clergy ordained in 2006 suggests a pastor with high debt may be more compliant with the existing norms of congregational life and more cautious about making difficult decisions or taking any actions in a congregation which may produce conflict.[3] Several of these pastors were interviewed and some indicated they were so anxious to receive, accept, and begin working in a call (in part to begin to pay down their debt or at least to stop incurring it), they wanted to do nothing which might jeopardize their future in that call. These findings should be set alongside those from recent survey work with lay leaders in congregations conducted in support of the ELCA's Living into the Future Together (LIFT) task

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[3] This finding is made as a part of the forthcoming report from Research and Evaluation on the Lilly funded M.Div. student debt project. The report will be available from Research and Evaluation, ELCA. The survey work with ELCA clergy ordained in 2006 involved the participation, in various ways, of about 100 clergy.

force.[4] This work showed ELCA congregational leaders like their congregations and are not interested in changing them. It also found the vast majority of congregational leaders believe the main problem is the predominant beliefs and attitudes in the wider culture and there is little they can do in the face of these powerful trends.

Finally, research on congregational vitality in the ELCA has found that member assessments of vitality are considerably more positive than those of the congregation's pastor.[5] In an attempt to understand why this is the case, it became very apparent members and pastors define vitality differently. For most members, a congregation is vital if there is little internal conflict and it has sufficient resources (financial and in terms of volunteers) to provide pastoral leadership for worship and the care of members along with a program of Christian education. Pastors, on the other hand, were much more likely to assess vitality based on the impact of the congregation in the local and global community. In short, if these perspectives are widespread among the members of ELCA congregations, it will take very skilled pastoral leadership to alter these views. But, is there a commitment to this internal change? Many of the comments of these respondents suggest considerably more interest in producing leaders who are better working outside a traditional congregational context than within it.

3. **What kinds of forms of education and contexts will best create the learning and equipping communities needed to live faithfully into God's mission?**

While there were clear themes in response to this question (which we will review below), there were respondents expressing opposing views (more or less informed) about the role of a seminary. In addition, the responses tended to focus primarily on the education of rostered leaders.

> *The value of residential seminary education for forming leaders cannot be underestimated. A year or more of living together as Christians in a community centered on word and sacrament provides a good model for helping shape life in congregations.*

> *If you want to be a leader in our church you must leave your current way of life, travel to one of only eight possible Lutheran institutions and spend four years of your life living in a fantasy world where your only task is to sit in classrooms and learn with others who have similar passions and ideas as you.*
> *I personally think that perhaps less seminary and more "in the trenches" experiences supported by on line education and a strong mentor might be effective and less costly.*

> *To me as a pastor, seminary is still the best for in depth, interactive biblical study as well as other core curriculum components.*

> *Our emphasis needs to shift toward extension education–training willing servants while they work in other public jobs. Until we find a way to bring down the cost of a four-year,*

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[4] This report is available from Research and Evaluation, ELCA.

[5] This work is on-going and being conducted in behalf of Research and Evaluation in a pilot project with the Western North Dakota Synod, the Upstate New York Synod, and the Rocky Mountain Synod.

on-campus degree, fewer and fewer will chose that option. "Education in place", with a few weeks of intensive class meetings, are more suited to the needs of the emerging church.

I totally support intense, on-site education AND spiritual formation (which Lutheran seminaries don't do well, but others do). Our leaders need a center that I'm skeptical online learning can provide. But that seems to be the new wave. Online folks still need a community and the face to face joy and accountability that provides. Plus learning by human osmosis, not cyberstuff.

On the other hand, most of the respondents argued neither for nor against seminary, but for an approach to learning which focuses on enhancing the student's ability to assess the context (the critical challenges faced by people in their everyday lives) as well as the student's ability to respond in a compelling, practical way (making a positive difference) both of which should be well informed and guided by Lutheran theology (an expression of God's grace).

While I will always believe there is a need to wrestle with scripture and to grapple with good theology, I also believe that it is important for this work to be done in the context of everyday life. So, it is important to move learning communities out of the ivory towers and into the streets. It is also important to have the spaces where the activities that we engage in on the streets can be reflected on theologically. I also believe that these reflections should take place in a broadly diverse context: in terms of age, race, and also breaking down the wall that has arisen between the "church professionals" and the lay leadership of our congregations. It is so important too for this education to take place in terms of listening and learning how to ask questions (not just answer them!). Let's free people to wonder about God and about how God is showing up in the world.

We need a nimble, flexible delivery system that can work with leaders as they are "embedded" in the local context similar to the action/reflection model but using all the bells and whistles of today's technologies.

While the calls of church leaders may look different than in the past, I think that the message and education for the most part should remain the same. We still need an education rooted in Bible, theology, history and pastoral care but it must always be set in context. We also need to learn practical skills: how do you read your audience/context? How do you share your faith in a parish setting vs. business setting? What does bi-vocational ministry look like? I think that this type of focus on the practical should bring students out of the classroom more and into their called contexts where they can immediately put their education into practice.

More hands on. I think it is such a strength of the Lutheran church to have pastors that are so well trained and educated theologically, but it's in the acting out of that knowledge. But it's not just the education of the pastors but the cultures within the

churches that need to change—a change to what can we do to help those around us rather than what can we do to help ourselves.

As leaders are prepared, an intentional component of didactic and contextual learning should include encouraging students to engage the communities where they serve. This would include learning a neighborhood not just through demographics and tertiary sources but through direct conversation with people in the communities, being out amongst the people, engaging those who are not currently members of the church in authentic relationship and partnership.

All should have the opportunity and requirement in contextual education to serve in a context very different from what has been their experience in growing up or is their current experience. This will allow the opportunity to understand ministry and engagement of people through a lens other than what comes familiar and will allow for a better understanding for the whole church to which we are called.   Additionally, more robust opportunities for development of lay leaders are essential. Lay schools of ministry across the country will help to develop stronger ministers of the gospel in our communities.

If we think how the Christian church first began, we see the disciples learning through their experience of living with Jesus for those three years. We see them learning through these life experiences. I think it may be important for our Lutheran leaders (pastors and other rostered leaders) to become most aware of understanding people's lives through those people's lives.   We may need to learn how to do more creative thinking to consider various and alternative means of sharing the gospel . . . and of worship. Life experiences may be more significant in the future . . . or learning how to apply such life experiences into the context of mission and ministry.

I believe, in encouraging students to empathize with those around them, to understand the challenges real people are facing in society, and to wrestle with the question of how our faith calls us to actively respond to the world around us.

We need deep theology and deep praxis. We need practice with cultural diversity and ways to not only develop cultural competencies, but also learn our real histories from this country and around the world.

A solid understanding of how Lutheran theology speaks into the lives of people is a necessity as other things change around us.

We need mature leaders who have taken the time to be formed in community with others. But we need those leaders in ministry contexts while they learn. They need to grow with the reality of Christian community in their faces.

. . . I do not necessarily think that means a focus on community organizing rather than parish life, but we need to do better helping religious leaders to understand the contexts in which people live, their questions and needs, and what the church can offer them . . . . Often seminary education is much more about the "content" of theology and scripture and divorced from these contextual concerns, other than field work and internship. Context, thus, is not only the individual location, but the wider context of postmodernism, individualism, technology, etc.

The respondents also developed a long list of educational outcomes.

• theology	• the Confessions	• Bible	• worship
• preaching	• ethics	• stewardship	• pastoral care
• change	• listening skills	• teaching skills	• history
• congregational administration skills	• conflict management	• spiritual formation, development, direction	• entrepreneurial skills
• contextual assessment skills	• language skills		
	• awareness of sexism, racism, classism		

The respondents also suggested a substantial list of strategies.

• approaches which embed students in the local context (parish-based, community organizing, mentors, cultural/community emersion programs, institutional emersion programs, work with community leaders)
• life-long learning approaches
• approaches which recognized different learning styles or stages of development
• action/reflection models
• on-line learning alternative
• cohort based learning approaches
• participation in a learning community
• synod based lay schools
• 50 small coordinated, integrated, learning communities
• intentional vocational discernment, faith formation, spiritual direction activities
• education in-place

At least one respondent argued the infrastructure already exists but it needs to be more actively coordinated. The infrastructure includes congregations, camps, campus ministries, lay schools, colleges/universities, seminaries, TEEM.

Finally, there was this exchange of views on the popular "best practices" approach.

I suggest bishops identify key churches which are effective. Then assign interns to those churches. THE, and I stress - THE ---- KEY PLACE TO EDUCATE FUTURE LEADERS IS AT THESE SITES. Most seminaries, I suspect, are rooted in traditionalism. It is the

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entrepreneurial local pastor who is breaking new ground. Why is it that the mega-churches of the 1990s held their own conferences? They were breaking out of the traditional mold. People went to these conferences because, obviously, seminaries were not equipping people and I would guess that seminaries dismissed these places. Assign future leaders to creative places. I find it highly dubious we will EVER reform the seminaries. It just will not happen. It is the nature of organizational change. Many churches, which get interns, are not necessarily doing much new or creative, they just have sufficient funds. As a result the first call pastor (typically, serving a small parish) is not as well educated/experienced as he/she might be to help develop that parish.

I'd like to see us move away from raising up "best practices" and "successful" congregations and more toward congregations and communities that see themselves in partnership with others. This would mean a greater emphasis on learning about the various agencies and services that already exist rather than congregations trying to make their "own" services to "help" others. Real relationship requires mutuality and shared benefit, not simply providing service to those we perceive to be in need. Family and neighborhood structures have broken down to the extent that people end up isolated from genuine relationships of cooperation and accountability. Education and contexts that help leaders and communities empower people at each stage of life would be very valuable.

Brief Summary of Responses from ELCA Seminaries

Many of the themes developed in by the individual respondents were also made in the responses from each of the seminaries. We have not included the verbatim responses from the seminaries but have summarized those responses into categories.

1. What is the vocation of the Lutheran movement in our North American context?

Responses to this question fell into three categories.

• To share the message of grace in a world which is increasingly complex, pluralistic, and multicultural
• To maintain a Lutheran perspective while working ecumenically with partners from other Christian denominations as well as interfaith partners
• To share a theology that is willing to live with tension and paradox

2. Into what forms and contexts of public witness and service is God calling this church for which we need to prepare leaders?

Responses to this question fell into the following categories.

• Although it was mentioned, the traditional church context received little emphasis as a context of future public witness. Rather, the responses from the seminaries stressed the importance of work outside of the church building in different contexts and witnessing to those outside the church setting.
• There will be greater utilization of an online setting as a context for ministry. Leaders will likely be using online interactions and social networking as part of their ministry. The use of these technologies will allow for witnessing opportunities at both local and global levels.
• Denominations are no longer as strong a factor in informing people's decisions about the congregation that they will attend or join. It is more common now for people to begin attending and joining churches because they like the pastor's sermons or the children's ministries, as opposed to the theological distinctions identified by denominations.

3. What kinds of education and contexts will best create the learning and equipping communities needed to live faithfully into God's mission?

Responses to this question fell into the following categories.

• Heavy emphasis was placed on the need for theological education in some form for lay leaders, as their role would likely begin becoming more important in future contexts.
• Given the changing context for ministry, there is a need to provide opportunities for continuing education for all, not just the future leaders. Although the Biblical truths have not changed, the culture and its challenges have; this makes it all the more important for those who have been in ministry for some time to refresh their learning.
• Education should prepare leaders for multiple vocations. This reasoning for this is more than financial. Leaders should learn and develop skills that would be beneficial in more than one vocation: "administration skills, public speaking, social research, conflict resolution, community organizing and small business skills…are all necessary and conducive to creative ministry."
• The continuation of distance learning is a near certainty. Although this type of learning has definite advantages over a traditional residential model, it must be done in such a way that students can experience community and grounded learning.

Theological Education Asset Mapping Report

Adam DeHoek

Research and Evaluation, Office of the Presiding Bishop

As part of its mandate, the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) of the ELCA was charged with gathering information about the resources available for theological education from organizations across the church. In order to collect this information, TEAC undertook an asset mapping study of the programs which provide theological education and are supported by the ELCA and related organizations.

Respondents received an invitation to share information about their programs through an online portal. When thinking about which theological education programs to include, respondents were asked to use the following definition of *program* as a guide, "Programs are standing opportunities that equip and support members in their ministry in the world and in the church."

Overall, the TEAC Asset Mapping project collected information from 115 organizations, inside and outside the ELCA. Many of these organizations (n = 92) identified themselves as primary providers of theological education. Information from these organizations will be presented here, as these were the only organizations which provided information about their programming.

As was assumed when this project began, the information collected here cannot be considered comprehensive, but represents a sampling of the theological education offerings across the ELCA.

Organizational Information

Type of Organization

21.7% (20)	Seminary
19.6% (18)	Synod
16.3% (15)	College/University
12.0% (11)	Campus Ministry
7.6% (7)	Lay school
5.4% (5)	Camp or retreat center
4.3% (4)	Congregation
4.3% (4)	Churchwide
8.7% (8)	Other:

- Sparkhouse (ecumenical division of Augsburg Fortress)
- ALDE (a continuing education provider)
- RevWriter Resources, LLC (ELCA-certified coach, consultant and author)
- Luther House (collaboration between Augustana, SD Synod & Sioux Falls Seminary)
- Vibrant Faith (a national organization)
- Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (organization providing services to congregations with weekday schools and early childhood programs)
- Border Servant Corps (Volunteer Service Corps)
- Select Learning (an organization with representatives of the three seminary clusters)

Primary Service Area

26.1% (24)	A region within a country
17.4% (16)	A region within a state
16.3% (15)	The nation as a whole
14.1% (13)	A specific institution
12.0% (11)	A metropolitan area
5.4% (5)	A state
5.4% (5)	United States and International
3.3% (3)	Other:

- International only
- Whoever contacts me
- No service area specified

Physical Location

In all, organizations from the 34 states indicated below and two countries (Germany and Mexico) identified themselves as providers of theological education.

Figure 1. Locations of theological education providers across the ELCA
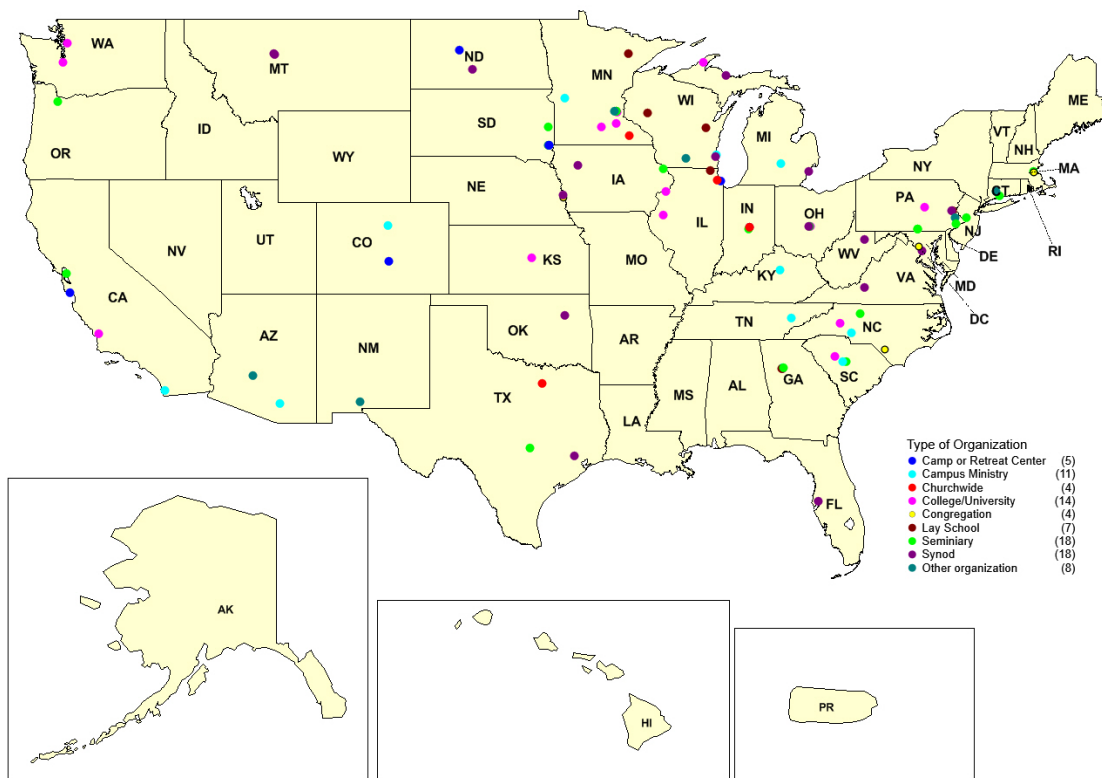
Program Information

The organizations who identified themselves as providers of theological education shared information about 185 theological education programs. Of these programs, 56 were degree-related and included undergraduate degrees in Religion and Philosophy and graduate degrees (e.g., M.Div., M.A., and Ph.D.). Respondents also provided information about 129 non-degree related programs. These programs were more varied in their form from conferences to institutes to seminars. The analyses below examine degree and non-degree programs separately.

Program foci

Although there were differences in the percentage of degree programs and non-degree programs which focused on different aspects of theological education, the most common foci were the same across both types of programs: Biblical knowledge, Lutheran theology, Faith formation/Discipleship, Leadership training and Vocational development.

Figure 2 below presents the different foci of the theological education programs across the ELCA, and the percentage of programs which have a focus on each. If a program focused on multiple items, program administrators were allowed to indicate this in the portal.

Figure 2. Focus of theological education programs across the ELCA

Focus	Non-degree programs (n = 129)	Degree programs (n = 56)
Biblical knowledge	66.7% (86)	87.5% (49)
Lutheran theology	62.8% (81)	73.2% (41)
Faith formation/Discipleship	59.7% (77)	57.1% (32)
Leadership training	58.1% (75)	62.5% (35)
Vocational development	41.9% (54)	57.1% (32)
Worship planning and leadership	34.9% (45)	42.9% (24)
Teaching Christian Education/Catechism	34.9% (45)	55.4% (31)
Staff/Professional development	34.1% (44)	33.9% (19)
Evangelism	31.8% (41)	44.6% (25)
Congregational development/relations	30.2% (39)	33.9% (19)
Missions	28.7% (37)	50.0% (28)
Youth Development	18.6% (24)	37.5% (21)
Volunteerism/Service	17.1% (22)	17.9% (10)
Family Ministry	15.5% (20)	37.5% (21)

Beyond the foci included here, programs also focused on general theology, social justice, ethics and preaching, though none of these were found to be the focus of more than 5 percent of programs, either degree or non-degree.

Methods of Instruction

The most common methods used in non-degree programs were in-person meetings/gatherings and in-person classes. More than half of non-degree programs used these methods.

These two methods were the most commonly used in degree programs as well; in fact, 98 percent (all but one) of degree programs used in-person classes. Additionally, considerably more methods were used with greater frequency in degree programs as opposed to non-degree programs. Online classes and reading materials, as well as experiential learning were also more prevalent.

Figure 3 presents the different methods used, and the percentage of programs which used each method. If a program used multiple methods, program administrators could indicate this in the portal.

Figure 3. Methods of theological education programs across the ELCA
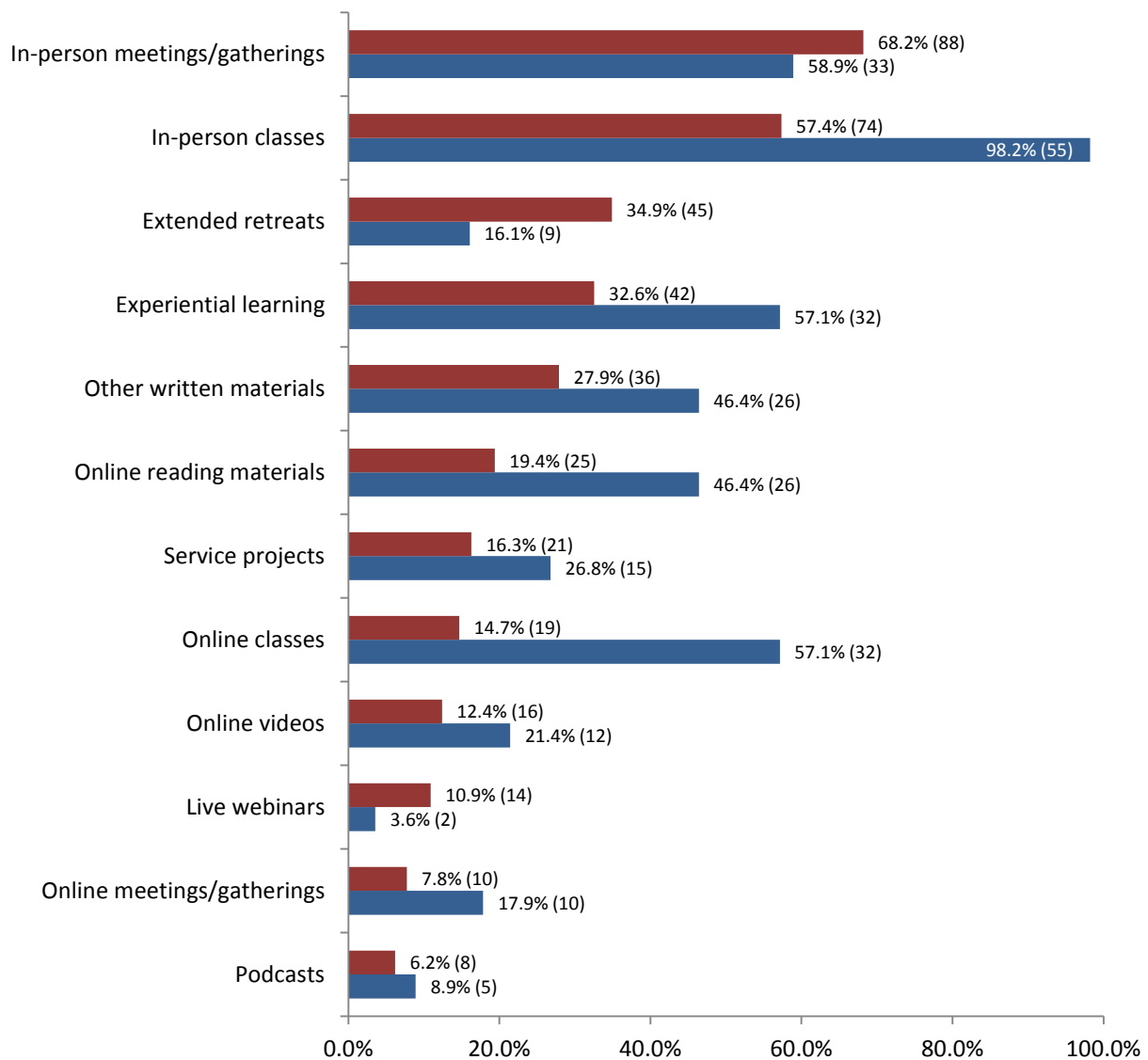
Characteristics of program participants

How many people were actively involved (for example, enrolled, attended gatherings, participated online) in this program last year?

The number of people actively involved in non-degree theological education programs varied widely from one participant (reported by two programs), to one program with 1.25 million participants. The median number of people involved in a non-degree program was 50.

Among degree programs, the range in number of participants was not quite as wide. One program reported having one participant and two programs reported having 1,500 participants. The median number of participants, 40, was somewhat less for degree programs than for non-degree programs.

Please estimate the racial/ethnic makeup of the people who were involved in this program in the last year

Across degree and non-degree programs, the majority of program participants were White. The second most highly represented group in both types of programs was African Americans, followed by Hispanics/Latinos. Table 1 shows the breakdown of program participants by race/ethnicity.

Table 1. Percentage of program participants by racial/ethnic makeup

	Non-degree programs	Degree programs
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.8%	0.8%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.3%
Asian or Asian American	3.3%	2.8%
Black or African American	5.3%	14.6%
Hispanic or Latino	3.3%	6.3%
Non-Hispanic White	86.0%	73.0%
Mixed Race	0.6%	2.2%
Other	0.6%	0.0%

Please estimate the makeup by age of the people who were involved in this program in the last year

The most commonly represented age group in non-degree programs and degree programs were those under 25 years of age. In non-degree programs, this was impacted by those who participated at camps and retreat centers, in campus ministry, and programs associated with the education of children in the ELCA. In degree programs, this was highly impacted by enrollment figures at colleges and universities. Table 2 shows the breakdown of program participants by age group.

Table 2. Percentage of program participants by age group

	Non-degree programs	Degree programs
Under 25	31.4%	46.8%
25-34	13.0%	15.7%
35-44	10.5%	14.1%
45-54	17.2%	12.9%
55-64	19.2%	8.2%
65-74	7.9%	2.0%
75 and older	0.9%	0.3%

What was the percentage breakdown of clergy, lay rostered leaders and non-rostered participants who were involved in this program in the last year?

Non-rostered participants were the largest group in non-degree programs and degree programs. Nearly two-thirds of participants in non-degree programs were non-rostered. These numbers were driven by those who participated in congregational programs, those who were enrolled in lay schools, those involves with campus ministry, and those who attended camps and retreat centers. Clergy, who made up nearly the other third of participants, were most likely to have participated in synodical and churchwide programs. In degree programs, nearly 90 percent of participants were non-rostered participants, driven primarily by the high percentage of undergraduate and graduate students. Table 3 shows the breakdown of program participants by roster status.

Table 3. Percentage of program participants by roster status

	Non-degree programs	Degree programs
Clergy	29.5%	10.9%
Lay rostered leaders	6.5%	2.0%
Non-rostered participants	64.0%	87.2%

Program Funding

How is this program supported financially?

The pattern by which programs are supported financially does not generally differ for degree programs and non-degree programs. Both types are most likely to draw funding from tuition/registration fees, followed by support from individual donors, synods and the churchwide organization. The difference is that a higher proportion of degree programs draw support from each of these sources.

Figure 4 presents the different sources of support for theological education programs, and the percentage of programs which receive support from each source. Many programs were supported via multiple methods of funding.

Figure 4. Sources of funding for theological education programs across the ELCA
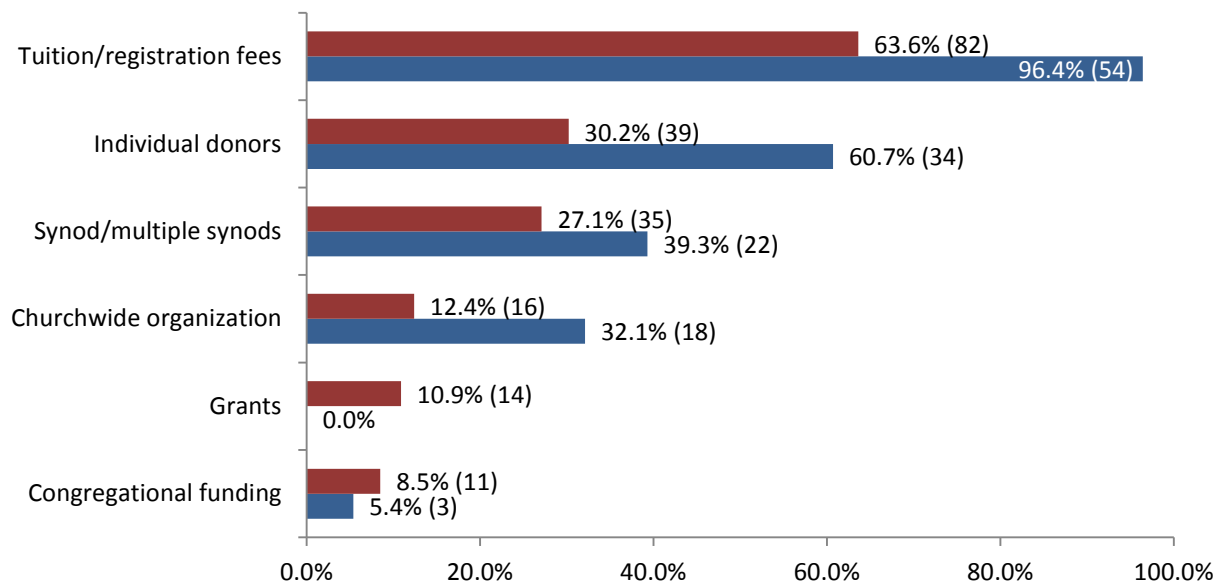
Which of the above is the primary source of financial support?

When looking only at a program's primary source of financial support, tuition/registration fees and individual donors rise to the top as by far the most frequent. In fact, these two sources are the primary sources for more than 90 percent of degree programs. Primary funding for non-degree programs extends to synodical support, churchwide support and endowments, though these are considered the primary source of funding for only a minority of programs.

Figure 5 presents the primary sources of support for theological education programs, and the percentage of programs defining that source as primary. Program administrators were not able to select multiple sources for this question.

Figure 5. Primary sources of funding for theological education programs across the ELCA
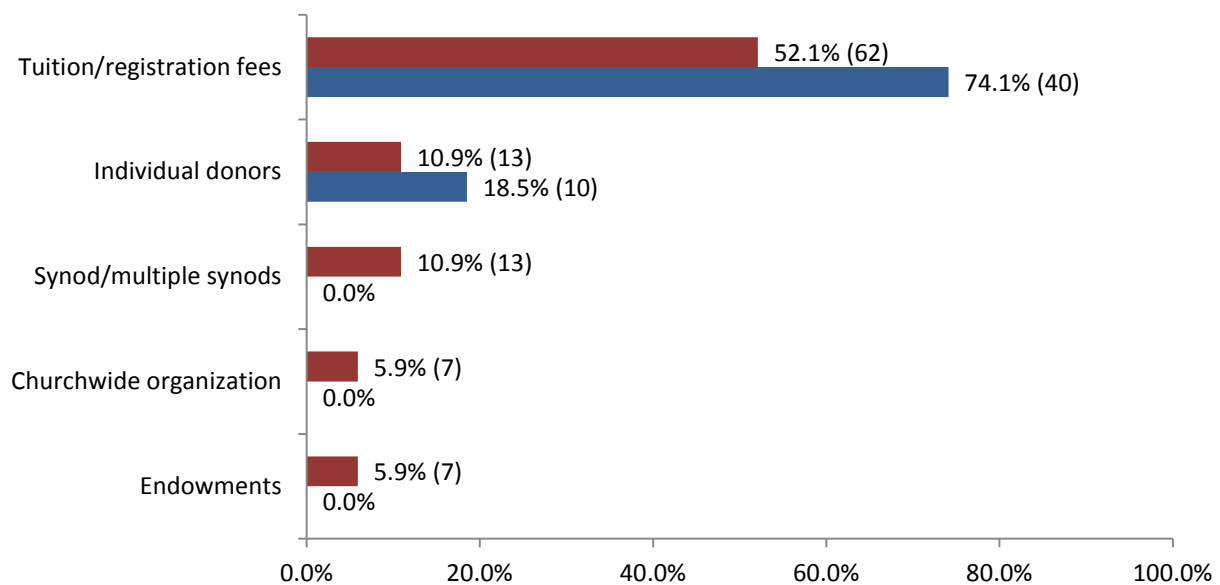
How do you advertise this program?

Online communication methods were the most common for advertising theological education programs in the ELCA. Among non-degree programs, email and organizational websites were the most common methods, followed by word of mouth and flyers. Among degree programs, the organization's website was the most frequently used method to advertise the program, followed by word of mouth, email and flyers.

Figure 6 presents the methods for advertising theological education programs across the ELCA and the percentage of degree programs and non-degree programs which used each method. Program administrators were able to select multiple methods for this question.

Figure 6. Methods for advertising theological education programs across the ELCA

Method	Degree	Non-degree
Email	89.1% (115)	66.1% (37)
On our website	86.0% (111)	91.1% (51)
Word of mouth	66.7% (86)	73.2% (41)
Flyers posted or handed out	53.5% (69)	64.3% (36)
Regular mail	42.6% (55)	53.6% (30)
Social media	12.4% (16)	7.1% (4)
Radio	1.6% (2)	7.1% (4)
Television	0.8% (1)	0.0%
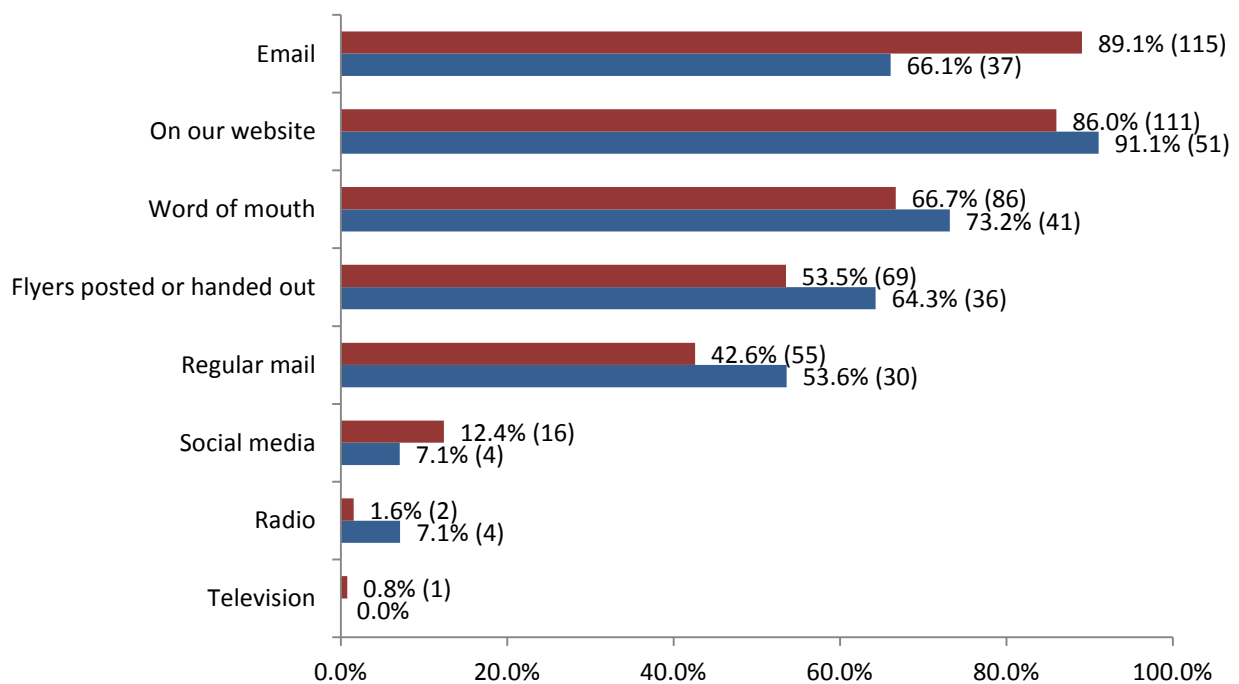
Program partners

The most common partners for those providing theological education in non-degree programs were synods and congregations. More than half of these programs currently partnered with a synod or a congregation to carry out their program. Among the commonly desired partners were the ELCA churchwide organization, colleges/universities and synods. Table 4 shows the current and desired partners of non-degree theological education programs.

Table 4. Current and desired partners of non-degree theological education programs

Potential partners of non-degree programs	Who are your partners with this program?	Who else would you like to partner with in this program?
ELCA churchwide organization	20.9% (27)	**16.3% (21)**
Synods	**51.9% (67)**	**15.5% (20)**
Congregation(s)	**51.2% (66)**	14.0% (18)
Seminaries	22.5% (29)	10.9% (14)
Colleges/Universities	20.2% (26)	16.3% (21)
Lay school	10.9% (14)	12.4% (16)
Camp/Retreat center	12.4% (16)	9.3% (12)
Social Service Agency	10.1% (13)	4.7% (6)
Non-ELCA organization	22.5% (29)	7.8% (10)
Other	8.5% (11)	0.8% (1)

The most common partners for those providing theological education in degree programs were congregations, synods and non-ELCA organizations. More than half of these programs currently partnered with a congregation to carry out their program. Among the commonly desired partners were the ELCA churchwide organization, synods and lay schools. Table 5 shows the current and desired partners of theological education degree programs.

Table 5. Current and desired partners of theological education degree programs

Potential partners of degree programs	Who are your partners with this program?	Who else would you like to partner with in this program?
ELCA churchwide organization	41.1% (23)	**19.6% (11)**
Synods	44.6% (25)	**17.9% (10)**
Congregation(s)	**55.4% (31)**	10.7% (6)
Seminaries	39.3% (22)	8.9% (5)
Colleges/Universities	41.1% (23)	12.5% (7)
Lay school	12.5% (7)	**17.9% (10)**
Camp/Retreat center	16.1% (9)	8.9% (5)
Social Service Agency	26.8% (15)	5.4% (3)
Non-ELCA organization	44.6% (25)	5.4% (3)
Other	7.1% (4)	0.0% (0)

Program challenges

Among non-degree programs, the most frequently mentioned challenges were finances/funding and recruitment of new students.

Non-degree programs (n = 129) (challenges faced by 5 percent of programs or more)

19.4% (25)   Finances/Funding
18.6% (24)   Recruitment/Attracting new students
14.0% (18)   Promotion/Advertising
12.4% (11)   Providing relevant/high quality course content
9.3% (12)   Time constraints
7.0% (9)   Low attendance/Low participation
7.0% (9)   Staffing/Personnel

Among degree programs, recruitment was by far the most frequently mentioned challenge at nearly 40 percent of programs.

Degree programs (n = 56) (challenges faced by 5 percent of programs or more)

38.9% (21)   Recruitment/Attracting new students
9.3% (5)   Finances/Funding
5.6% (3)   Finding placements for students
5.6% (3)   Staffing/Personnel

HuronEducation

TO: James Nieman, President, LSTC on behalf of the ELCA seminary leaders

FROM: Huron Engagement Project Team

DATE: Revised September 10, 2015

RE: UPDATED DRAFT Academic Learning Exchange "Base Case" for ELCA seminary leaders to deliver to the seminary communities

The purpose of this memo is two-fold. First, this document serves as a starting point for seminary leaders to engage in a discussion and come to agreement on the framing and parameters for this project. Second, it provides content and key details for each leader to share with relevant stakeholders, customized as needed for the unique culture on each campus, in preparation for the visits and interviews that will occur over the coming months.

A shared strategic initiative: Exploring the potential for an academic learning exchange

Through the generosity of a donor deeply committed to our mission, our community of seminaries has been provided an opportunity to work together to evaluate the opportunities, details, and dimensions of a shared academic learning exchange. We believe that an academic learning exchange presents a unique opportunity to expand our seminaries' reach and impact in support of the ELCA mission. Rather than just serving as a digital repository of educational content, the learning exchange has the potential to stretch our classrooms and capabilities through new kinds of collaborations. These collaborations can foster greater student interaction, enable us to pursue shared intellectual and mission goals, and bring new learners into our communities.

We recognize that an academic learning exchange could take many different shapes, and this feasibility study begins as an exploration across our campuses to discover the most promising shape for our collective goals and purposes. As a starting concept we can conceive of a learning exchange as an online environment where faculty, students and others participate in both formal (e.g., courses) and informal (e.g., "work groups") joint learning activity. Features and content could include: content for entire courses developed by inter-seminary faculty teams available for structured "virtual classroom" or self-paced use; functionality for synchronous and asynchronous discussion group sessions; searchable libraries of shared resources for teaching and ministry; or "LinkedIn-style" listings of faculty, students, and others to facilitate networking. These are just thought-starters, and we look forward to the imaginative and practical ideas stakeholders bring to the campus planning conversations.

We understand that our seminaries have distinctive institutional identities and programmatic strategies, with many stakeholders dedicated to stewarding institution-level aims and commitments. A learning exchange must value and respect institutional distinctions and interests, while fostering shared efforts that augment and enhance the work of our individual campuses. As findings from the Theological Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) initiative make clear, it is imperative that we consider ways to combine resources to reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts and investments that challenge the financial and operational sustainability of our institutions. As seminary leaders, we are excited to explore the specific potential of an academic learning exchange to help achieve both mission-based and pragmatic operational goals.

Over the course of this fall, our seminaries will be working with Huron Consulting Group's Higher Education practice on a feasibility study for the potential learning exchange. Huron's work will involve visiting each of the seminaries to

meet with faculty, students, staff and leadership. The objective of this set of campus visits is to identify shared interests and aspirations, and shared concerns, that bridge across our institutions. This information will be used to inform a strategic concept and plan for the learning exchange if there is sufficient agreement about the feasibility of the exchange.

Below are some additional thoughts about the learning exchange to inspire your thinking, followed by more detail about the Huron visits.

Why an academic learning exchange?

- Today, our clergy, seminarians, congregants, lay leaders, and the communities we serve live in an expansive and interconnected world where technology facilitates connections, fellowship, education, and worship. Through the exploration of a learning exchange, we are inviting our seminary stakeholders to help fulfill our mission by imagining ways to stretch our classrooms and share our teaching through this global network.

- An academic learning exchange can provide a forum for collaborative curriculum development and delivery, accessible to faculty at all our institutions to develop and utilize course content. In turn, the learning exchange can provide our students, and new learners from across the globe, access to the breadth of courses and supplemental material created across our entire network.

- We promise seminary students a transformative and unparalleled education. An academic learning exchange has the potential to connect all our students to shared resources (courses, material, colleagues) beyond that which any one of our institutions can singularly provide.

Why now?

- The Theological Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) has charged the ELCA seminaries with reimagining ways that seminary education can be more far-reaching, sustainable, connected, and flexible. This charge requires us to develop models for teaching and learning that preserve our core commitments to graduate education while expanding our purview further beyond our physical campuses.

- We face urgent financial and enrollment pressures at our seminaries that will require transforming our pedagogical delivery methods, funding sources, and governance structure. According to a recent TEAC-sponsored study, collectively our seminaries have seen a 39% decline in enrollment over the past decade resulting in a collective structural deficit of approximately $6 million (including depreciation) in FY15. The study indicates that we would need to recruit at least 800 additional students each year to be right-sized to our current capital and expenditure levels or reduce expenses by selling off physical assets and decreasing the size of our faculty and staff. Put another way, we need to find solutions that are financially viable and allow us to more fully fulfill the mission of the ELCA.

- Significant changes are occurring in educational consumption patterns among students at all types of institutions. Particularly at the graduate and professional degree levels, enrollments in conventional residential programs are often stagnating while participation in online and hybrid programs is increasing – including at many of the highly selective and top-performing institutions our seminaries count as academic peers.

What is the process for exploring this initiative?

Huron Education

Huron Consulting Group's education consulting practice will be facilitating a robust set of conversations across our eight seminaries to explore the potential for a digital exchange for hosting formal and informal learning, discuss how such a learning exchange might best be governed and operated, and evaluate potential technology platforms to fit identified needs. Many questions remain to be answered about how and whether the development of an academic learning exchange should proceed, addressing issues including appropriate content, the operating model for the exchange, and how it can be best used to extend the capability and capacity of our faculty. This project seeks to answer many of these questions in the coming months.

- Huron teams will be visiting each of our seminaries in September and October to meet with faculty, students, leadership and staff. These campus conversations will explore questions including:
  - *What ideas, hopes, and concerns do seminary stakeholders bring to the conversation about a potential academic learning exchange?*
  - *What activities, course-related and other, might best lend themselves to online collaboration in the next 1-3 years? How might this content best be created and curated?*
  - *What might a more visionary learning exchange that reaches beyond our current students and campuses look like? How can the learning exchange grow over time?*
  - *How should an academic learning exchange be operated? What technology factors must be accommodated to ensure that individual seminaries can best continue their own efforts while participating in the exchange?*

- Huron consultants will also be conducting a significant amount of analysis and benchmark learning to bring ideas to us about what other top institutions are doing in implementing academic learning exchanges.

- In November, the seminary leaders will convene a Leadership Meeting in Chicago to consider and discuss learning from the field research and campus visits. Each leader will bring a small delegation from her or his seminary to participate. The goal of the Leadership Meeting will be to refine the collective position about the feasibility, shape, staging, content, and technology requirements for the learning exchange.

- Following the November event we anticipate further communication back to our campuses about the learning exchange planning initiative.

As leaders of the eight ELCA seminaries we urge you, our colleagues, to be imaginative and creative as you consider the potential for an academic learning exchange to support the efforts of our faculty and promote more effective and collaborative learning for all our students and stakeholders. In the coming days, you will begin to see invitations to meet with our consultants to discuss this opportunity. Please do all you can to provide thoughtful and productive information to the team. Thank you for your interest and support.

Education Model Assessment

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

August 3, 2015

Contents

I. Scope & Purpose of Assessment

The ELCA Theological Education Assessment was requested by the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) as part of TEAC's broader initiative to reimagine ways that ELCA theological education is *more far-reaching, more sustainable, more connected, and flexible*. These concepts mean different things to different stakeholders, yet are all based on the desire to meet present and future leadership needs of the Church while exercising effective stewardship of limited resources. Baker Tilly's assessment is only one piece of a much broader discussion aimed at answering the questions that define TEAC's initiative. The assessment outlines options for the organizational and structural transformative change that must occur in order to realize education that is *more far-reaching, more sustainable, more connected, and flexible*. It is up to the TEAC, the seminaries, and other Church leadership to discern what that transformed mission and leadership development will look like.

Specifically, TEAC has been charged by the Church Council to re-envision the ELCA theological education delivery model in a manner that will, among other things:

I.   Align with emerging needs and mission-based growth opportunities of the Church
II.   Ensure that church theological education resources and assets are focused on strategic, mission-based priorities
III. Reduce overall cost outlay per student
IV.   Make sure theological education is effective and available where it is needed
V.   Recognize the changing cultural, demographic, and socio-economic context in which churches and their leaders live and work

Theological education across all denominations is facing challenges like never before as rapid cultural changes have made religious belonging and participation much less the norm. These include unprecedented decreases in mainline denomination membership, reductions in numbers of congregations, and reductions in those seeking careers in ministry and related fields. The ELCA theological education network and institutions also face serious challenges related to their current fiscal position, constrained resource levels, and resources that are tied up in underutilized assets.

The ability to experiment and innovate to meet emerging and ever-changing mission-based demands requires more flexibility in aligning assets and programs, and less anxiety around fiscal sustainability.

The ability to experiment and innovate to meet emerging and ever-changing mission-based demands requires more flexibility in aligning assets and programs, a repurposing, if you will, of existing resources toward the most impactful and urgent opportunities. It also requires the ability to take calculated risks in trying new approaches, accepting that there is no guarantee that every approach tried will have the intended outcomes. In other words, having the financial bandwidth to have failed experiments is critical as the ELCA considers how it will respond to meet mission needs of the future.

One of TEAC's insights is that the ELCA needs *more* theological education, not less. But for whom? Though the seminaries have engaged in lay and continuing education for the past decade, the eight theological schools are mainly focused on graduate degree education – master's and doctoral degrees for persons seeking calls in congregational ministry, chaplaincy, in advanced study and teaching, and needing continuing education.

TEAC argues that theological education should embrace "the whole people of God." There is a need for everyone, in every aspect of life, to explore and experience meaning, service, community, and compassion. Pastors and lay leaders need enabling resources to accompany their members and friends on their faith journeys.

While the seminaries do conduct some lay education and train their students in Christian education, one can readily acknowledge that 21st century needs and opportunities differ from those of the 20th century, specifically requiring:

> Different ways to engage millennials and realize "the Church" of the future
> Enhanced efforts to grow and equip pastors to provide effective leadership relative to theological issues, congregational operations, and mission growth
> Focus on the needs of changing member populations and demographics
> Enhanced focus on ecumenical and cross cultural ministries
> Increased ability to ensure that rostered leaders have access to the "best thinking" as it relates to the critical issues or challenges of the present (e.g., how to facilitate community conversations about inclusivity, race, and privilege; what is critical for a congregation in financial crisis, and how to navigate political issues that divide a congregation)
> Attention to needs in major geographies without a current ELCA seminary presence (e.g., southwest, northwest) and within which emerging populations exist

Because no one has an easy answer as to how these challenges will be met, it befits the ELCA to find ways and means to try creative experiments. An opportunity stands before the ELCA seminaries to boldly address new missional needs in the Church across North America and internationally. This report specifically focuses on ways to free resources in support of this expanded mission, and offers model options for organizing the education of church leaders of the future.

The goals of TEAC as we interpret them for purposes of identifying potential transformative models are as follows:

Table 1: TEAC Goals

More Far Reaching	More Connected and Flexible	More Sustainable
Work in theological education needs to become more robust in:	Delivery of theological education can benefit from:	As it relates to seminaries, students, and God's mission:
> Providing life-long learning for the whole people of God, so that they can continue to grow in faith and live out their baptismal vocation fully, in an increasingly multi-cultural and inter-religious environment. > Preparing more persons from a wider range of communities to serve as rostered leaders in a wider range of contexts. > Strengthening a culture of continuing education for rostered leaders which enables them to lead well in a changing church, in a rapidly changing culture.	> A connected theological education network that effectively utilizes all assets of the Church including seminaries, colleges, congregations, synod lay schools, ecumenical and global partners in our approach to delivering education. > More flexible arrangements in deploying our current seminary faculty and linking them to teaching resources in other settings; the ELCA theological education network could become much more robust and fruitful.	> Sustainable seminaries require careful management of both expenses and revenues to increase liquidity, improve operating results, and create more capacity for innovation. > Sustainable economy of theological education for students - reduced role that student borrowing plays in the economy of both of students and of our institutions. > Sustainable service to God's mission - increased productivity of our work in theological education in terms of the number, variety, and generativity of the leaders we prepare.

Transforming the ELCA theological education network to one that better meets the changing needs of the Church in a manner that is flexible, sustainable, and cost effective requires altruism and creativity at the highest levels possible.

This report opens with an outline of the context for why a significant transformative change is needed to address sustainability issues relative to theological delivery within the ELCA that have been discussed since 1995. Our analysis includes consideration of what is currently being done to address these issues; however, the question being asked is whether a way can be found to do more. As the seminary visits, conversations, and analyses proceeded, it became evident that identifying and repurposing resources is complex.

One question is: can eight independent institutions find a way to individually or collectively achieve sustainability and contribute resources to help meet the educational needs identified by TEAC? That question, in turn, leads to speculation that there might be a better way to corporately configure the institutions so that resources may be repurposed to meet those needs. There is no easy answer and until the model or paradigm shift is determined, executing on the logistics of the model is not feasible. However, understanding the impacts and risks of each potential approach is critical to finding the solution and ***thus the key component of the report (and the promising discussions to date) is the matrix of models which compares various governance options for consideration. This matrix (Section V) compares and contrasts the various governance structures, and identifies specific mission and fiscal impacts possible through adoption of each model.***

II. Why is Transformation Needed?

The sustainability of the ELCA theological education delivery model, and concerns regarding the existing governance and funding, are recurring topics which have been focused on in multiple reports and initiatives over the past three decades. The bottom line is that the current model used to deliver ELCA theological education is provided by relatively autonomous entities, focused on delivering education primarily for master of divinity students, in a manner that does not consistently provide the intended outcomes either on a mission or fiscal basis. In short, a better approach to balancing the equation of assets (i.e., physical, faculty, staff) to number of students (e.g., masters, PhD, lay, continuing education) is vital.

When evaluating sustainability relative to ELCA theological education, there are three key components of consideration that result in challenges to realization of the mission:

I. Growing leaders – meeting congregational needs (new and existing) for rostered leaders
II. Growing mission through expanded education (e.g., geographic, lay) and experimentation ("change in church")
III. Ensuring a positive fiscal picture

Enrollment at all ELCA seminaries has declined substantially in the last ten years; ELCA seminaries' loss was approximately twice as much as mainline schools.

Growing leaders

Enrollment at all ELCA seminaries has declined substantially in the last ten years. Collectively the ELCA seminaries' loss was approximately twice as much as mainline schools (i.e., 39% of full time equivalent (FTE) students compared to 19%). Collectively the ELCA loss was 35% of head count compared to 22% of headcount for all mainline schools.

The seminaries would need at least an additional 800 students to have a student body right-sized to the current level of capital assets.

Figure 1: Long-Term Head Count

Long Term Head Count Enrollment in ELCA Seminaries

Legend: Wartburg, Trinity, Pacific, Luther, LTS Philadelphia, LTS Gettysburg, LT Southern Seminary, LST Chicago
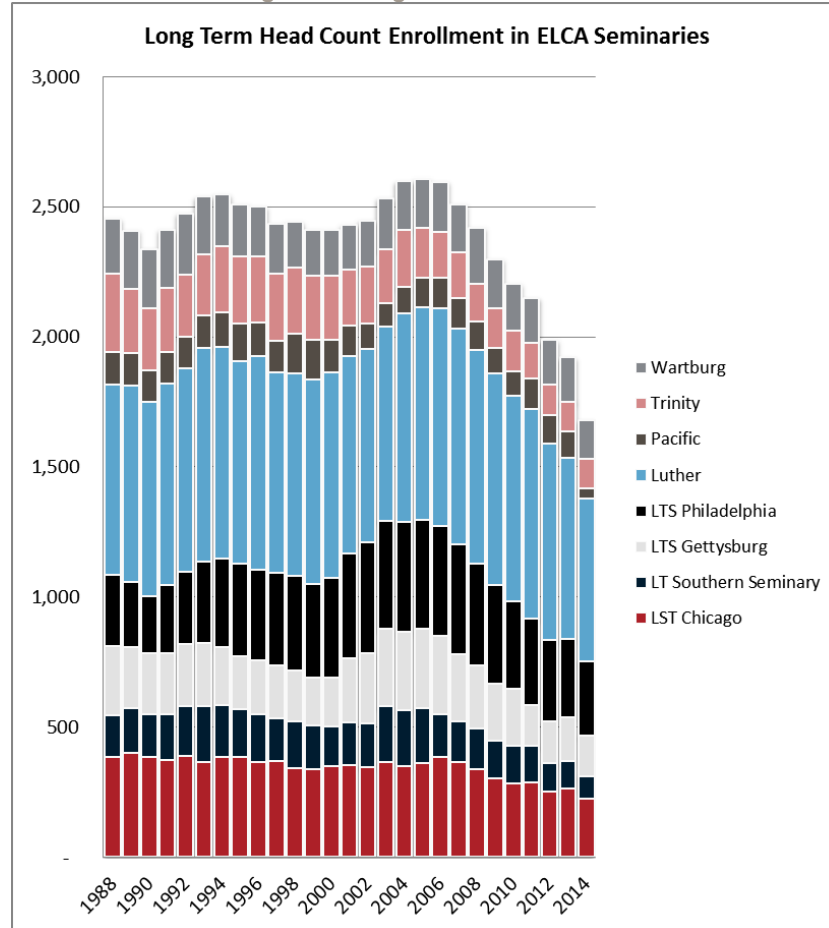
To put this in perspective, the ELCA seminaries' enrollment grew through the 1950s and 1960s, reaching its peak in the mid-1970s at approximately 2,500 headcount students. The seminaries' enrollment remained at that level for three decades, through 2005. Since then the headcount enrollment has decreased between 30% and 35%. The seminaries have made some adaptations in physical, managerial, or educational capacity to serve this diminished population. As highlighted in the chart above, however, given the level of physical assets currently owned, the seminaries would need at least an additional 800[1] students to have the student body and level of capital assets in a sustainable balance.[2]

[1] The number of students required to balance the level of physical assets compared to students is intended to be illustrative of how "out of balance" the current physical assets are. For example, the section Balancing the Equation– Focus on Physical Assets" cites two student figures that are intended to show how out of balance total expenditures per FTE are compared to a peer average.
[2] Assumes a peak headcount of 2,500 and a current headcount of 1,693.

While 64.5% of students educated at ELCA seminaries pursue the Master of Divinity degree with the intention of serving as rostered leaders, 43% of the reported vacancies in full-time first call positions were left unfilled during 2015. This was similar to the results in most recent years.[3] Also, while many are considering the need to expand the reach to educating lay and other leaders within the Church the vast majority of programs are focused on education for those pursuing a Master in Divinity degree. Additionally, the process of connecting those providing theological education to those most involved in vocational discernment in its early stages is currently ad hoc and relies on individual personalities rather than a focused, formal, and intentional structure for connecting programs and people.

Mission through expanded reach and experimentation

As described in the opening section, expansion of mission involves changes relative to a number of factors. There are two critical subcomponents of consideration relative to a sustainable mission presence: a) meeting underserved and emerging populations (e.g., through geographic presence, cultural understanding); and b) expanded types of education to fulfill needs of those beyond the Master of Divinity student and to accommodate required mission expansion to address mission challenges which are before the Church. The mission of the Church of the future is much bigger than the mission of the past. Specifically, there is a need for greater mission impact as the result of a rapidly changing and more pluralistic world, differing expectations of a globally focused and less insular youth population, and communities that by virtue of their composition require interfaith understanding.

ELCA seminaries alone commit over $62 million annually in expenses, and have almost $100 million in dedicated physical assets.

The footprint and delivery model of the ELCA seminaries is predominantly limited to the traditional locations and on-campus presence requirements for students. While some limited experimentation is occurring, the vast majority of work done by seminaries occurs in a campus setting within five geographic pockets of the nation. Likewise, while there are some highly successful and innovative programs for lay education, these are the exception. Overall, resources are not strategically aligned to expand or prioritize lay and continuing education of rostered leaders in a manner that is consistently accessible and convenient.

The seminaries have long sought to innovate to meet the changing needs of the Church and their students. Laudably, non-traditional programs (i.e., Theological Education for Emerging Ministries [TEEM], bi-vocational emphases, urban partnerships) have been implemented in pockets across the nation. Nonetheless, many observers note that the need for innovative non-traditional programs is greater than is currently addressed given the rapidly changing context within which churches exist and serve.

Ensuring a positive fiscal position

The current approach to ELCA theological education assumes a significant level of autonomy and separate resource commitment from the individual entities involved and impacted. The ELCA seminaries alone commit over $62 million annually in expenses, and have approximately $100 million in physical assets[4]. Staff resources dedicated to

[3] Source: ELCA Program Director for Assignment, February 2015 data.
[4] This represents the FY14 book value of assets, not the market value.

theological education equal 120 faculty and over 326 staff for a total spend on human capital equivalent to $40.67 million. The extent of physical and operating assets currently dedicated to theological education, or available to support theological education, from the remainder of the ELCA entities (e.g., congregations, universities, colleges), has not been collectively quantified, but is currently being quantified as part of an asset mapping project.

Figure 2: ELCA Entities
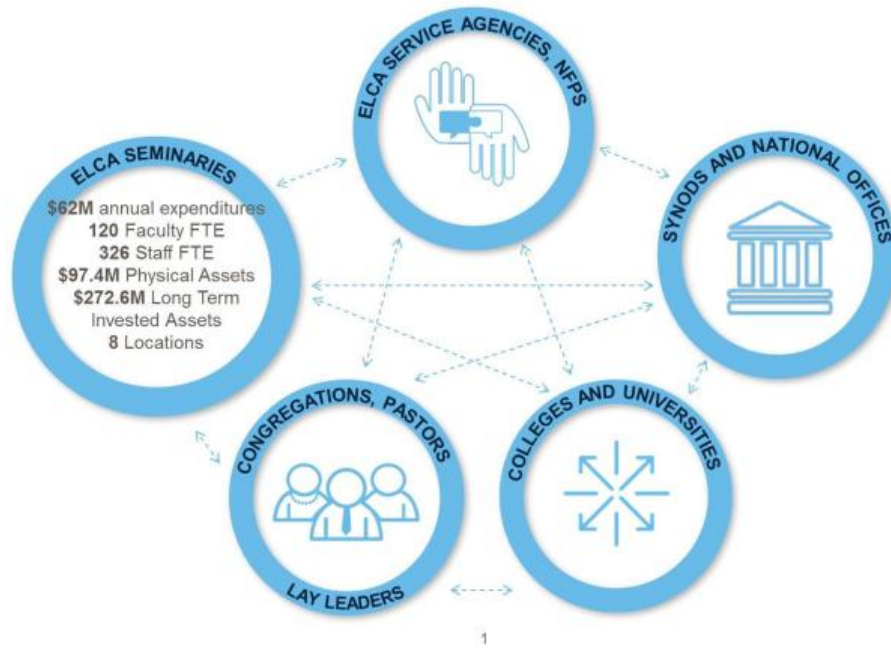
The historical financial performance for the seminaries is not sustainable, and points to a situation with too many committed resources for the level of revenue generated. Specifically, the cumulative level of deficit anticipated for FY15 is $6.08 M including depreciation expense and $471,269 with depreciation excluded. Of the eight seminaries, five have projected structural deficits before accounting depreciation, while all have structural operating deficits when depreciation is included.

Table 2: FY 2015 Projected Surplus/Deficit

Seminary	Projected Surplus/Deficit FY 2015 (including depreciation)	Projected Surplus/Deficit FY 2015 (excluding depreciation)
Chicago	($238,000)	$458,000
Gettysburg	($90,270)	$334,731
Luther	($1,400,000)	($118,000)
Pacific	($250,000)	($125,000)
Philadelphia	($1,800,000)	($700,000)
Southern	($1,265,322)	($159,000)
Trinity	($812,000)	($312,000)
Wartburg	($225,000)	$150,000
TOTAL	($6,080,592)	($471,269)

A "structural" deficit occurs when normal, ongoing "business as usual" expenditures exceed normal levels of revenue from tuition, gifts, and a prudent 5 percent draw from endowment. As may be seen on Figure 2 on page 7 at least half of the institutions have struggled with substantial deficits during the past decade. Deficits have to be financed – either expendable financial assets are consumed or money is borrowed to make up the gap. Either way, the financial position of the institution is weakened and the future becomes more uncertain. From time to time unusual market gains or the receipt of significant non-repeating gifts (such as bequests) improve the situation in the short term, but an underlying structural deficit will eventually erode those recent gains. On the other hand, market sluggishness and downturns accelerate the consumption of reserves in the short term.

These points of analysis go to further confirm previous analysis (e.g., Fall 2014 TEAC report that summarized the Stewards of Abundance 2013 Report, Baker Tilly ELCA Comparative Financial Ratio Analysis, multi-year) which highlighted concerns for the fiscal stability of the ELCA theological approach in its current form.

Current state – comparison of levels of spending

The level of spending in many areas outpaces that of others and points to an overburdened situation when comparing spending levels per student. Specifically:

> *Average resource expended per student* - the current average cost expended per theological student within the ELCA system is $66,804 per student. Comparison with peer schools indicates that the average cost is slightly greater than peers, with some schools falling into the 25th percentile. The goal would be to have all schools fall into the 75th percentile as it is believed that the peer group overall is not as efficient as is required.

*The level of
spending in many
areas outpaces
that of others and
points to an
overburdened
situation…*

Figure 3: Cost per FTE Student
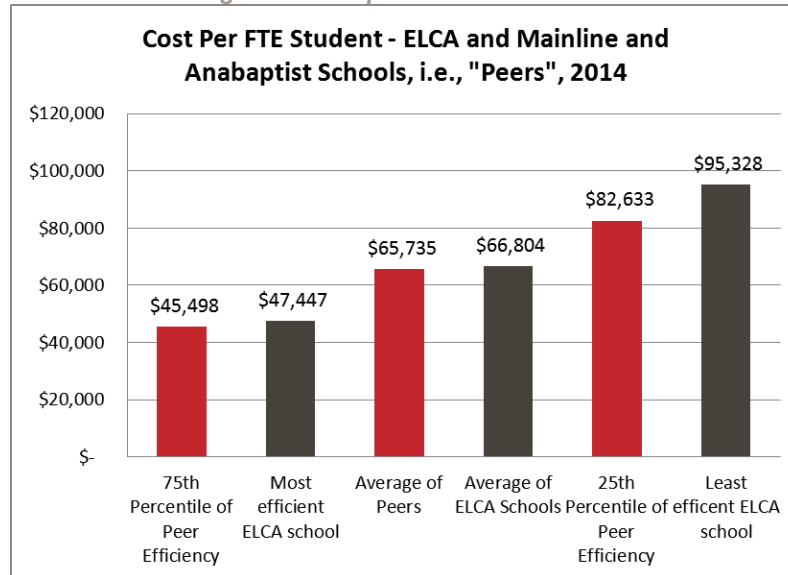
> *Institutional support* - institutional support expenditures exceed the average by approximately $4,000 more than the ATS average ($15,714 excluding the embedded schools compared to an ATS average of $11,741). Based on current student levels, this equates to a total of $4.38M[5] more in institutional support expenditures annually across the network compared to the peer benchmark level.

> **Student Services** - student services expenditures per FTE are $3,607 per FTE compared to an ATS average of $2,231. This indicates that in total the ELCA seminaries spend on average just over $1,300 more per student. Based on current student FTE, this equates to a total of $1.6M[6] more in total student services expenditures annually across the network compared to the peer benchmark level.

Balancing the equation –physical assets

Further analysis of the level of physical assets underlines the fact that resource level reductions have not correlated to the decrease in students and that either a reduction in assets or a substantial increase in students is required to balance the current level of physical assets maintained from a financial perspective.

Across the eight seminaries approximately $100 million (book value) is held in physical assets equivalent to total of 1,443,341 square feet of useable space. Based on a conservative analysis of unused capacity during core hours, it is estimated that approximately 22% of total space capacity (322,953 sq. ft.) is not used, which equates to

*...it is estimated
that approximately
22% of total space
is not used.*

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[5] This compares the difference in total expenditures assuming the current FTE and current cost per FTE, versus the current FTE and the peer benchmark cost per FTE.
[6] This compares the difference in total expenditures assuming the current FTE and current average cost per FTE, versus the current FTE and peer benchmark average cost per FTE.

approximately $33.7 million in value. The level of unused capacity varies by institution (see Appendix E for details.)

To illustrate the concept of balancing the equation, assuming a total seminary enrollment of 1,137 student FTE, and total seminary expenditures of $67.9M, the seminaries collectively would need an additional 101[7] students to meet the average cost per FTE (for all ATS students). It is worthwhile to note that the rest of the industry is suffering the same problems as the ELCA schools (e.g., decreasing enrollment, overspending). Thus, comparisons are between similar contexts. One could argue that even for the peer benchmark group a more cost effective benchmark might be a 10% decrease in the average expenditures per FTE. In that case the ELCA would require 236 additional students (in total enrollment) to right size to an efficient peer cost level. So in other words, if one assumes that even the benchmark average is not at the optimal level and there is room to better balance students and expenditures by reducing costs by 10%, the ELCA would then need to increase students by 236 rather than 101.

Additionally, the operating cost of maintaining these assets is significant and reflected in the levels of deferred maintenance currently incurred by each seminary. The eight seminaries in total estimate between $35.1 and $50.8 M in deferred maintenance[8]. Even when subtracting the embedded seminaries, the average estimated deferred maintenance level per student is significantly higher than the ATS average of $18,419[9] on both the low ($24,720) and the high ($36,667) level per enrolled student FTE perspective.

Balancing the equation – human capital assets

Human capital is the key component of the higher education "product" of educating students. As such, there is a significant level of faculty, staff, and administrative resources currently expended. Over 440 FTE are currently involved in delivering theological education at seminary locations across the nation. Of that amount there are approximately 120 faculty and 326 staff FTE allocated to various positions.

In conducting this assessment, we found that a major challenge for all seminaries is the availability of faculty with the required specialization consistently at each seminary site. Our evaluation looks at ways to ensure these specializations are in fact accessible to the students at each seminary, and offers an analysis of ways to achieve the alignment of faculty specializations with student need. An important consideration in this discussion is the one of tenure and its specific impact on the ability to modify the total number of faculty through faculty layoffs.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure describes tenure of faculty as it relates to the economic security and academic freedom afforded to a faculty member. Specifically, this

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[7] The number of students required to balance total expenditures per FTE is intended to be illustrative of how "out of balance" the current expenditures per FTE are. Compare the previous "Growing Leaders" section that notes that in order to balance capital assets compared to number of students, the ELCA seminaries collectively would need an additional 800 students. This indicates that compared to expenditures per FTE (requiring an additional 101-236 students) the capital assets given the current student enrollment is more "out of balance."

[8] Estimates of current deferred maintenance levels provided by seminary CFOs.

[9] The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools.

assumes that the faculty member will have continuous employment as articulated in the "precise terms and conditions" of their appointment. The key question to be resolved is what is meant by the precise terms and conditions of the employment agreement.

Many within higher education are facing this same challenge and are addressing the tenure discussion as follows:

> Not being too prescriptive in the specific terms and conditions included in employment agreements

> In the event of fiscal uncertainty and the need to reallocate or reduce faculty resources, do so in close conversation with faculty in coming to the best solution for both the institution and the faculty member

> Offering opportunities to retain focus in area of specialization with options to "team teach" a course or series of courses to integrate the perspectives of different specializations and thus, strengthen the relevance of the course to the student

> Set realistic expectations about future opportunities for tenure based on projected market and student needs and existing resources

> Ensure that the mix of courses taught by the faculty member retains and respects areas of expertise and qualifications, and does not assume an "anyone can teach anything mentality"

It will be key for the seminaries within the ELCA to come to agreement with its faculty and ensure an ongoing two-way dialogue if the impacts required to "balance the equation" are to be feasible.

In summary, though exceeding the costs of comparable schools, the level of resources committed on most fronts is not guaranteeing fulfilment of the mission expectations for the ELCA theological education. The challenge to the seminaries and leaders within the ELCA is to find those opportunities which allow realignment of resources in a way that most significantly impacts mission. By considering ways to collaborate, it will be possible to sustain current operations and also to utilize reallocated or saved resources, once the seminaries are in a position of fiscal surplus, toward experimentation or investment in innovation. This resource reallocation in alignment with mission may also positively impact the attraction of additional investment by donors, foundations or other granting entities.

The transformation of the delivery model needs to accomplish several things, most notably alignment of resources in a manner that expands the reach of theological education, is flexible in supporting the needs for rostered leaders, and is funded within recurring and reliable resources. Collaboration to optimize resources is a critical component of that transformation. Starting within the ELCA there are many opportunities to collaborate:

Figure 4: Collaboration Opportunities
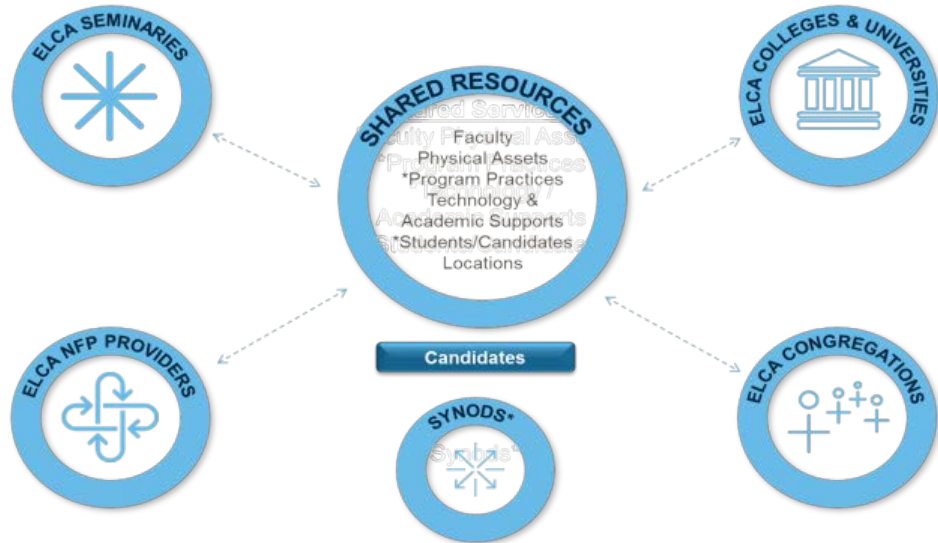
Each individual seminary is pondering ways to "right" its financial picture and mission focus. However, given the level of resources expended and the lessons learned from past attempts to address fiscal concerns, it may make sense to think about certain potential options on a global sense. Many concepts must be considered to ensure sustainable alignment of mission and resources and ability to meet the broader theological education needs of the ELCA.

III. What is Possible? Impacts of Balancing the Asset Equation in Alignment with Mission

The goal of making theological education more sustainable is challenging, as previously noted. Diminished enrollment and a shrinking church membership erode revenues from tuition and gifts. The Great Recession negatively affected the value of endowments. Not surprisingly, most seminaries have struggled with operating deficits for the past decade.

How can the schools be made more sustainable? Although many individual school efforts are underway, a more holistic view of "how" to best align resources to mission is required.

Figure 5: Surplus (Deficit) Chart
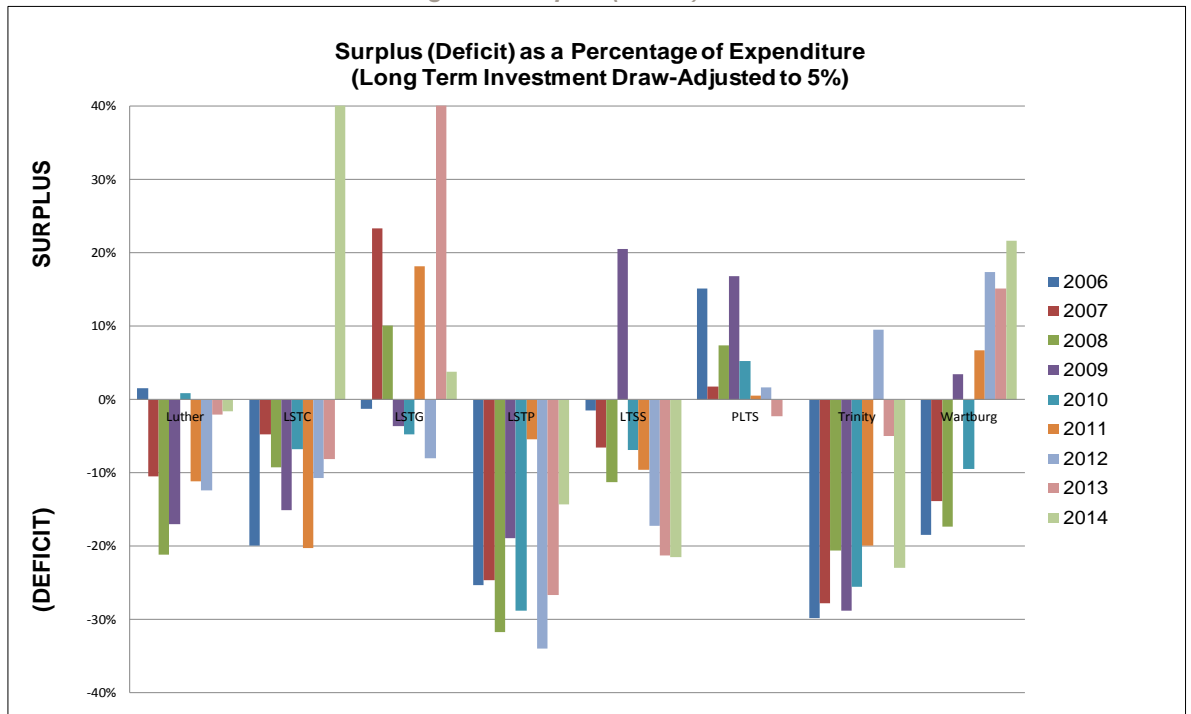
As illustrated by the Surplus (Deficit) chart (Figure 5) above, there is urgency to reverse these deficits and align resources cost effectively with mission needs.

The estimates of savings and revenues that follow are *illustrative* of the potential opportunities for direct impact on sustainability. Again, a holistic view is required for maximum impact.

As previously identified, the level of **physical** assets currently committed is at a level which exceeds the optimal level for the currently enrolled student population. The cumulative physical asset commitment across all eight campuses is approximately $100 million. There is too much space for current needs. This excess capacity should either: be repurposed for expansion of mission, sold for one-time revenue, or rented for recurring revenue. Dependent upon the model selected, if the 23% of campus capacity at just the non-embedded schools was either rented or sold, additional revenue streams would result in approximately $25,394,000 in one-time or $4,057,000 in annual recurring revenue (see Appendix G for details) .

Additionally, **deferred maintenance** continues to be a considerable liability for all campuses with an estimated current deferred maintenance range of $30,946 – $44,745 per student. The reduction of physical assets through adoption of different governance / deliveries model(s) would also significantly decrease deferred maintenance. Specifically, it is estimated that between $6.5 and $18.9 million in deferred maintenance costs can be eliminated for the non-embedded seminaries through the sale of unused physical assets (see Appendix D for details).

Another major ongoing expenditure is **faculty**. While it is recognized that each seminary has its own ethos and academic emphasis, our conversations across campuses identified faculty sharing as an approach to aligning resources to mission.

In many cases individual seminaries have right-sized faculty positions to the point where further reductions will harm their ability to be a viable quality education institution. However, there is still a need to align specialization with student demand and to ensure that faculty capacity is optimized. There is great potential for the ELCA theological education network to reduce or reallocate faculty to expansion of mission needs if minimum course size and distance learning platforms are adopted. Though we recognize there are some seminaries with excess faculty capacity, the more pressing issue is faculty with specialties that do not align with student needs on the particular campus on which that faculty are in residence.

By enforcing a class size minimum and using distance-learning technology to fill class sections with students from several seminaries, each seminary can both realize optimized capacity faculty and expand student opportunities to take courses in topics not offered at the student's home seminary. The current average course size across the seminaries is approximately 15 students, with a minimum of one student and a maximum of 86 students. If this faculty sharing approach was used only for introductory courses (excluding advanced courses and independent studies) with all seminaries enforcing a minimum of 15 students per course, 17 faculty could potentially be reduced or reallocated. Twenty-two faculty could be reduced or reallocated if a minimum of 20 students per introductory course becomes the adopted practice.[10] There is excess faculty capacity across the network as it relates to certain specialties.

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[10] Calculated using course information provided by the seminaries.

The estimated savings or potential value of reallocated resources for sharing faculty across the six non-embedded schools is $1.5 – $4.4 million dependent upon the model selected.

Additionally, savings relative to centralizing key institutional support functions at the manager and above level can have significant impact (fiscal and other) through shared administrative positions. It is estimated that adopting the administrative structures outlined for each governance model can result in between $1.5 - $3.4 million in savings.

Table 3 below illustrates the potential impacts of a different governance model based on asset to student balancing assumptions:

Table 3: Illustrative Impact Summary

	Physical Assets	**Faculty**
Current Total Book Value (Physical Assets) Current Total Annual Expenditure (Faculty)	$100,000,000	$10,560,000
Current Total FTE	44 (staff FTE dedicated to maintenance operations)	120
Noted Gaps	Unused space of 23%	Courses not at minimum class size
Illustrative Fiscal Impact (Savings or Available for Reallocation)	*$19 – $25.4 million (sale of assets)*	*$1.5 – $4.4 million (require course minimums)*

The potential for reallocation of resources toward mission priorities is significant; however difficult decisions will be required at all levels.

What is already happening?

The seminaries and their individual boards continue to work diligently to address issues of sustainability from both mission and fiscal perspectives. Seminaries have been entrepreneurial in locating partnerships across a variety of entities to enhance academic programs, foster academic and administrative shared services agreements, and offer combined degrees. Seminaries often look to local partners before ELCA seminary partners, and in fact, significant cross collaboration on shared courses occurs with non-ELCA seminaries (e.g., Graduate Theological Union, Association of Chicago Theological Schools, etc.).

Likewise, innovation is occurring relative to expanded or enhanced mission focus across all campuses building on the distinguishing attributes of each seminary. Specifically we noted the following innovations to be celebrated:

> Revised Master of Divinity program approaches
  – Revised program length to address debt issues
  – Revised focus to enhance leadership development
  – Increased time in and/or changes in sequencing of onsite placements

> Increased partnerships for emerging ministries
  – Rural Ministries (e.g., cross seminary efforts)
  – Urban Ministries (e.g., Nonprofit partnerships)
  – Emerging Population Ministries (e.g., TEEM)
  – Ecumenical/Interfaith Centers (e.g., Islamic Studies and Interfaith Relations)
  – Multi-vocational leaders

> Expansion of those educated, and strengthened congregation and seminary relationships
  – Seminary Advocates
  – Sponsored Congregational Leadership Development Events
  – Online Education for Lay Leaders

> Collaborative recruitment at ELCA Colleges and Universities

> Distance Learning offerings

However, these innovations are occurring in pockets and do not currently exhibit broad based sharing of either expertise for experimentation or results for effective implementation of effective practices. In fact, a lack of resources consistently available for innovative efforts restricts the ability to conduct meaningful and data driven experimentation in a manner that will have long-term impacts on the attraction and development of church leadership nationwide.

Thus, unfortunately, the potential for mission expansion is continually burdened for most by a required focus on financial challenges (e.g., structural deficits, overextended student debt, the constant pressure of fundraising, and burdensome reliance on endowment). The movement of two of the schools into an embedded governance model (i.e., they reside within an ELCA college or University) is just one of the options pursued in order to resolve fiscal issues and allow the type of mission innovation required. The partnerships between Lenoir-Rhyne University and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, and between California Lutheran University and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary are intended to strengthen the effective alignment of resources to theological education mission. The results of these recent changes in governance are not yet known.

IV. Who is Responsible to Transform the Theological Education Approach (Governance)

The ELCA has a long history of discussing and analyzing the challenges and issues relative to governance, impact, and cost of ELCA theological education. A 1995 report entitled *Faithful Leaders for a Changing World: Theological Education for Mission in the ELCA*, outlines many of the same issues identified as part of this assessment and specifically evaluated the required steps to address the 11 imperatives identified at the 1993 Churchwide Assembly. At its core, this 1993 report discusses the need for "a new structure to enhance collaboration and coordination" through a "cluster of interdependent networks of theological education providers." During this period of discussion, the seminaries embraced this concept and went to work to maximize resources, set priorities, and enhance the preparation of leaders within the clusters.

Most agree that the results of the cluster formation are mixed, with some initiatives resulting in significant impact and others being viewed as little more than a gentlemen's agreement to keep each other informed.

The reality is that while theological education continues to be a focus of mission for the ELCA, the current and anticipated paradigm shift in level of commitment to traditional, mainline religion, combined with public sensitivity to high levels of student debt, paints a complex and challenging picture for theological education across all religions.

This is a problem to be solved by the whole of the ELCA network. The power to make significant change resides at the local (seminary) level. In fact, under the current ELCA bylaws, while the ELCA has authority to "sponsor, support, and provide for oversight of seminaries for the preparation of persons for the ordained and other ministries and for continuing study on the part of ordained minsters and laypersons" each seminary is a separately incorporated entity with a separate governing body that holds the power to make all strategic decisions.

The difficult challenge is that while the "power" resides at the individual board level, the desire for change impacts stakeholders throughout the entirety of the Church. As such, it is imperative that all stakeholders convene to develop an attractive strategic plan that promotes sustainability in the broadest sense. The level of involvement in a new strategy to transform theological education by ELCA churchwide is ultimately the decision of each seminary board; however, that being said, the tremendous benefits of a common vision, central oversight approach, consistent and reliable funding source, and convener of impactful initiatives should not be minimized.

The governance options presented in this report provide a broad continuum of centralized and locally focused governance intended to drive discussion about the greatest point of sustainable impact. The actual governance representation within these structures will be critical to ensuring articulated outcomes drive action.

The governance models offered provide the information required to objectively view various options towards sustainability of which the recommended solution may be somewhere in between or a combination of all of the above. The compare and contrast approach will allow for depth of dialogue about which model or combination of them has the potential for impact and participation.

V. Governance Options – Model Matrix

The matrix which follows takes a compare and contrast approach, outlining various options for meeting TEAC objectives. It is important to remember that Baker Tilly's assessment is but one piece of a much broader discussion aimed at answering the questions that define TEAC's initiative. This matrix outlines options for the organizational and structural transformative change that must occur in order to realize education that is *more far-reaching, more sustainable, more connected, and flexible.* It is up to the TEAC, the seminaries, and other Church leadership to discern what that transformed mission and leadership development will look like.

The five models presented are:

- I.   Central System
- II.   Limited Central System
- III. Regional System
- IV. Joint Ventures
- V.   Current State

The options or variables under each model of organizing the ELCA seminaries are presented in the following order:

- > Description of the Models
  - – Governance
  - – Relationships
  - – Student Impact
  - – Program Emphasis and Delivery
  - – Public Relations
  - – Resources
  - – Financial Authority and Exit Strategy
- > Estimated Mission Impact
  - – Regarding the TEAC Agenda
- > Illustrative Fiscal Impact
- > Risk and Problem Areas
- > High Impact Leverage Points

It is important to note that in our impact analysis we have assumed a steady total seminary enrollment for purposes of discussing the need to balance the equation of assets to students. While we recognize that current student enrollment may decrease (or

increase) substantially in the future, the evaluation of market trends of potential future enrollments was not within the scope of this project; rather, the objective was to outline key actions and shifts in resources required to ensure sustainability of the ELCA theological education model. It is not feasible to accurately predict the future enrollment in theological education due to uncertainty relative to church membership, congregational mergers or dissolutions, and other variables. Therefore, the calculations assume a baseline enrollment, with the assumption that any new students in addition to this baseline would result in new revenue which requires less "balancing" to occur (i.e., increases in enrollment through initiatives which address the leadership needs of the Church and which also provide new revenue sources would aid in "balancing.") What is outlined below is illustrative of what is feasible in terms of balancing resources to students within each of the models identified.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Paradigm Description	One seminary, many places, governed centrally with a single Board; authority located in one place in the system will determine all priorities. Schools have advisory boards for relating to synods and donors.	Separate parent corporation (e.g. Theological University) and separate subsidiaries. Parent retains overall financial oversight; and sets explicit expectations relative to fiscal health, balanced budgets, and level of assets. Approval of financial plans and endowment spending required from Parent Board. Parent invests in[11] and requires participation in targeted academic and administrative joint ventures. Also, ensures relevant programs to achieve ELCA educational mission. Parent delegates location related operations (e.g., facilities, direct student services) to multiple presidents[12] and boards. However if a school is deemed "failing" the parent assumes ownership of asset management. In general, healthy schools will be given more latitude and	Three to four central systems (i.e., one seminary, with many locations) based regionally, developed in alignment with mission growth needs and based on geographic coverage through a mix of full service campuses and satellites. It is assumed here and in all models that Churchwide expectations for the education of rostered leaders will continue in force.	Option 1: Joint venture approach through formal agreements for a finite time by individual project or by category (e.g., shared services, leadership development, academic program development, faculty sharing). Overall expectations for collaboration outcomes set globally, parameters for funding and accountabilities set by agreement. No geographic limitations. Option 2: Model of a research center/experiment incubator to prioritize, initiate, and execute joint ventures. *Note: Column D was filled out with Option 1 in mind, but Option 2 should be considered as well.*	No change to the current arrangements.

[11] The nature or source of these investments is to be determined. Some of this funding could come, for example, from the savings gained from efficiencies in this model (e.g., shared services, reduced administrative positions).
[12] The reference to subsidiaries assumes the six non-embedded seminaries would participate in this model with the two embedded seminaries retaining separate governing authority, required to adhere to the required parameters for being an ELCA theological seminary (per ELCA bylaw 8.32.06), and participating in joint ventures as deemed appropriate.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
		struggling schools more oversight.			
Timeline	Estimated: three to five years. Model A would likely take the longest to implement, with savings estimated in the matrix not being fully realized until after this time period. Selecting this model as the end goal does not preclude other short-term measures to ensure fiscal sustainability, as not all the seminaries have three to five years to wait.	Estimated: three to four years. Model B would likely require slightly less time than model A as the seminaries would not have to join as many operations centrally. The savings estimated in the matrix would not be fully realized until after this time period. Selecting this model as the end goal does not preclude other short-term measures to ensure fiscal sustainability, as not all the seminaries have three to four years to wait.	Estimated: two to four years. Selecting this model as the end goal does not preclude other short-term measures to ensure fiscal sustainability, as not all the seminaries have up to four years of financial solvency. Formation of a regional system would take less time than Model A and Model B as it involves fewer institutions. It may take more time to fully realize the estimated savings represented in this matrix.	Estimated: less than one to two years. Some joint ventures would be easier to implement than others (e.g., shared IT provider versus shared faculty joint venture; joint experimentation could take some considerable time for the total experiment to be finalized, but initial changes could occur once the design is determined).	No change to the current arrangements.
Governance					
Governance Scope	Completely centralized fiduciary and mission responsibility including budgets, programs, and administration. Embedded would not see any changes relative to their primary governing authority but would participate in this	Parent has fiduciary and mission authority, but execution is delegated to subsidiaries with the exception of those things that are deemed required joint ventures (e.g., national faculty, strategic planning, DL platform, certain areas of institutional support). Embedded would not see any changes relative to their primary governing authority but would	Primary fiduciary and mission responsibility delegated to the regions with general parameters and performance criteria dictated by the regional body. Shared services can be within and outside ELCA entities within the region with first consideration given for cross-ELCA collaboration.	Fiduciary and mission responsibility based on agreements with some oversight for expected outcomes (i.e., rules of engagement) from churchwide for any church related funding. Governing input can be equal or based on contributing equity.	Purview of each institution's Board. TEAC, synods, other boards, and agencies have the opportunity to make suggestions.

	A. Central System	B. Limited Central System	C. Regional Systems	D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures	E. Informal Model – Current State
Models					
Variables:					
	governance model.	participate in this governance model.	Embedded would not participate in this governance model but would be able to participate in joint ventures offered within their region.		
Governance					
Composition of Governing Body or Bodies [13]	One centralized governing board for non-embedded schools. Trustee composition either self-perpetuating or partially or wholly comprised of representatives (e.g., former Board members, synods, congregations).	For the subsidiaries there would be two levels of oversight: 1) Parent board - either self-perpetuating or one comprised wholly or partially of representatives including those directly aligned to the Church council and representative of the subsidiary; and 2) Subsidiary boards determined by the schools according to their needs and relationships.	Single governing board for each region with membership which may include representatives of regional judicatories (e.g., synods, areas), donors, and/or current Boards.	Joint ventures would have advisory or formal partnership corporation boards. Seminary governing boards would be nominated and elected as at present.	No change from current.

[13] Some observers assert that the strongest boards are self-perpetuating, i.e., determining their own membership within broad guidelines, such as "A majority of trustees shall be members of the ELCA." In the best of circumstances such boards populate themselves with motivated individuals able to contribute substantial work, wealth, and wisdom. This kind of board can be effective in raising funds. On the downside, this kind of board can become ingrown and insular.

Another approach is to delegate the nomination of trustees to ecclesial bodies, thereby assuring "representation" and a higher degree of ecclesial control. Under this approach "representatives" could include persons nominated by the theological schools to the central board, a specified number of bishops, or other ecclesial leaders, and persons representing particular constituencies. This approach to trusteeship is often seen when seminary boards are primarily concerned with the educational content and formation process. The approach is weaker when fundraising is a significant responsibility.

Typically theological schools have a mix of designated and at-large appointments.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Governance					
Executive Leadership or Role of the President	The CEO appointed by the central board would monitor, counsel, and when necessary direct seminary COOs. Oversight of system-wide strategic planning and allocation of resources. *Seminary CEOs in embedded schools would be appointed by their universities.*	Central CEO (e.g., Chancellor) appointed by the central board would monitor, counsel, and when necessary direct seminary CEOs (e.g., Presidents). Subsidiary CEOs would be elected or terminated by the Parent board. It would likely do so in consultation with the subsidiary board. *Seminary CEOs in embedded schools would be appointed by their universities.*	The regional boards would each elect or terminate their CEO. Duties would not be unlike those of current CEOs. Each location may have an Academic dean and/or COO or Manager of Operations. *Seminary CEOs in embedded schools would be appointed by their universities.*	No change from current.	No change from current.
Governance Considerations	Minimal complications; clear authority over all schools.	The degree of delegation and self-determination of the subsidiaries is challenging, requiring careful delineation.	Governance would be at the regional level for mission priorities and fiduciary matters. Execution of the mission would also be the responsibility of the regional entity in collaboration with other entities.	Any collaborative venture would only include those seminaries willing to participate.	Minimal complications; clearly distributed authority.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
	Governance				
	In all models the ELCA will continue to exercise significant influence through standards for ordination and education of rostered leaders, as it does currently.				
ELCA Exercises Significant Influence Through:	Churchwide will continue to determine standards for education of rostered leaders. Transparency by the central board will foster accountability to the wider church. Agencies and assemblies will continue to make requests and suggestions to the board and thus to the seminaries. ELCA funds may be prioritized and potentially redirected from other initiatives based on theological needs and potential impact on mission. Would continue to oversee Board nominating process and	Parent organization would define expectations of outcomes related to ELCA standards for ordination, education of rostered leaders, board criteria, etc. For healthy schools, implementation of this would be largely up to each individual site (*what* is defined by parent, *how* is determined by subsidiary).	Regions would have increased accountability for governance, mission direction, leadership formation priorities, etc.	Potential funding of joint ventures could occur through churchwide annual "joint venture" allocation, coordinated donor "ask," and individual contributions from participants. ELCA bodies may suggest projects for collaborative work.	No change to current.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
	criteria for Board membership[14]. Would see more implicit connections and partnerships with other ELCA entities.				
	Governance				
Metrics/ Accountabilities	Transparency to the ELCA on finances, educational program statistics, student debt levels. Each location has accountability to central governing body in the above areas.	Financial, educational, and student debt performance metrics as determined and monitored by parent, and are the responsibility of the subsidiary to meet.	Financial, educational, and student debt performance metrics as determined and monitored by regional governance body.	Milestones and other metrics pertaining to joint ventures would be monitored by the funding source and advisory or corporate board, and reported back to participants, as well as others, to communicate results and encourage adoption of best practices.	Current reporting and transparency. Loyal accountability to the ELCA; legal accountability to each school's board and the state of incorporation.

[14] Please note: this currently exists to some extent and could exist in some of these models but would need to be adjusted depending on the model.

	Models				
Variables:	A. Central System	B. Limited Central System	C. Regional Systems	D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures	E. Informal Model – Current State
Governance					
Number and Location Decisions, including Possible Mergers.	The Board decides number and location, and may merge some or all full service campuses.	Parent board assesses the sustainability of each subsidiary; failing schools are asked to merge, embed, or transform mission and resources into something that furthers the mission of the Church and is more fiscally sustainable.	This would be challenging, as existing seminaries would have to agree on the new assignment of regional responsibilities. This could imply that some schools would have to consider relocation.	Each school's board determines its location(s). These could change by voluntary mergers or other partnerships based on results of joint ventures. The number of the schools could increase if new schools are founded.	Each school's board determines its location(s). These could change by voluntary mergers or other partnerships. The number of the schools could increase if new schools are founded.
Funding Model[15]	Centrally managed funds sourced through national and synod funding; individual and foundation philanthropy; endowment; tuition. Campus consolidation converts physical assets to invested financial assets.	Funding for parent from national funds, foundations, and allocations for centralized services. Seminary operations funded through synods and as current through donors and gifts, endowment and tuition. Budget allocations and monitoring by parent.	Funding for regional oversight comes from national level, the synod, and/or reallocated resources from current model. Decisions regarding funding would be at the regional rather than school level.	Funding for joint venture investments largely through centrally coordinated donors or shared churchwide funds, if available. Shared service funding and cost allocation managed through formal agreements between participating entities.	National and synod funding; individual and foundation philanthropy; endowment; tuition.

[15] All models assume that potential reallocated resources or cost savings will be available to fund one time and/or recurring budgetary costs. Caution should be used in implementation planning, as fiscal impacts may not be realized immediately and may require investments initially. Additionally, the level of effort expended by administrators in moving to consolidated or shared operations should be factored into resource planning as well.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Governance					
Endowments and Funds Functioning as Endowments	Managed by the central board.	Managed by the parent board.	Managed by the regional boards.	Managed by each seminary or parent university.	Managed by each seminary or parent university.
Embedded Schools	**Embedded schools participate but are not governed by the system.** Have presence (voice but no vote) on the board on matters relevant to their work. Opportunities for collaboration are extended to embedded schools. They are governed by their parent university's board	Same as Model A.	**Embedded schools voluntarily participate in regional collaborations.** They are governed by their parent university's board.	**Embedded schools voluntarily participate in collaborative ventures and could take ownership of joint ventures.** They are governed by their parent university's board.	No change – governed by their University's Board.
Relationships					
Connection to ELCA Colleges and Universities	More formal approach to link college/ university resources to system needs. Arrangements made by system with individual colleges/universities as needed and appropriate.	Arrangements made with colleges/universities as needed and appropriate with the parent being accountable to raise opportunities for collaboration as appropriate.	Highly desirable within the region and directed by regional CEO's and boards.	College and university resources should be availed for some studies, projects, and joint ventures.	Arrangements made with individual colleges/universities as needed and appropriate.

			Models		
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Relationships					
Relationship to Synods	Synod influence on governance weakened.	Synod representation on boards maintained.	Very close relationships.	Heightened involvement of synods (and congregations) in shaping some collaborative ventures.	As at present.
Joint Ventures[16]	The central board could undertake joint ventures with organizations inside and outside the ELCA.	Joint ventures developed by subsidiaries would have to be carefully monitored by the parent board so that they achieve the mission and meet financial goals.	The regional boards could undertake joint ventures with organizations inside and outside the ELCA.	Each seminary is free to undertake joint ventures with the approval of its governing board.	Each seminary is free to undertake joint ventures with the approval of its governing board.

[16] Joint ventures are undertakings of two or more organizations for the accomplishment of a specific purpose, often time-limited and narrowly defined. Legally they may be one of three types: 1) a contractual relationship between the sponsors, 2) a partnership, joint powers authority or Limited Liability Company, or 3) a corporation with its own board that may be wholly owned entirely or in part by the sponsors. The corporate joint venture is usually intended to continue indefinitely. The joint venture agreements have to be carefully drawn so that responsibilities, costs, goals, and accountabilities are clear. Jane Arsenault, Forging Nonprofit Alliances, Jossey-Bass, 1998.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Student Impact					
Student Educational Debt	Increased financial assets and consolidated cost savings can reduce net costs to students. Metrics for debt levels will be set and monitored relative to distribution of scholarship funds. Robust DL for academic and internship purposes can reduce debt for those keeping full time employment.	Coordination on best practices strongly urged by parent. Metrics developed for student debt for use in parent monitoring use of scholarship funds. Parent can set timetables for change. Robust DL for academic and internship purposes can reduce debt for those keeping full time employment.	Insofar as regionalization generates greater involvement and donations, net costs to students may decrease.	Envision the joint board or advisory body will serve to ensure movement on recommendations of existing studies (e.g., Lilly Endowment Grant) related to student educational debt; further necessary study on this or other issues may be pursued by a coalition of institutions as a joint study. Robust DL for academic and internship purposes can reduce debt for those students with full time employment.	Individual schools may address this issue as they wish.
Recruitment of Students, Encouragement of Vocations	Consolidated recruitment, and therefore greater deployment of staff to different populations such as camps, Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM); no competition, therefore longer-range developmental strategy could emerge.	Schools recruit individually, as at present in their cooperative but competitive mode. More extensive recruitment (YAGMs, etc.) would need to be organized and funded.	The visibility of the school would be much higher in the region.	A joint venture on encouraging vocations may be considered.	Schools recruit individually, in their cooperative but competitive mode. More extensive recruitment (e.g., YAGMs) would need to be organized and funded.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Program Emphasis and Delivery					
Academic Program Development	Programs at any or all locations may be initiated, ended, or combined at the discretion of the board. Possibilities include a single PhD program, a single DL platform, or the creation of national centers of excellence.	Consolidation, cooperation, and coordination strongly urged by parent. Parent can set timetables for change.	Developed by the seminaries with the needs of the region foremost in mind.	May be developed by a coalition of institutions as a joint venture.	Programs are largely developed by individual schools, with inter-institutional communication through the deans and other means.
Lay and Rostered Continuing Education	Operating resources may be reallocated to lay and continuing education due to consolidation savings and increased endowment. DL platform to increase accessibility may be developed for laity and rostered leaders.	Consolidation, cooperation, and coordination strongly urged by parent. Parent can suggest parameters and timetables for change. DL may be developed for laity and rostered leaders. Reallocated resources may be prioritized toward these efforts.	If a priority, programs may be developed by the seminaries with the needs of the region foremost in mind.	May be developed by a coalition of institutions as a joint venture.	Programs are largely developed by individual schools, with inter-institutional communication through the deans and other means.
Distributed Learning	Highly robust program needed to make up for lost regional presence.	Coordination strongly urged by parent. Parent can set timetables for change.	Developed by the seminaries with the needs of the region foremost in mind.	May be pursued by a coalition of institutions as a joint venture, or by individual schools.	Levels of investment in DL vary by school.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Scholarly Research and Production	Sharply reduced due to diminished faculty.	May be reduced as faculty sharing grows.	No change anticipated.	Increased as joint research and projects would be encouraged.	As at present.
Public Relations (PR)					
Philanthropic Impact	Some potential loss of donors whose affiliated school is merged; long-term upside potential due to improved quality and institutional reliability which could attract more donors.	Current arrangements and relationships with donors maintained (this a major reason for retaining presidents and boards).	Individual donor arrangements and relationships would be within the region. Judicatory funding and decisions regarding allocations would be made by those entities.	Positive impact on some (e.g., donors seeking more collaboration and impact, such as Lilly Endowment initiatives). Negative impacts minimized due to entities retaining their identities.	There is some probability that ELCA funding will remain flat or decline. Skill in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting individual donors will be valuable.
Public Reaction	Applause for efficiency; objections by alums and regions to the "closing" (i.e., merger) of schools.	Criticism for adding another hierarchical and bureaucratic layer. Applause for creating more of a system.	Likely mixed. Applause for trying to be regionally responsive. Concern about any disruption and cost.	Likely positive, depending on the nature of the collaboration.	None, as there is no change. Potential for continued frustration with number of seminaries.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Resources					
Shared Faculty	Required, so may be more efficiently deployed. Tenure approach addressed globally[17]. Consolidation savings. Greater flexibility in hiring faculty with specializations to support the mission of the Church.	Strongly urged by parent in the broadest sense; may be required for core courses where specialization supply is not in alignment with demand.	Faculty sharing agreements could occur on a regional level whether for one-time sharing, shared hiring of faculty, distance learning models, or others.	Could be a requirement of participation in a joint venture; and will happen, as at present, on an ad hoc basis, or by arrangements between institutions.	Will happen, as at present, on an ad hoc basis, or by arrangements between institutions.
Educational Research and Innovation	Operating resources may be reallocated to research and innovation due to consolidation savings and increased endowment. Research may include new models of educating clergy; new models used in other fields; pilot programs.	Cooperation and coordination strongly urged by parent. Parent can set timetables for change.	Developed by the seminaries with the needs of the region foremost in mind.	May be pursued by a coalition of institutions as a joint venture, or by individual schools.	Innovation and change in programs and curricula are largely developed by individual schools. Inter-institutional communication through the deans and other means.

[17] Tenure issue will need to be addressed relative to reallocation of faculty between courses and schools; and what if any layoff parameters are appropriate due to fiscal exigency.

Models					
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
Resources					
Shared Institutional Staff and Costs	Resources may be more efficiently deployed and a more strategic approach taken to use of assets both geographically as well as programmatically. Potential consolidation savings.	Consolidation, cooperation, and coordination strongly urged by parent. Parent can set timetables for change. Potential for additional cost due to increased hierarchy if not carefully designed.	Regional oversight design would need to consider how to not increase costs. Opportunity to share with churches or judicatories in the region.	May be pursued by a coalition of institutions as a joint venture.	Very little at present.
Financial Authority and Exit Strategy					
Capital Acquisition, Disposition, and Financing Authority	All assets, liabilities and net assets would transfer to the central board, which would be responsible for the acquisition or disposition of any significant physical assets. It may designate the proceeds from disposition to purposes furthering the mission. Capital fundraising for particular campuses would be in cooperation with the campus' advisory	The parent board would combine endowments and manage investments and provide spending guidelines. Capital fundraising would be in cooperation with the subsidiaries' boards. The parent board would approve subsidiaries' financing plans and work to ensure fiscal health and subsidiary boards would maintain fiduciary responsibility. The subsidiary board would manage the physical assets in trust. The parent board would approve system-wide strategic planning. In pursuit of the plan,	Regional boards would be responsible for the acquisition or disposition of any significant physical assets. They may designate the proceeds from disposition to purposes furthering the mission. Capital fundraising for the region would be in cooperation with the campuses in the region. The regional boards will have the right to borrow and pledge assets as collateral.	Individual seminary boards would be responsible for the acquisition or disposition of any significant physical assets. They have the right to borrow and pledge assets as collateral. They have the privilege of raising capital funds. Financing of joint venture capital assets would have to be thoroughly delineated and agreed by the sponsors.	The individual seminary boards are responsible for the acquisition or disposition of any significant physical assets. They have the right to borrow and pledge assets as collateral. They have the privilege of raising capital funds.

	Models				
Variables:	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. Informal Model – Current State**
	board. The central board will have the right to borrow and pledge assets as collateral.	it would approve the subsidiaries' acquisition or disposition of any significant physical assets. For failing schools, all assets, liabilities and assets would transfer to the parent board.			
Financial Authority and Exit Strategy					
Exit Strategy, or Reversion to the Current Status Quo	Seminaries have to opt in, but can opt out before final merger negotiations are complete and documents executed. After legal merger they cannot opt out, although the central board can spin them off (i.e., no longer take responsibility for them, for example, by giving the seminary its assets and let the seminary be free standing or align the seminary with a university or other partner) if warranted.	Seminaries have to opt in, but can opt out before final merger negotiations are complete and documents executed. After legal merger they cannot opt out, although the parent board can spin them off if warranted (see Model A for further explanation).	Seminaries have to opt in, but can opt out before final merger negotiations are complete and documents executed. After legal merger they cannot opt out, although the regional board can spin them off if warranted.	Seminaries participating in joint ventures are generally obligated to meet their responsibilities as contracted, as a partner, and as an owner in the joint venture. Special arrangements would be required for an early exit.	Status quo continues.

Estimated Mission Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Regarding the TEAC Agenda (see Appendix B)					
More Far Reaching	Maybe, if saved resources are reallocated toward mission needs and/or locations through satellites and distributed learning (DL).	Maybe, if saved resources are reallocated toward mission needs and/or locations through satellites and DL, and if the parent and subsidiaries agree.	May vary with the amount of available resources and associated revenue of the new ventures.	May vary with the amount of available resources and associated revenue of the new ventures.	Status quo (e.g., each seminary determines initiatives to accomplish greater reach).
More Connected and Flexible	Yes, shared resources and increased flexibility in aligning expertise and programs with needs and use of ELCA-wide assets. No, large entity reduces nimble decision-making.	Yes, shared resources increase flexibility in aligning expertise and programs with needs and use of ELCA-wide assets. No, shared authority reduces nimble decision-making.	Yes, on a smaller scale within the region. Deeper relationships may be possible given focused strategy.	Connectivity should improve in a way appropriate to the collaborative venture under consideration.	Status quo (e.g., each seminary determines initiatives to accomplish).

Estimated Mission Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Regarding the TEAC Agenda (see Appendix B)					
More Sustainable	Yes, ability to share specializations in leadership formation allows entity to have expertise to address changing market needs. Yes, economies of scale improve fiscal sustainability picture. Yes, student debt metrics can drive use of scholarship more effectively toward highest priorities. Yes, can consolidate schools when necessary.	Yes, ability to share specializations in leadership formation allows entity to have expertise to address changing market needs. Yes, economies of scale improve fiscal sustainability picture. Yes, student debt metrics can drive use of scholarship more effectively toward highest priorities. Yes, can consolidate schools when necessary. Poor performance by subsidiaries may negatively impact the ability to reach sustainability.	May depend on the strength of support from donors and judicatories within the regions.	To the extent that collaboration leads to new revenue or to consolidation sustainability is strengthened.	Status quo. The sustainability of each seminary continues as at present.
Realignment of Resources to Emerging Population	System-wide resources (i.e., all ELCA assets) relevant to emerging populations may be readily identified. If a priority, resources may be allocated and decisions about number and locations directly aligned.	Resources relevant to emerging populations may be readily identified. If a priority, a timetable for development may be set.	Insofar as these are regional concerns, resources may be reallocated.	This could be an occasion for a collaborative project. Realignment of resources requires a realignment of priorities.	This would depend on the mission priorities of the individual institutions.

Estimated Mission Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Regarding the TEAC Agenda (see Appendix B)					
Revenue Impact[18]	Donor Impact: $2.9M Rental Income: $4.1M (Annual) Sale of Assets: $25.4M (One time)	Donor Impact: $3.1M Rental Income: $3M (Annual) Sale of Assets: $19M (One time)	Donor Impact: $2M Rental Income: $2.3M (Annual) Sale of Assets: $16.9M (One time)	Donor Impact: Dependent upon joint venture Rental Income: Dependent upon joint venture Sale of Assets: N/A	Donor Impact: N/A Rental Income: $4.6M (Annual) Sale of Assets: $33.7M (One time)

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Expenditure Impact[19]	**Estimated impact (savings / reallocation) on annual operating expenditures: $8.2M** One-time expenditure impact variables:	**Estimated impact (savings / reallocation) on annual operating expenditures: $4.9M** One-time expenditure impact variables: > DL platform	**Estimated impact (savings / reallocation) on annual operating expenditures: $3M** One-time expenditure impact variables: > Regional DL platform	**Estimated impact (savings / reallocation) on annual operating expenditures: $TBD (see example joint ventures)** One-time expenditure impact variables: Development of experiment incubator oversight	**Estimated impact (savings / reallocation) on annual operating expenditures: Dependent upon seminary**

[18] Precise estimates of the revenue impact cannot be accurately made at this point. Such estimates would depend on the number of seminaries opting into a consolidation (Model A, B, or C) and the receipts from any property sales. Effects on donations – whether up or down - are speculative.

[19] Transitioning to a new model carries costs which are difficult to estimate at this point. Costs will depend on the seminaries opting into the model, the assets, and operational strength they bring, geography, and other factors.

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	> DL platform > Faculty training for DL platform > Startup costs of implementing a system model > Staff training related to system-wide operations > Potential costs for reduction of tenured faculty > Recruiting costs for new staff positions	> Faculty training for DL platform > Startup costs of implementing a system model > Staff training related to system-wide operations > Potential costs for reduction of tenured faculty > Recruiting costs for new staff positions	> Faculty training for DL platform > Startup costs of collaborating regionally > Staff training related to regional based operations (e.g., finance, facilities) > Recruiting costs for new staff positions	framework	One-time expenditure impact variables: N/A

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Faculty Expenditures[20]	Estimated savings: $4.4M of available resources to reallocate or reduce.	Estimated savings: $1.9M of available resources to reallocate or reduce. Estimated	Estimated savings: $1.5M of available resources to reallocate or reduce. Estimated	For illustrative purposes, assume three seminaries collaborate on a rural ministry pilot project; each does not fill two faculty positions that have	Faculty sharing will continue on an ad hoc basis. While the savings could be similar to

[20] Note that these figures represent estimated eventual savings or resources for reallocation. A majority of the ELCA seminaries' faculty is tenured; therefore, changes above would be made gradually as retirements occur and as the tenure system is addressed as a whole. If buyouts of tenured faculty were done, these would be one-time initial costs that could decrease the savings listed above. Also note that as it relates to reallocation of faculty, due to recent curriculum reviews by several seminaries courses are not all interchangeable. To ensure the seminaries have interchangeable courses would require an investment of time and formal agreements related to these courses (e.g., common requirements and/or interchangeable courses).

	Illustrative Fiscal Impact				
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	Estimated reduction/reallocation in faculty FTE: 50 Assumptions: > Required sharing of faculty through distance learning and other models > Maximum utilization of faculty (i.e., all hired faculty will match specialization needs of students, new tenure approach, use of adjuncts) > Minimum student FTE per course (i.e., introductory and non-introductory) of fifteen students > Average faculty total compensation of $88,000	reduction/reallocation in faculty FTE: 22 faculty Assumptions: > Formal sharing of faculty in introductory, non-independent study courses through distance learning and other models across the system > A minimum class size of 20 students; this is reflective of economies of scale gained through a coordinated approach to faculty hiring and sharing for introductory courses across six seminaries > Impact could be greater if minimum course size for non-introductory courses is also assumed > Average faculty total compensation of $88,000	reduction/reallocation in faculty FTE: 17 faculty Assumptions: > Formal sharing of faculty in introductory, non-independent study courses through distance learning and other models within and across regions > A minimum class size of 15 students; the smaller class size as compared to Model B is reflective of lesser economies of scale gained when the coordination of faculty is done on a regional, versus system-wide, level > Impact could be greater if minimum course size for non-introductory courses is assumed > Average faculty total compensation of $88,000	recently retired but instead collectively hire two faculty in this specialty (a net loss of four faculty) for the pilot project. Estimated potential savings: $352,000 and potential to increase. Assumptions: > Formal agreements to share faculty for specific initiatives and joint ventures > Phasing out of the tenure process to allow the hiring of faculty for specific areas deemed important for the formation of leaders following the Church's vision	Model D, partnerships are likely to be much slower and would not be as targeted towards pilot projects with the potential funding available in Model D for such ventures.
Faculty Expenditures (cont.)	Considerations: Reducing the number of courses offered each year will result in balance of faculty to students, and therefore	Considerations: The above figures assume a minimum class size only for introductory courses as we recognize that some autonomy at the site level may not allow	Considerations: The above figures assume a minimum class size only for introductory courses as we recognize that the collaboration focused on a	Considerations: Such a joint venture enables joint collaboration for new projects without the risk of one seminary alone hiring three faculties in an experimental	

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	may impact the variety of courses offered. However, we assume that a new central approach to tenure and the use of non-tenured faculty could actually accommodate more variety (e.g., instead of one tenured faculty member teaching five courses per year in one specialty, several non-tenured faculty could be hired to teach five course in different specialties) in both type of course and possibly students served.	the same level of control over more niche courses that may be non-introductory.	regional level may not allow for the same cross-seminary sharing as Model A.	project area.	

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Overhead / Institutional Support Expenditures	Estimated savings: $3.4M Assume only 1 FTE in central system for the following positions:	Estimated savings: $2.7M Assume only 1 FTE in a limited central system for the following positions:	Estimated savings: $1.5M Assume 1 FTE in each of the three regional systems for the following positions (i.e., a total of three of each of the	Joint ventures open up the possibility of one or more seminaries partnering for shared services in any of these areas. For example, if two seminaries who currently have	Some sharing exists, primarily with local partners.

Illustrative Fiscal Impact				
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	> President > VP of Admissions > VP of Advancement > VP Finance > Registrar > Director of Communications/Marketing > Library Director > Director of IT > Director of Operations Assume 1 FTE in central system at each seminary location for the following positions (i.e., six total FTE for each): > Director of Admissions > Controller/Business Office Coordinator > IT Coordinator > Facilities supervisor > Head librarian Assume that current additional office support staff will remain the same.	> VP of Admissions > VP of Advancement > VP Finance > Registrar > Director of Communications/Marketing > Director Library > Director of IT > Director of Operations Assume 1 FTE in limited central system at each location (e.g., six positions): > Director of Admissions > Controller/Business Office Coordinator > IT Coordinator > Facilities supervisor > Head librarian Assume that current additional office support staff will remain the same.	following positions): > President > VP of Admission > VP of Advancement > VP of Finance and Operations > Registrar > Director of Communications/Marketing > Director Library > Director of IT Assume 1 FTE at each seminary of the following (i.e., six FTE total): > Director of Admissions > Controller/Business Office Coordinator > IT Coordinator > Facilities supervisor > Head librarian Assume that current additional office support staff will remain the same.	a Director of IT wanted to share a Director for oversight purposes while maintaining existing IT specialists at each site, this could save approximately $87,600.	

Illustrative Fiscal Impact				
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Physical Assets	The free standing seminaries currently have an estimated 23% of unused space. [21] The estimated potential impact of these could be: > Estimated rental income revenue $4.1M > Sale of physical assets $25.4M > Number of square feet available for redeployment for expanded or new mission use is 283,218	The free standing seminaries currently have an estimated 23% of unused space.[2] Assuming, for example, the sale, rental, or redeployment of 75% of unused physical assets the estimated potential impact of these could be: > Estimated rental income revenue (75%) $3M > Sale of physical assets (75%) 19M > Number of square feet available for redeployment for expanded or new mission use. (75%) 212,413 > Potential savings from decrease in plant and	All seminaries currently have an aggregate estimated 22% of unused space which equates to 322,953 square feet[2] at a value of $33,716,085. > Estimated rental income revenue (50%) $2.3M > Sale of physical assets (50%) 16.9M > Number of square feet available for redeployment for expanded or new mission use. (50%) 161,476 <u>Considerations:</u> Each seminary Board would	All seminaries currently have an aggregate estimated 22% of unused space which equates to 322,953 square feet valued at $33,716,085 (including the embedded schools). This excess capacity could be redeployed for any number of joint ventures.[22] For example, if two seminaries on the East Coast had a joint venture pilot project related to urban ministry they could collaborate with a more urban seminary to use unused space for this pilot.	The seminaries have an estimated 22% of their space unused, which equates to 322,953 square feet. The total value of these is $33,716,085.[2] Currently, there have been discussions of selling some buildings and renting out space though often rental income is not market value.

[21] Assumptions: Based on space utilization information provided by the six free standing seminaries, during core hours:
> 49% of the classroom space is unused
> 30% of housing capacity is unused
> 11% of "other" space is unused
> In aggregate, 23% of the total space is unused

[22] Assumptions: Based on space utilization information provided by all eight seminaries, during core hours:
> 47% of the classroom space is unused
> 27% of housing capacity is unused
> 13% of "other" space is unused
> In aggregate, 22% of the total space is unused

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Physical Assets (cont.)	> Potential savings from decrease in plant and operations staff: $437,000 Considerations: Plant and Maintenance Staffing Reduction Currently there are 44 Plant Operations and Maintenance FTE across the six free standing seminaries, including custodians, groundskeepers, housekeepers, and other operations staff. Their total benefits and salaries are $1.9M. Assuming a 23% reduction in these expenses to right-size unused space to current student FTE, this would result in $437,000 in savings.	operations staff: $327,750 Considerations: Each seminary Board would determine whether to sell, rent, or redeploy space. For example, if failing schools were asked to merge, embed, or change mission this could increase the use of space. Seminaries could also collaborate to share space as need with a priority for inter-ELCA entity use of physical assets (i.e., colleges, non-profits, congregations).	determine whether to sell, rent, or redeploy space. With a VP of Finance and Operations for each region, regions can collaborate strategically on the future of their seminary campuses and potential satellite campuses. Aside from selling physical assets regions can reimagine the use for those assets collaboratively through new initiatives to further the mission of the Church, which also may create new potential revenue streams for existing assets. Additionally, inter-ELCA regional partnership for capacity sharing may increase.		

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Eliminated Deferred Maintenance[13]	Estimated decrease in deferred maintenance: $6.5M to $18.9M.[23]	Estimated decrease in deferred maintenance: $0 to $18.9M (assuming the highest range).[24]	All eight seminaries face large amounts of deferred maintenance.[25]	All eight seminaries face large amounts of deferred maintenance.	All eight seminaries face large amounts of deferred maintenance.[5]
	The elimination of deferred maintenance will largely be the result of decrease in physical	Considerations: Because each entity will still have its own Board in Model B	Considerations: Decreases in deferred maintenance would result from	Considerations: Deferred maintenance would decrease as a result of the	Considerations: > Current estimates of deferred

[23] Assumptions:
> Deferred maintenance costs could be decreased by the sale of physical assets.
> The current average deferred maintenance per FTE on each free standing seminary campus ranges from $24,721 to $36,667 per enrolled student FTE compared to a peer average of $18,419.
> If the free standing seminaries were collectively to right-size their deferred maintenance to a level similar to other ATS seminaries this would require a decrease in deferred maintenance (and therefore, in a sense, physical assets) of between 25% and 50%.

[24] Assumptions:
> Deferred maintenance costs could be decreased by the sale of physical assets.
> The current average deferred maintenance per FTE on each free standing seminary campus ranges from $24,721 to $36,667 per enrolled student FTE compared to a peer average of $18,419.

[25] Assumptions:
> Deferred maintenance costs could be decreased by the sale of physical assets.
> The current average deferred maintenance per FTE on each free standing seminary campus ranges from $24,721 to $36,667 per enrolled student FTE compared to a peer average of $18,419.

[13] Prior to 1988, this was funded through a churchwide capital campaign. Independently seminaries appear to not have been successful in raising the necessary capital to cover deferred maintenance.

Illustrative Fiscal Impact					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Eliminated Deferred Maintenance (cont.)	assets.	it would be up to each Board and seminary whether buildings are sold to right size or rented out for other purposes. The central VP for Operations, however, could lead a strategic campus planning initiative to be implemented and approved at each seminary including the sale of buildings, renting of assets, and collaboration around the use of unused space for new initiatives.	the sale of physical assets as determined by regional boards. On a regional level, each VP for Operations, however, could lead a strategic campus planning initiative to be implemented and approved at each seminary including the sale of buildings, renting of assets, and collaboration around the use of unused space for new initiatives.	sale of physical assets. However, through joint ventures seminaries could use underutilized spaces for new mission-focused, revenue-generating activities.	maintenance range from $35.2M to $50.9M collectively across the eight seminaries. > Though some seminaries rent unused space often the rent is not enough to cover maintenance costs; the sale of some unused buildings could help to marginally decrease these figures.

Risk and Problem Areas					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Mergers	Full merger into one seminary is part of this model. A loss of autonomy by individual seminary boards and administrations occurs within this model.	The possibility of mergers may provoke concerns about possible loss of autonomy. Mergers suggested by the parent board will have difficult negotiations and implementation if any	Mergers are not necessarily implied by this model, depending on the way in which regions and institutions are set up. Alliances and mergers may be voluntary, and more likely if regional	Institutional independence is maintained in this model. Mergers and alliances are therefore among the options individual schools may pursue to achieve sustainability and	Institutional independence is maintained in this model. Mergers and alliances are therefore among the options individual

Risk and Problem Areas					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	Schools with strong finances are less likely to see the need to merge into this model. Boards may resist the move to eliminate local control and identity.	potential partner is unwilling	collaborations had engendered productive programs and inter-institutional trust.	programmatic vitality.	schools may pursue to achieve sustainability and programmatic vitality.
Seminary Curricula	A curriculum revision that would permit sharing of faculty and establishing minimum course sizes would be likely. Elective offerings could be broadened through video conferencing and other methods. Unique courses and disciplinary perspectives could be maintained. Particular values infused in courses at particular locations would be supported.	Subsidiary boards would be responsible for curricula within guidelines promulgated by the parent board. Those parent-board guidelines would include faculty sharing. Curricular revisions enabling equivalence of credits would have to be developed.	Curricula would be developed in the regions. Regions with multiple teaching locations would determine if inter-institutional sharing of faculty and common curricular ground are warranted.	Joint ventures on new topics and methods of teaching may be developed and implemented by participants. Sharing of curricular revisions and successes can be continued and emphasized.	Each seminary, within ELCA guidelines, develops and implements its curricula.
Community Identity	Each school has its own ethos and, in the residential schools especially, its own ways of forming student intellect, character, and vocational commitment.	A change to a parent-subsidiary governance model does not imply a significant change to the ethos, formation, and internal values of a seminary, unless merger and relocation is	Part of the identity of the seminary may change as regional relationships are developed. These may also imply the inclusion of new members of the community.	No apparent change to the seminary's identity.	No apparent change to the seminary's identity.

Risk and Problem Areas					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
	Merger and relocation may change these student experiences.	indicated.			
Cost/Investments	The negotiations and implementation involved in mergers is lengthy and costly in time and money. In the long run resources may or may not be both concentrated and found to expand the mission of theological education.	1. The negotiations and implementation involved in mergers is lengthy and costly in time and money. In the long run resources may be both concentrated and found to expand the mission of theological education. 2. Two levels of boards may be duplicative, sluggish, and susceptible to inter-board conflict. Feasible that significant effort could be expended without the intended results.	The negotiations and implementation involved in moving to this model many be lengthy and costly in time and money. Regional collaboration without introducing additional costs or hierarchy can be challenging. Structure would need to honor standards of the broader network, while considering priorities of the region.	Special funding for collaborative initiatives and joint ventures would have to be sought or found. The scale of some of these collaborations may be small, however.	No new costs to the seminaries are envisioned.
Financial risk	Risk of losing donors, especially alumni/ae of schools that are relocated and/or merged. The merger may not come off if schools opt out, and that, therefore, savings are not realized.	Risk of losing donors, especially alumni/ae of schools that are relocated and/or merged.	If all funding is regional, new disparities in synod funding may emerge between the regions. While closer ties to a region may generate better relationships and, consequently, funding, the achievability of this assumption is uncertain.	A stronger network and more collaboration may not have a significant impact on sustainability. Current trends show financial fragility in some schools, with a likelihood of further deterioration. Joint venture and collaborative arrangements could break down over funding/fiscal issues if there is not a clear commitment to the project and a funding structure which	Current trends show financial fragility in some schools, with a likelihood of further deterioration. If trends continue or are exacerbated, the accreditation and current mission of the school may reach a crisis.

Risk and Problem Areas					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
				aligns to the common good.	
Risks Relative to TEAC Outcomes of: **More Far Reaching,** **More Flexible & Connected** **More Sustainable**	A central approach to viewing and allocating resources should have the benefit of aligning resources in ways that allow for expansion of mission and geographic reach – the risk is in the ability to execute changes with a sense of urgency given size. A large, single system risks the inability to make decisions and move quickly; this may not be aligned with the goal of flexibility to react to market needs. Also, connectivity between initiatives and seminaries should be enhanced, yet connectivity at the local level may be compromised. The ability to gain economies, ensure common expectations around fiscal sustainability, and work	The ability to come together to eliminate duplicative resources, ensure availability of other resources, and reconfigure locations in a manner that is most mission driven and cost effective should have the benefit of enhancing presence and connectivity, while reducing costs. However, the ability to be flexible to seminary-based issues and to respond quickly to local needs may be negatively impacted by the need to go through a hierarchy or dual hierarchies to gain approvals or direction. Coming together to find a solution to the question of how to ensure quality leaders for the future of the Church may be enhanced through this model given that the best ideas from all can be considered; however, the level of bureaucracy in the ultimate framework could	The regional model offers benefits as it relates to being more flexible and far-reaching, yet most likely on a smaller more regional scale and with potentially disparate level of impact/result across the regions. Competition rather than collaboration may continue to exist between regions and ability to shift resources to emerging populations or geographies may be complicated. In terms of leadership sustainability, there are relevant and impactful concepts to build upon that can occur regionally, yet the impact of finding solutions and expending resources toward those solutions will continue to be duplicated in the regional model, and those regions that are not as strong fiscally may struggle to put efforts and resources toward the required experimentation.	Initiatives in which most or all of the seminaries come together for experimentation or joint venture will positively impact the ability to more strategically offer depth, type, and presence of program, and will also positively impact the connectively for the network. The risk is in that the option of voluntarily coming together may continue a mindset of "it is better for each of us to *go this alone*" rather than be hampered by group think or complex hierarchies. At the same time, another risk to this model is that given that resources are not required to be combined or offered, those who are apt to want to be collaborative may consistently incur expense and expended effort on behalf of those who do not participate. The funding/financing piece for this model is uncertain and could be unduly complicated.	While progress toward TEAC's goals may be feasible in the current model, it is unknown whether individual seminary efforts will have the impacts required especially as it relates to being more far reaching from a national perspective, being sustainable fiscally, and being flexible as it relates to faculty sharing.

	Risk and Problem Areas				
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Risks Relative to TEAC Outcomes of: **More Far Reaching,** **More Flexible & Connected** (cont.)	to strategically develop a framework for future church leader development will be a positive; the risk is not coming to consensus and having unduly bureaucratic approaches to achieving this. Poor investment markets and decisions are a further risk. And the ultimate risk is potential further sharp decline in applicants, which dependent on the level of decline no economies of scale or collaboration may be able to overcome.	harm progress to move forward if not carefully designed. Major risk inefficiencies created if there is destructive conflict between the parent and subsidiary boards. Poor investment markets and decisions are a further risk. And the ultimate risk is potential further sharp decline in applicants, which dependent on the level of decline no economies of scale or collaboration may be able to overcome.			

Regardless of which model is chosen, the following offer considerable opportunity and highest impact in leveraging the power of collaboration across the ELCA:

High Impact Leverage Points					
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Faculty Specialization	Faculty is hired with the specific mission and program needs in mind.	The central system coordinates the joint hiring of faculty across locations where common specializations are needed.	Hiring of faculty to meet regional needs is coordinated by the governing body in the region to make use of overlapping needs in specialization.	Partnerships to share faculty where there is interest in common specializations.	As faculty retirements occur, some seminaries share faculty ad hoc where they need specializations.
Mission Leadership Development	A strategic approach can be developed and executed centrally related to an overarching strategy for leadership development.	A shared vision for the leadership needs of the Church and how to meet those can be developed centrally, but the implementation and exaction of the approach would be done at each location.	Each region could dictate their focus on leadership formation and collaborate to achieve this.	Seminaries can partner to address the changing leadership needs of the Church; the experiment incubator could help to facilitate this creative thinking and partnership.	Each seminary has its own interpretation of leadership formation and is addressing this individually.
Experiment Incubator	Central experiment incubator/think tank model funded by whole system to collaborative and create new initiatives.	Central experiment incubator/think tank model funded collectively by seminaries; ideas are implemented by each location.	Central incubator would facilitate collaboration on both a regional level, and national level.	Incubator would be central to forging partnerships.	None exists; experimentation is largely done individually by seminaries.

	High Impact Leverage Points				
	A. Central System	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional System**	**D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures**	**E. The Current Model**
Shared Vocational Discernment /Leverage Point for all ELCA Programs[26]	One strategic approach to connecting with youth (e.g., YAGM, LVC, camp counselors)	One strategic vision for to connecting with youth (e.g., YAGM, LVC, camp counselors) executed by each seminary location.	One strategic approach to connecting with youth (e.g., YAGM, LVC, camp counselors) but executed regionally based on the needs of the region.	Emphasis on partnerships to creatively address connections with youth for vocational discernment process.	Individual seminary approach to connecting with youth; limited due to funding constraints and competition between seminaries.

[26] It is important to note that there is still work that needs to be done by the Church and seminaries in discovering how to connect to potential future leaders. There is no easy answer; this report does not assume that answers have already been reached.

VI.   Summary/Call to Action

This assessment by Baker Tilly is just one piece of a much broader discussion and effort necessary to ensure the ELCA has leaders that meet the needs of the Church of the future, maintains cultural relevance, and is part of a broader effort to ensure the sustainability of theological education from both mission and fiscal perspectives. Given the adaptive challenges[27] facing all churches in the United States (e.g., shrinking numbers of those aligning themselves with organized religion) and the significant decline and shift in the religious commitment and expectations of a changing demographic (e.g., younger, multi-cultural), it is critical that ELCA leadership – the collective leaders of the Church including synod leaders, churchwide administrators, lay leaders, and seminary CEOs and board members - challenge themselves to rethink the ways in which the Church connects to, and fulfills its mission within communities and prepares culturally-savvy leaders.

The keys to sustainability are directly linked to answering questions such as:

> How do we create relevant and compelling relationships with the Church and define "worship" in a way that more broadly fulfills the mission and meets individual member needs?
> What is required to develop long-term, meaningful relationships?
> How do we engage our members based on their needs and expectations?
> How do we best form leaders who can fulfill the Church's mission in ways that are sustainable, flexible, and nimble to meet changing expectations?
> How do we support our current congregational leaders (lay and rostered) through relevant and accessible continuing education from the best minds in congregational leadership and in mission and daily life?

The key to answering these questions is the authority to: innovate through new approaches; foster experiments and pilot programs; and learn from others through research and intentional sharing. As important is the latitude and fiscal ability to fail in order to determine the best answer. Unfortunately, the capacity to experiment is not feasible when resources are scarce or committed to the preservation of existing assets. Such is the case with the ELCA seminaries.

The current negative fiscal picture (i.e., structural operating deficits, considerable deferred maintenance, and capital renewal burdens, all of which exist for most seminaries) is the direct result of a 39 percent decrease in full time equivalent students since 2005, and legacy assets being committed neither in ways that are cost effective nor in alignment with changing market needs and strategic priorities. The continuation of this hampered financial situation will prevent the ELCA from having the resources required to adequately attend to mission sustainability in an innovative and forward looking manner. With every day that passes, ELCA funds are being expended that could be directed

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[27] The term "adaptive change" as discussed by Ronald A. Heifetz, Leadership Without Easy Answers, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1994.

toward more value added initiatives aimed at solving the problem of how to ensure the sustainability of ELCA theological education, and assist to solve the broader mission challenges of the Church.

There are currently gaps in meeting needs relative to candidacy, student scholarship funding, emerging populations, and geographic presence among other things. Unfortunately, these issues are not easy to solve, nor is there a considerable amount of time to make the required changes.

The collective ELCA has to decide how a more coordinated approach to developing church leaders will occur in order to render ELCA theological education truly sustainable in every aspect. It is possible that each seminary continuing to try to "right the financial ship" individually will have the required results; however, the most likely scenario is that short of a disruptive change (i.e., change that assures the effective balancing of resources and revenues to meet emerging and ever changing needs), many of the schools will survive in the short term based on non-recurring large donations, yet will not be financially solvent for the long-term. Those who say this model has survived past economic downturns and fiscal deficits must remember that the "X" factor this time is that labor costs are only going to continue to increase, while the availability of students for enrollment will continue to decline if a new approach is not taken. Based on this urgency, transformative change is necessary to realize results of those efforts before the seminaries are no longer financially viable.

Additionally, by working together to determine a more relevant and sustainable model of theological education, the funds "saved" can work beyond ensuring financial sustainability of seminaries to also release committed funds for investment in experiments and new approaches. By improving individual seminaries' fiscal positions and repurposing surplus funds toward innovation, it is also likely that the ELCA as a whole will be able to attract new donors or foundation investments.

In order to address the challenges outlined above, specific questions that TEAC must answer include:

1. What specific actions must be taken prior to the November Church meeting to ensure that transformation occurs in a manner that is timely? What is realistic to accomplish between now and then given other priorities and initiatives?

2. Given theological education's direct impact on achievement of the broader church mission, is it necessary for the ELCA to appoint an oversight body that continues to monitor all theological education functions and assumes a role as facilitator of collaboration? If so, how does that body's formation need to be reflected in the action steps?

3. To assure that any initiated taskforces and work groups are representative, yet not so large they become inefficient, what specific expectations relative to their formation and functioning need to be explicitly outlined?

4. How does TEAC work with the Church Council and individual seminary boards to ensure objective and realistic oversight of each seminary's fiscal situation and appropriate focus on mission-critical allocation of resources?

5. What role does the current ELCA governance structure (e.g., Church Council, Conference of Bishops) play relative to each of these action steps?

As such, we recommend that ELCA leadership demand an urgent and collaborative approach to identifying key changes and modifications required for the approach to, and fiscal priorities of, the ELCA Theological Education Model. Specifically, the following next steps for ELCA leadership are critical to reaching an impactful and sustainable future.

Required ELCA Leadership Action Steps

No.	Owner	Activity	Outcome	Timeline
1	**TEAC**	Invite discussion of Baker Tilly report by Seminary Board Chairs. Seek short-term action plan(s) from each seminary for moving forward in a fiscally sustainable manner.	Recommendation from Seminary Boards on short-term actions (12-18 months) to be taken by their institution to the November 2015 Church Council meeting.	Discussion by Seminary Boards: Late August – upon receipt of final Baker Tilly report Action Plan: Prior to November 2015 Church Council Meeting
2	**TEAC**	Identify readiness champions[28] to work through entire process and work proactively toward value-added and successful modifications.	Advisory group of champions to be the "voice of reality" throughout the transformation.	September
3	**TEAC/Seminary CEOs**	Outline key *impact points*[29] and *required outcomes* relative to mission impact and leadership formation – what needs to change?	Focused agreement of what needs to change – for presentation to Church Council.	August - September
4	**TEAC/Seminary CEOs**	For each *impact point* – research what others within and outside the ELCA are currently doing relative to this impact point with a	Prioritized listing of impact points.	September-October

[28] Readiness champions are individuals at all levels within the involved organizations that are serving as advocates for transformation, driving change locally, and facilitating a proactive, two-way dialogue that provides feedback to ELCA leaders about barriers which may impede effective change.

[29] *Impact points* are variables or conditions that must be present in order for the ELCA to fulfill its mission and ensure effective future church leadership. In other words, what will be most impactful to the future of the Church (e.g., innovation in worship and lay education, financial leadership, reaching emerging populations)?

No.	Owner	Activity	Outcome	Timeline
		focus on **required outcomes**.[30]		
5	**TEAC/Seminary CEOs**	Develop working groups (using an accelerated improvement process model[31]) to address each impact point with the specific expectation that priority focus areas will be defined.	Define specific initiatives or experiments to be funded and identify the priority sequencing of these experiments/ initiatives based on anticipated outcomes.	September-October
6	**TEAC/ Congregational Leaders/Synods and Seminary Academic Leaders**	Identify critical needs relative to lifelong learning for lay leaders and continuing education for rostered leaders.	Provide input to a working group focused on lay and continuing education as a means to broaden the value of ELCA membership through direct engagement in the "call" for more global and impactful "work of the Church."	September - October
7	**TEAC or New Oversight Body**	Identify potential introduction and/or reallocation of some funds (e.g., churchwide, grants, donor based) toward experiments or initiatives (**high impact projects[32]**).	Determine specific allocations and timeframe for each high impact project.	Post November 2015 Church Council meeting
8	**Seminary CEOs**	Research on joint sharing and reassignment of faculty toward high impact projects.	Report to Church Council on potential impact of realignments and requests for additional funding of staff for involvement in experiments.	September – October – for preliminary recommendations at November 2015 Church Council meeting
9	**TEAC/Seminary**	Develop an initial theological education	Accountability to move forward with	September – October – for

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[30] **Required outcomes** are the results that are being sought through addressing the impact points (e.g., increased membership, active membership, expanded global mission giving or involvement).
[31] **Accelerated process improvement** is a process used to identify and recommend potential transformative efforts or process changes in a concentrated and condensed timeframe (no more than ten to twelve weeks).
[32] **High impact projects** are defined as those experiments, initiatives, or pilots that have the potential for the most significant impact on required outcomes.

No.	Owner	Activity	Outcome	Timeline
	CEOs	transformation plan with key milestones and report outs to all stakeholder groups and plan to report to governance body.	impactful changes, programs, and approaches.	preliminary recommendations at November 2015 Church Council meeting
10	**ELCA Churchwide Staff and Seminary CFOs**	Identify mechanisms and reports to ensure transparency relative to finances, resource outlays, and educational outputs for Boards, Church Council, and Synods.	Ability of seminary and other Church leaders to objectively assess fiscal realities/needs, carryout fiscal governance responsibilities and set accountabilities, or reallocate resources, as needed.	Prior to Spring 2016 Church Council meeting
11	**Seminary Boards and ELCA**	Determine governance body structure and membership for these initiatives.	Accountability to move forward with impactful changes, programs and approaches.	Post November 2015 Church Council meeting
12	**ELCA Churchwide Organization Seminary CEOs**	Set framework/timeframe for experiments, results reporting, and ultimate recommendations relative to required changes.	Status and Final reports to Seminary Boards, Synods, and ELCA Churchwide relative to recommendations for model and approach change and required funding.	Prior to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly meeting

Two points of important clarification relative to the required action steps:

1. **The selection of impact points will be critical to ensure meaningful change** based on the findings and conclusions of this assessment. See the below summary of impact point themes for a comprehensive list of those articulated by constituents throughout this assessment.

Area	Description
Mission Impact	
Leadership Formation/Development	Collaboration on leadership formation from the perspective of honoring the "distinctives" of various campuses (e.g., urban ministry, financial leadership acumen, interfaith leadership), as

Area	Description
	well as a jointly identifying and implementing best approaches to preparing the Church leader of the future.
Experimentation Incubator – Emerging Populations	The ability to work and experiment jointly to identify the best ways to serve emerging populations and to ensure adequate and intentional presence geographically.
Experimentation Incubator – Shared Vocational Discernment	The ability to combine resources and thinking about the most effective and impactful approaches to identifying, mentoring and guiding those discerning vocation.
Faculty Specialization Sharing	Widespread agreement of the need to "rethink" how to ensure faculty specializations are optimized and available for <u>all</u> students.
Lay & Continuing Education Platforms and Offerings	Specific emphasis on the need to create education offerings in this area which are accessible, relevant, and impactful in guiding ELCA leaders of all types.
Multi-Vocational Program Development	Recognition that, in the context of the changing church, preparing leaders for a "call" relative to service may look very different in the future. How can nontraditional ways of serving the Church be highlighted and related programs or partners included in leadership formation?
Resource Impact	
Physical Assets/Location Sharing & Reconfiguration	Action relative to the overleveraged physical asset situation of entities involved in ELCA theological education. This warrants a considerable amount of action relative to balancing the costs with the revenue or mission impacts received. Across all campuses, either assets need to be reduced, or new mission and revenue impacts realized to maintain current assets.

Area	Description
Business Technology & Technology Related Academic Support (DL Platform, flexible cohorts)	Rapid adoption of advanced technology approaches to share academic and administrative resources, offering educational programming that is relevant and accessible, and encouraging more widespread sharing of effective practices will be critical to both fiscal and mission sustainability. Presence in new geographies through satellite or shared locations will rely on a reliable and consistently utilized DL platform.
Financial Oversight & Reporting	Transparency and accountabilities will be required to ensure that fiscal resources align with critical mission actions.
Fiscal Operations (e.g., student billing, reporting, accounting, accounts payable)	The ability to share expertise and reduce overall resources for non-mission based operations will be critical to addressing student debt, affordability, and fiscal sustainability issues.
Shared Vocational Branding, Recruitment and Admission Strategy and Supports	More effective "marketing" of the ELCA and mission-related vocations and engagement from all facets of "the Church."
Student Services Supports (Administration, Financial Aid, Admissions, Records, IT)	Interest in collaborating on certain aspects of student services and supports in a manner that reduces administrative duplication, yet honors the ability to attract and retain students from a "best fit" perspective.

2. Financial transparency and a strategic approach to assisting all involved in making effective decisions regarding allocation of resources towards the highest impact on mission are vital to achieving overall sustainability. This information is critical for both planning and accountability purposes. There are several options for enhancing current financial transparency efforts (e.g., the ELCA Comparative Financial Audit). Specific financial metrics which need additional focus to address the most critical fiscal sustainability issues include:

> Expenditures and revenues per student FTE
> Structural deficits
> Effective spending rates
> Student debt
> Physical assets – underutilized capacity, deferred maintenance
> Student/faculty and student/staff FTE ratios

See Appendix A for a more detailed explanation of what is required for enhanced transparency in theological education financial reporting.

The need for sustainability and the need to express in new ways the Church's educational outreach led to the analyses in this Baker Tilly report. As important as the completion of this final report may be, the iterative dialogue which occurred between church leaders throughout the assessment has been crucial. We continue to be impressed by the thoughtful conversations and continued passion toward fulfilling the Church's mission indefinitely exhibited by those involved in this project.

If ever there was a time which demanded broad altruism and unbiased assessment from, and reflection by, the ELCA – it is now. The potential lies in moving forward together and quickly.

Appendix A: Financial Transparency

It is critical that the ELCA seminaries have an ongoing mechanism for ensuring transparency across key financial and other metrics. Such transparency makes it easier to monitor the financial health of the seminaries on an ongoing basis, allows easier assessment for potential collaboration opportunities (e.g., shared IT resource and potential savings, shared faculty for a specific specialization), and allows comparisons with industry leading averages and benchmarks. The ability to quickly and accurately garner such information is critical to making effective decisions regarding allocation of resources towards the highest impact on mission.

Current inconsistencies in how each seminary accounts for, and allocates, revenues and expenditures make the comparison of ELCA seminary data challenging. The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) has guidelines for how higher education institutions should classify expenses (e.g., institutional support, auxiliary, student services); however, the seminaries are not consistently applying these standards. For example, the six free standing seminaries currently allocate the registrar's salary to one of three different expense categories: student services, academic support, or instructional support. This makes a comparison of FTE per student in each category, or salary expenditures per student in each category, inaccurate between the seminaries and challenges the ability to compare to industry leading practices inaccurate.

Below are some of the key metrics which we would recommend the seminaries consider moving forward and some of the current challenges in comparing and calculating this data.

Metric	Current Practice	Challenge	Potential Recommendation
Structural deficits	The seminaries are not consistent in whether they include one-time-only revenue transactions (e.g., sale of building or bequests).	The inclusion of one-time transactions or estimated bequests does not provide an accurate picture of a seminary's underlying financial sustainability. If seminaries include different things in the calculation of structural deficit this also makes those figures incomparable.	Seminary CFOs should determine clear guidelines for comparing structural deficits (i.e., what to include and exclude) and what else is important to consider relative to financial viability (e.g., bequests, deferred maintenance estimates).
Percentage draw on endowment	The seminaries use different formulae to determine their draws on endowment, including different draw rates. Seminaries may also	The seminaries' investment draw should be computed using the same formula across the eight seminaries in order to have comparative results. Moreover, the	Seminary CFOs should agree on clear guidelines for the calculation of percentage draw on endowment that is reflective of actual use of endowment for a given

Metric	Current Practice	Challenge	Potential Recommendation
	vary their spending rates year to year with emergency draws and other irregular withdrawals.	operating results should be measured against the common standard of a five percent draw.	fiscal year. For example, computing the draw rate as a percentage of financial assets which would exclude housing.
Student debt	The Director of Seminaries collects this data from each seminary.	The average debt levels of graduates in some cases are too high to be considered sustainable on first call compensation.	Continue to experiment with ways of structuring distributed learning, internships, and financial education for students. Consistently assess and take action relative to measures of excessive student debt.
Investment return	This data is not currently calculated in order to compare the seminaries.	A twofold challenge: first, showing the comparative total return on each school's investment portfolio before withdrawals. Second, noting and comparing the size and scale of additions and withdrawals from each portfolio over time.	This could be shown on a net basis – long term investments this year versus last year, including all additions, withdrawals, gains, and losses. This would show school trustees the long term growth or decline of their crucial financial assets.
Staff and faculty FTE	There are inconsistencies in how seminaries account for different faculty types (e.g., adjunct, full time) when calculating FTE. This is also true when faculty have different administrative positions within the seminary for which their workload is decreased (i.e., Dean, librarian, President).	Salaries and FTE are not consistently allocated because of differences in how seminaries count faculty FTE and account for faculty having administrative positions. This results in inaccurate metrics that use this data, for example, total faculty FTE per student FTE, and total faculty cost per student FTE.	The seminary CFOs and Deans should collaborate to determine how to account for faculty FTE (e.g., adjunct, full-time, faculty with part-time administrative positions) in a way that reflects the true resources being used in teaching and other academic areas.
Deferred maintenance	Each seminary has a different method for calculating deferred maintenance; some seminaries' estimates are based on formal campus assessments, while others include all	The differences in deferred maintenance estimates makes it challenging to understand what types of large maintenance expenditures are actually facing the seminaries in the short-term and the	The seminary CFOs should agree upon what should be included in deferred maintenance estimates. They should consider estimates in intervals of time to consider short versus

Metric	Current Practice	Challenge	Potential Recommendation
	large upcoming estimated maintenance projects.	long-term. For example, the deferred maintenance estimates the seminaries provided BT compared to those provided to ATS varied by 45% overall (i.e., a range of $35.2M to 50.9M).	long term needs.
Revenues and expenditures per student FTE	Revenues and expenditures are not consistently categorized using the NACUBO expense classification guidelines. Costs are also allocated differently depending on the seminary. For example: > Overhead: some seminaries allocate overhead to each department while others do not > Depreciation: some seminaries allocate depreciation by department, others do not > Technology: some seminaries keep this as one lump sum on the GL, some allocate the technology cost by department > Salaries: some seminaries allocate salaries by department, while others keep it as one lump sum on the GL	Because seminaries allocate costs very differently, it is challenging to compare the cost per student FTE by department (e.g., registrar, admissions). General expenses are not consistently classified following the NACUBO classification guidelines, so comparability of overall expense category costs per student is inaccurate	Seminary CFOs should determine how the allocation of costs and accounting of costs can be standardized among the seminaries to provide the most accurate picture of true costs so that expense comparisons can be easily made between the seminaries, and with industry leading practices.

The metrics listed above are not all included in a traditional financial audit and cannot be audited in the same way that financial statements are annually audited. However, similar to institutional data reporting, clear guidelines and definition for different metrics (e.g., deferred maintenance) will provide critical comparability of information. As part of any fiscal transparency effort the seminary Presidents and CFOs should determine the best way to display and share this information; for example, a colored dashboard could visually depict financial position, or a format similar to the TEAC ELCA Seminary

Scorecard could be used. Such a document should not be limited to traditional financial ratios but should also include both qualitative and quantitative information relative to the metrics listed above.

Below is an example of the TEAC ELCA Seminary Scorecard:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Theological Seminary Scorecard, 2014   **Seminary ~ Luther**
Source: Baker/Tilly Audited Financials

Financial Ratio	Definition	09	10	11	12	13	14*	Standard	Positive/ Negative/ Neutral Rating
No. 1 - Primary Reserve & Secondary Reserve Ratio	Primary Reserve ratio indicates the strength and flexibility of the seminary by indicating how long it could operate using its expendable reserves without relying on additional net assets generated by operations.	(.032)	.154	.505	(.029)	.048		A ratio of .40x or better is an advisable reserve to give seminaries the flexibility to transform the enterprise. This financial flexibility would provide the ability to cover 5 months of expenses without replenishment. *2013:* H – 2.029 M – 0.231 L – (.405)	*Negative,* slightly below average results 4 of 5 years. Four of five results are below industry standard.
	Secondary Reserve ratio provides an assessment of the significance of permanently restricted or nonexpendable net assets in relation to operating size.	2.925	3.20	3.15	2.63	3.07		The higher the value of this ratio, the more favorable the seminary's financial condition. Nonexpendable net assets should increase at a faster rate than operating size. *2013:* H – 4.898 M – 3.379 L – 2.480	*Neutral,* below average results 5 of 5 years.

Appendix B: Seminary Visit Observations

Examples of existing institutional initiatives to address financial and educational challenges (strengths):

1. The presence within individual seminaries and in limited cases between seminaries of broad and intentional experimentation with program emphasis areas that align with the needs articulated in candidacy, of local congregations, and in meeting overall theological education demands (e.g., sequencing of internships and use of distributed learning [DL] decreases student debt and increases time spent in context – to define the most effective model or approach). All seminaries have redesigned their curriculum in an attempt to meet: the needs and changing expectations of church leaders (e.g., to form leaders taking into account culture and context), the shift in types of students (e.g., non-traditional students, rural leaders), and the call to reduce student debt.

2. Advancement and capital campaign planning is intentionally being positioned to address structural deficits, deferred maintenance challenges and plans are in place in many cases to monetize or exploit campus physical assets. In a few cases, advancement is focused on growth initiatives but this is not present across all seminaries given their fiscal position.

3. The presence of expanded partnerships with other institutions (e.g., embedding with Lutheran Universities, sharing academic programs and administrative services with locally situated liberal arts colleges or other seminaries, aligning continuing education programming with not for profit or other seminaries in the geographic location).

4. Limited sharing of faculty from the individual school perspective to address temporary absences or specialized skill set needs. Seminaries are thinking more strategically about faculty specializations and as faculty retire, are hiring strategically to meet the demand for certain specializations.

5. Collectively, seminaries are addressing physical asset misalignment (e.g., gap in assets to level of need for physical space) by repurposing the space, renting it to other entities, or developing programs that would increase the utilization of the space. The level of assets owned, however, far exceeds the level needed or recommended and the current solutions do not entirely close the gap
   a. Not all of these initiatives are recouping the total cost of maintaining these assets.
   b. Limited cost/benefit analysis in terms of market value versus ongoing maintenance liability.
   c. In many cases space is rented to nonprofits that do not have the ability to pay but do have programs aligned with community based ministries (mission).

Appendix C: Budget Surplus/Deficit Detail

Seminary	Projected Surplus/Deficit FY 2015 (including depreciation)	Projected Surplus/Deficit FY 2015 (excluding depreciation)
Chicago	($238,000)	$458,000
Gettysburg	($90,270)	$334,731
Luther	($1,400,000)	($118,000)
Pacific	($250,000)	($125,000)
Philadelphia	($1,800,000)	($700,000)
Southern	($1,265,322)	($159,000)
Trinity	($812,000)	($312,000)
Wartburg	($225,000)	$150,000
TOTAL	($6,080,592)	($471,269)

Appendix D: Deferred Maintenance Detail

Seminary	Fall 2014 Estimated Deferred Maintenance (High)	Fall 2014 Estimated Deferred Maintenance (Low)
LSTC	$19,500,000	$15,236,000
Gettysburg	$1,750,000	$250,000
LTSP	$3,500,000	$1,000,000
Southern	$4,725,276	$3,000,000
PLTS	$8,200,000	$6,600,000
Trinity	$1,200,000	$100,000
Wartburg	$2,000,000	$1,000,000
Luther	$10,000,000	$8,000,000
Total	**$50,875,276**	**$35,186,000**
Total (excluding embedded)	**$37,950,000**	**$25,586,000**

Fall 2014 Estimated Deferred Maintenance	All	Excluding embedded
Average High per Student	$44,745	$36,667
Average Low per Student	$30,946	$24,721
Peer Average Deferred Maintenance Expense per Student	$18,419	$18,419

Estimated Change in Deferred Maintenance with Sale of Physical Assets (Including Embedded)			
	Percent	ATS Amount	Decrease
Decrease in deferred maintenance (High)	-59%	$20,942,403	$29,932,873
Decrease in deferred maintenance (Low)	-40%	$20,942,403	$14,243,597
Deferred maintenance to get per FTE in line with ATS		$20,942,403	

Estimated Change in Deferred Maintenance with Sale of Physical Assets (Excluding Embedded)			
	Percent	ATS Amount	Decrease
Decrease in deferred maintenance (High)	-50%	$19,063,665	$18,886,335
Decrease in deferred maintenance (Low)	-25%	$19,063,665	$ 6,522,335
Deferred maintenance to get per FTE in line with ATS		$19,063,665	

Appendix E: Physical Capacity & Available Assets Detail

Seminaries	Approximate Current Square Footage	Percent of Available Capacity Used (During Core Hours):	Percent of Available Capacity Used (After Core Hours):	Unused Square Feet - Core Hours	Unused Square Feet - After Hours	TOTAL Potential Rental Income - Core Hours	TOTAL Potential Sale Revenue - Core Hours
Gettysburg							
Classroom space	18,206	19%	5%	14,707	17,296	$ -	$ -
Student Housing	71,969	96%	60%	3,023	28,788	$57,900	$232,000
Faculty Housing	15,076	100%	100%	-	-	$ -	$ -
Other	79,122	100%	50%	-	39,561	$ -	$ -
Total	**184,373**			**17,730**	**85,644**	**$57,900**	**$232,000**
Chicago							
Classroom space	5,200	75%	25%	1,300	3,900	$25,350	$325,000
Housing	122,881	88%	98%	15,237	3,072	$59,904	$768,000
Other	62,200	86%	91%	10,800	5,400	$105,300	$1,350,000
Total	**190,281**			**27,337**	**12,372**	**$190,554**	**$2,443,000**
Luther							
Classrooms	15,324	25%	13%	11,499	13,356	$195,477	$103,488
Housing (dorms & apts.)	48,061	6%	N/A	45,017	45,017	$765,291	$405,154

Seminaries	Approximate Current Square Footage	Percent of Available Capacity Used (During Core Hours):	Percent of Available Capacity Used (After Core Hours):	Unused Square Feet - Core Hours	Unused Square Feet - After Hours	TOTAL Potential Rental Income - Core Hours	TOTAL Potential Sale Revenue - Core Hours
Housing (Seminary-owned houses)	33,420	56%	N/A	14,621	14,621	$248,561	$131,591
Other (incl. common area in academic buildings)	193,415	92%	N/A	15,537	15,537	$264,134	$139,836
Total	**290,220**			**86,674**	**88,532**	**$1,473,464**	**$780,069**
Pacific							
Classroom space	3,485	50%	10%	1,743	3,137	$44,120	$1,402,713
Housing	43,058	75%	75%	10,765	10,765	$272,557	$3,530,756
Other	12,397	90%	25%	1,240	9,298	$ 31,389	$997,959
Total	**58,940**			**13,747**	**23,199**	**$348,066**	**5,931,427**
Philadelphia							
Classroom space	30,000	30%	30%	21,000	21,000	$840,000	$8,400,000
Housing	80,000	70%	70%	24,000	24,000	$240,000	$4,440,000
Other	35,000	25%	25%	26,250	26,250	$472,500	$7,875,000
Total	**145,000**			**71,250**	**71,250**	**$1,552,500**	**$20,715,000**

Seminaries	Approximate Current Square Footage	Percent of Available Capacity Used (During Core Hours):	Percent of Available Capacity Used (After Core Hours):	Unused Square Feet - Core Hours	Unused Square Feet - After Hours	TOTAL Potential Rental Income - Core Hours	TOTAL Potential Sale Revenue - Core Hours
Southern							
Classroom space	11,310	71%	65%	3,280	3,959	$31,487	$301,751
Housing	97,320	90%	90%	9,732	9,732	$ 93,427	$895,344
Other	43,255	70%	10%	12,977	38,930	$124,574	$1,193,838
Total	**151,885**			**25,988**	**52,620**	**$249,489**	**$2,390,933**
Trinity							
Classroom space	34,375	85%	35%	5,156	22,344	$64,453	$ -
Housing	87,404	50%	50%	43,702	43,702	$546,275	$1,223,656
Other	121,293	97%	10%	3,639	109,164	$45,485	$ -
Total	**243,072**			**52,497**	**175,209**	**$656,213**	**$1,223,656**
Wartburg							
Classroom space	10,000	80%	2%	2,000	9,800	$ -	$ -
Housing	87,730	80%	80%	17,546	17,546	$108,000	$ -
Other	81,840	90%	2%	8,184	80,203	$18,000	$ -
Total	**179,570**			**27,730**	**107,549**	**$126,000**	**$ -**

Appendix F: Space Utilization Assumptions

Seminary	Contact/Source	Assumptions - Rental Income	Assumptions - Sale Revenue
Gettysburg	Jenn Byers; John Spangler	Potential monthly rental income was provided for 7 apartment units that were not rented, out of the 110 housing units on campus. Calculated on an annual basis.	Sale value is based on an appraisal for one condo with 3 units. The apartments are part of multiple housing dwellings and therefore cannot be sold.
Chicago	Bob Berridge	LSTC currently rents out space to other NFP institutions at a rate of $15.95 per square foot. However, other seminaries and higher education institutions are getting $17-22 per square foot for similar space, so an average of $19.50 was used in our calculation as a more representative figure of market value.	Sale of property is estimated at $200-300 per square foot. An average of $250 was used in our calculation.
Luther	Michael Morrow	Gross rental value (including maintenance and utilities) is about $16-18 per square foot. An average of $17 was used in our calculations. This assumption is based on all underutilized space and does not included a 10% reserve for growth, changing needs, contingencies, etc.	The sale of raw land has a range of $8-10. An average of $9 was used in our calculation. This assumption is based on all underutilized space and does not included a 10% reserve for growth, changing needs, contingencies, etc.
Pacific	Debora Ow; Karen Davis; Thomas Marsh	Estimated per square foot rental value of underutilized space is $2.11 per month, annualized at $25.32, based on Kent Mitchell study.	Estimated per square foot sale value for underutilized space is $805 for main campus (classrooms & administrative), and $328 for housing.
Philadelphia	John Heidgerd	Rental value rates per square foot are $18 for office space, $10 for housing, and $40 for classrooms.	Sale values per square foot are $185 for housing, $300 for office, and $400 for classrooms.
Southern	Robyn Marren	Square foot monthly rental is $.80, annualized at $9.60, is used in our calculation.	Square foot sales value is $92.

Seminary	Contact/Source	Assumptions - Rental Income	Assumptions - Sale Revenue
Trinity	Ron Benedick	The estimated square foot rental value for housing is $12.50-20. However, because housing space is integrated with seminary housing and substantial rental to non-seminary students would impact a tax abatement with the city, $12.50 is used as a conservative estimate in our calculation. Classroom space and other administrative space have no rental value.	Based on "Land for Sale" websites and other offers they have had for property, the sale value of land ranges from $16 to $40. An average of $28 was used in our calculation.
Wartburg	Andy Willenborg	Underutilized dorms/apartments/housing is approximately 15 units, for an average of $600 per month, $108,000 per year. Underutilized other space in the basement is $1,500 per month, $18,000 per year.	There is currently no underutilized space that could be sold off separately.

Appendix G: Summary of Physical Asset Impact Scenarios

	A. Central System	B. Limited Central System	C. Regional System	D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures	E. The Current Model
Assumption about unused space	Based on space utilization information provided by the free standing seminaries, during core hours. These six seminaries have an estimated 23% of unused space. These calculations represent full utilization through rental or sale of unused physical assets.	Based on space utilization information provided by the free standing seminaries, during core hours. These six seminaries have an estimated 23% of unused space. These calculations represent the rental or sale of 75% of unused physical assets.	Based on space utilization information provided by all the seminaries, during core hours. The seminaries have an estimated 22% of unused space. These calculations represent the rental or sale of 50% of unused physical assets.	Based on space utilization information provided by all the seminaries, during core hours. The seminaries have an estimated 22% of unused space. This excess capacity could be redeployed for any number of joint ventures.	Based on space utilization information provided by all the seminaries, during core hours. The seminaries have an estimated 22% of unused space. These calculations represent full utilization through rental or sale of unused physical assets.
Total Potential Rental Income	$4,056,631	$3,042,473	$2,327,093	*Dependent upon joint venture*	$4,654,186
Total Potential Sale of Asset Revenue	$25,393,725	$19,045,294	$16,858,042	*N/A*	$33,716,085

Appendix H: Faculty Compensation Data

Teaching Faculty Average Compensation, 2014/15, by Rank, ELCA Seminaries (excludes Presidents and Deans)						
Rank	**FTE Count**	**Average Salary**	**Average Housing Value**	**Average Added Benefits**	**Average Pension Payments**	**Average Total Compensation**
Assistant	9	$56,850		$11,594	$6,097	$ 73,252
Associate	35	$63,729	$8,520	$11,754	$6,687	$82,715
Professor	48	$68,561	$14,036	$13,492	$9,351	$ 94,144
Note: PLTS did not report compensation data.						

Teaching Faculty Compensation Direct Cost, 2014/15, ELCA Seminaries						
Rank	**FTE Count**	**Salary total**	**Housing total**	**Added Benefit total**	**Pension Total**	**Total Compensation**
Assistant	9	$511,647	$ -	$92,749	$54,872	$659,268
Associate	35	$2,230,500	$42,600	$387,883	$234,058	$2,895,041
Professor	48	$3,290,928	$154,400	$634,129	$439,475	$4,518,932
Total	**92**[33]					**$8,073,241**
Average per faculty member:						**$87,753**

[33] Source: ATS Data. The 92 faculty FTE excludes administrative positions that are given faculty status, as those positions (e.g., President, Library Director, Dean) would have inaccurately skewed the compensation average. The 120 FTE used in Appendix H is reflective of the current faculty FTE in the eight seminaries and includes those administrative positions that teach (e.g., if a 1 FTE seminary President spends 25% of his/her time teaching, we included .25 FTE in the faculty FTE count).

Appendix I: Faculty Asset Impact Scenarios

Assumptions	A. Central System	B. Limited Central System	C. Regional System	D. Formal Network - Joint Ventures	E. The Current Model
Current Total Faculty FTE	120	120	120	120	120
Potential Reduction/Reallocation in FTE Faculty	50	22	17	4	N/A
Average Compensation per Faculty Member[34]	$87,753	$87,753	$87,753	$87,753	$87,753
Total Estimated Savings	$4,387,631	$1,930,558	$1,491,795	$351,010	N/A

[34] This calculation is based on ATS data on faculty compensation

Appendix J: Donor Impact Scenarios

Estimated Increase (Decrease) in Annual Giving in Five Years Under Different Models				
Assumptions	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	
Alumni/ae	(50%)	(15%)	(15%)	
Other Individuals, Foundations, Corporations, and Other	20%	15%	5%	
Religious Organizations	0%	0%	12%	
Projections	**A. Central System**	**B. Limited Central System**	**C. Regional Systems**	**Baseline - Average Gifts 2011-2013**
Alumni/ae	$(1,900,937)	$ (570,281)	$ (570,281.10)	$3,801,874
Other Individuals, Foundations, Corporations, and Other	$4,882,557	$3,661,918	$1,220,639.18	$24,412,784
Religious Organizations	$ -	$ -	$1,354,999.20	$11,291,660
Net Increase (Decrease)	**$2,981,620**	**$3,091,636**	**$2,005,357**	**$39,506,318**

Discussion:

Alumni/ae are assumed to dislike merger and possible relocation (A, B, or C). This assumption can be challenged as too pessimistic.

Individual-related giving is assumed to rise under each scenario because of greater concentration of fundraising efforts, more efficiency in education, and broader service to the Church.

Churchwide giving is assumed to continue to be flat for A, B, and C. Regional systems C assumes greater support from synods.

Appendix K: Theological Education Advisory Council

TEAC Members
Jacqueline Bussie Associate Professor and Director, Forum Faith and Life, Concordia College
Kristen Capel Lead Pastor, Easter Lutheran Church
Randall Foster Healthcare Executive, Retired
Andrea Green Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Georgia Gwinnett College
James Hazelwood Bishop, New England Synod
William "Bill" B. Horne II City Manager, City of Clearwater, Florida
Maren Hulden Skadden Fellow/Staff Attorney, Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center
Leila Ortiz PhD Candidate (A.B.D.), Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia Coordinator of the Latino/a Lay School of the ELCA
Paul Pribbenow President, Augsburg College
Sarah Rohde Associate Pastor, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Robin Steinke, Co-Chair President, Luther Seminary
Sr. Noreen Stevens Assistant to Bishop, St. Paul Area Synod
Nancy Winder Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, NW Washington Synod
Herman Yoos, Co-Chair Bishop, South Carolina Synod
Churchwide Organization Staff
Stephen Bouman, Advisor Executive Director, Congregational and Synodical Mission
Wyvetta Bullock, Advisor Assistant to the Presiding Bishop/Executive for Administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Liz Eaton, Advisor Presiding Bishop, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Sonia Hayden, Support Executive Administrative Assistant, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Kenn Inskeep, Staff Executive for Research and Evaluation, Office of the Presiding Bishop
Jonathan Strandjord, Staff Program Director, Seminaries, Congregational and Synodical Mission

TEAC Members
Gordon Straw, Advisor Program Director, Lay Schools, Congregational and Synodical Mission
Greg Villalon, Advisor Director, Leadership for Mission/Candidacy, Congregational and Synodical Mission

Appendix L: ELCA Theological Assessment Steering Committee

TEAC Steering Committee Members
Clay Schmit Provost, School of Theology, Lenoir-Rhyne University
Craig Koester Academic Dean, Luther Seminary
Jim Lakso Board Member, Gettysburg Seminary
Jonathan Strandjord, Staff Program Director, Seminaries, Congregational and Synodical Mission
Mark Van Scharrel Vice President, Advancement, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Marty Stevens Associate Professor, Gettysburg Seminary
Michael Morrow Vice President of Finance and Administration, Luther Seminary
Stan Olson, Chair Former President, Wartburg Theological Seminary

REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

At the **June 3, 2015** audit committee meeting, management presented a preliminary draft of the financial statements of the ELCA for the year ended January 31, 2015. The auditors, Crowe Horwath, noted that the financial statements will include an "unmodified" opinion from Crowe Horwath that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the ELCA as of January 31, 2015, and the changes in its net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

In its report to the audit committee in accordance with Statement of Auditing Standards 114, Crowe also reported that there were no difficulties were encountered during the audit, no disagreements with management, and no audit adjustments. He noted that there was one waived audit adjustment ($2.7 million) related to the potential impact of using newly published RP2014 mortality tables in the calculation of annuity liabilities instead of the current standard 2000 mortality tables – organizations are not using the new tables for 2015 calculations as they are based on variable life estimates instead of static life estimates and new programs to calculate the liabilities need to be written. A formal management recommendation letter was not required as there were no material weaknesses noted – One new finding (annuity payments) and two updates (IT controls and bank reconciliations) relative to previous findings were discussed, all of which are being appropriately addressed by management.

The committee recommended approval by the Budget and Finance Committee of the draft audited financial statements of the ELCA, as presented, for the year ended January 31, 2015.

The committee also received, reviewed, and accepted the report of the internal auditor which outlined the audits performed, issues raised, and managements' responses.

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

At the **November 12, 2015** audit committee meeting, management reviewed current activities relative to financial processes and the interim financial results through September 30, 2015. Management responses to the external audit recommendations were also reviewed.

Crowe Horwath presented the Audit Service Plan for the year ending January 31, 2016 with an audit scope, audit approach, and audit activities essentially the same as last year, with a decrease in fees of about 10%. The committee recommends approval by the Budget and Finance Committee of the Crowe Horwath audit service plan and fees for the year ending January 31, 2016.

The committee also received, reviewed, and accepted the report of CapinCrouse (the accounting firm that is providing internal audit services) which outlined the internal audits performed, issues raised and managements' responses, assessment of audit risk, and the 2016 internal audit plan. The internal audit plan for 2015 will be completed as scheduled. The committee approved the 2016 internal audit plan.

The committee also recommends approval by the Budget and Finance Committee of the appointment of Mari Jo Petrivelli, Clarance Smith, and Ingrid Sponberg Stafford to the ELCA Audit Committee for two year renewable terms ending August 2017, and the appointment of Marjorie Ellis to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year term ending November 2017.

The Committee received a report from Jon Beyer, Director for Information Technology discussing the actions being taken in response to the Comprehensive Information Security Risk Assessment performed in 2014 and subsequent internal audit findings relative to IT. An action matrix is maintained for 106 issues arising from the Comprehensive Assessment, internal audit, and other sources weighted for priority. 32 of those issues have been resolved, 34 are actively being addressed and 40 lower priority items (with priority below 16 on a 25 point scale) are still to be addressed.

Three major projects scheduled to be completed by year-end are: implementation of an enhanced employee on-boarding and off-boarding process to improve controls; the movement of disaster recovery to a managed service model to improve recovery time and point objectives and overall reliability of the process; and evaluation of the penetration test which has just been completed.

An IT capacity study has also been completed in which a major focus was on analyzing the necessary capacity to assess, maintain, and emphasize information security needs.

The Committee requested that a comprehensive multi-year plan for security audits be presented at the Spring meeting.

A Regional Office Finance and Accounting Manual has been created and will be issued by the end of the year.

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

Report of the Conference of Bishops
Jessica Crist, Bishop of the Montana Synod and Chair of the Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops met October 1-6, 2015, at the Lutheran Center and welcomed new bishops Timothy Smith (North Carolina Synod) and Matthew Riegel (West Virginia/Western Maryland Synod). We also welcomed Church Council members Christine Connell and Hans Becklin as visitors.

Conference of Bishops meetings begin with worship. Each day begins with morning prayer. A chaplain is appointed for each day, and is called on for prayer at times of decision and stress, as well as at meals. For this meeting, Region 8 bishops provided the chaplains and worship leaders. A team of process observers watches how we function and provides feedback throughout the meeting.

Before the meeting starts in plenary, bishops meet in committees to delve deeper into the business of the church, and to provide opportunities for feedback to staff involved in the various areas the committees address. Some committees are focused internally: the Roster Committee, the Academy Committee, the Bishop Formation Committee and the Executive Committee. Other committees work closely with churchwide staff: CSM-Leadership, CSM-New and Renewing Congregations, Ecumenical and Interreligious Liaison, Theological and Ethical Concerns, Global Mission. Some are focused on the world beyond, such as Ministry Among People in Poverty.

The meeting began with an examination of the resolutions the Church Council passed in April 2015, regarding mission support and the outcomes of those resolutions. Our church is taking seriously that we are in a different place than we were in 1988, and that we need new ideas for the future. We heard about the five synods who are engaged in mission support experiments. We heard about new ways for synods and churchwide to consult about mission support, and possible constitutional implications. We also heard about new revenue streams, new reporting and a new strategy for conceiving mission support.

Theological education was another major topic. The Conference of Bishops met with seminary presidents to hear the report from the Theological Education Advisory Council, and bishops serving on seminary boards had additional time with presidents. The Conference, understanding the imperative to move forward with decisions on theological education, encouraged closer cooperation among the seminaries of the ELCA, and discouraged the status quo. The recommendation goes to the Church Council and to all the ELCA seminary boards.

A subgroup of the bishops met to discuss inadequacies in the current assignment process for serving the future needs of the church. A task force was formed to come up with recommendations for the next meeting. The Conference also reviewed the new candidacy manual and expressed appreciation for the many changes that had been made as a result of consultations with bishops, candidacy committees and others.

The bishops received the ecumenical document, "Declaration On the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist," and commended its adoption by the Church Council. You will be looking at it at this meeting. It is a compilation of the major agreements between Lutherans and Catholics in our years of ecumenical dialogues.

The Conference saw the latest draft of the proposed social message on Gender-based Violence and expressed gratitude at the many changes that had been made in response to comments from readers from the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops. The Bishops are comfortable recommending the statement in its present form.

The Presiding Bishop, Secretary, Vice President and Treasurer all gave reports to the conference, giving updates on activities and programs, and looking to the future, particularly the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

The Conference of Bishops had opportunity to discuss the Word and Service Task Force Report, as well as the Entrance Rite Discernment group. In closed session, we heard a report from the Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and Their Families working group and provided feedback for their meeting immediately following the Conference.

Addressing current events, the Conference of Bishops had a conversation on race and racism, including presentations from bishops serving in synods with high-profile incidents. We discussed accompanying migrant minors (AMMPARO) and we discussed gun violence, noting our previously adopted pastoral letter on gun violence and commending it to those who are not familiar with it.

Bishops divided up on Saturday afternoon into self-generated interest groups, including racism, violence, assignment and mobility, immigration and retirement. Bishops also divided into optional "Ready Benches" for education and advocacy. Current Ready Benches include Middle East, Immigration, Domestic, International, Care of Creation and Justice is not Just Us.

The Conference elected a new Executive Committee, starting January 1, 2016. Bishop William Gafkjen of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod was elected chair of the Conference of Bishops, and Bishop Tracie Bartholomew of the New Jersey Synod was elected Vice Chair, each for a four-year term. In order to provide continuity, the three at-large members were elected to staggered terms, with Bishop Shelley Wickstrom of the Alaska Synod serving a three-year term, Bishop Guy Erwin of the Southern California West Synod serving a two-year term, and Bishop Michael Burk of the Southeastern Iowa Synod serving a one-year term.

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Conference of Bishops and as a member of the Church Council.

Report of the Executive for Administration

Strategic Planning
   Churchwide Organization 2014-16 Operational Plan Goals:

We are Church
   1. Congregations are growing, vibrant in their worship life and diverse, and worshippers increase their engagement in and support for God's mission, locally and globally.

We are Church Together
   2. Members of this church are better connected with who we are as church, and relationships across this church's wider ecology are deepened and strengthened for evangelical witness and service in the world.

We are Church for the Sake of the World
   3. Impoverished and vulnerable people, locally and globally, achieve sufficient, sustainable lives and are accompanied in addressing the challenges of poverty, injustice and emergencies in their communities.

We are Lutheran
   4. Lay and rostered leaders are grounded in Lutheran theology and competent to serve the church we are becoming, and the leadership profile reflects this church's aspiration for cultural, generational and socio-economic diversity.

We are Church Together
   5. Leaders across this church are working together on strategies to address future sustainability of the ELCA, and the churchwide organization has a growing and sustainable base for mission.

We are Church. We are Lutheran. We are Church Together. We are Church for the Sake of the World.
   6. The churchwide organization is effective in fulfilling its roles and functions on behalf of the ELCA and further develops an organization culture characterized by strong leadership, accountability, competent and motivated staff, effective systems and learning.

   At this November Church Council meeting, the Planning and Evaluation Committee will review goals 1, 4 and 6 of the churchwide organization's operational plan. They will spend time in small groups and in discussion with unit staff members about the progress, achievements and set-backs for the stated objectives of each goal.

   In August, the Administrative Team received the 2015 mid-year report for the Operational Plan. Highlights of noted achievements included:
- Approved 37 new start ministries[1]
- First Renewing Congregations Campaign Review Table
  - Funded $161, 500 representing four synod strategies
  - Funded $60,000 in two fast growth grants
- Youth Gathering in Detroit – 30,000 participants

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[1] Update to new starts since August 2015: the total for the year has increased to 53 new ministries. 8-10 more are expected at the November table. 58 synods have been involved in new starts.

- Worship Jubilee in Atlanta - 830 participants
- Young Adults in Global Mission – 85 percent of 2017 goal
- ELCA Campaign on point
- Successful Malaria Campaign - $15 million

Some delays and/or setbacks mid-year included:
- Disability Ministries portion of the ELCA Campaign;
- New software for the churchwide organization's granting programs;
- Some global projects, due to civil unrest; and
- Staffing capacity and changes.

Goals 2 and 5 of the Operational Plan call for enhanced connectedness across this church and leaders working together on strategies to address future mission and sustainability. At your last meeting in April, you affirmed Presiding Bishop Eaton's intention to convene a team "…to sharpen the priorities of this church and bring greater clarity about what this church will do and will not do in order to serve God's mission more faithfully and effectively in the years to come." The Presiding Bishop has engaged a consultant and begun this work. You will receive an update in her report at this meeting.

Another response to Goal 5 in the Operational Plan is a Mission Support Comprehensive Strategy. (See Appendix A) This strategy was jointly developed by the Mission Advancement and Congregational and Synodical Mission Units. It has been affirmed by the Administrative Team and the Conference of Bishops. The strategy will be presented as part of the reports to the Budget and Finance and Planning and Evaluation Committees, and will be part of the oral unit reports to the full Church Council.

Budget

Please see the Report of the Treasurer for detailed information on the income and expenses for 2015. The Budget and Finance Committee will be asked to approve a revised spending authorization for 2016 at this meeting. We remain grateful for the generosity of members of this church that enable the mission and ministry represented in the aforementioned budgets.

General Administration

The Worship ministry team moved from the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit to the Office of the Presiding Bishop on September 1, 2015. The team's offices will remain on the ninth floor due to space constraints.

Personnel

The Human Resources web site can be found at www.elca.org/humanresources; information regarding positions in Global Mission can be found at www.elca.org/globalserve.

Staff Demographics

As of September 30, 2015, the distribution of the domestic staff for the ELCA Churchwide Office was 61 percent female, 39 percent male; 66 percent white, 34 percent persons of color; 30 percent clergy and rostered lay, 71 percent lay. Sixty-eight percent of the staff are Chicago-based, 32 percent are deployed. On September 30, 2015 there were 284 regular full-time, 10 regular part-time and 56 term contract.

The separately incorporated ministries under the umbrella of the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies staffing data was as follows:

Mission Investment Fund: 61 percent female, 39 percent male; 65 percent white, 35 percent persons of color, 11 percent clergy and rostered lay, 89 percent lay. On September 30, 2015, there were 46 employees in the MIF.

Women of the ELCA: 100 percent female; 38 percent white, 62 percent persons of color; 8 percent rostered lay; 100 percent Chicago-based. On September 30, there were 13 employees in the Women of the ELCA.

Lutheran Men in Mission has three employees – 2 white, 1 person of color; 1 rostered lay, 2 lay; 2 Chicago-based, 1 deployed.

New Human Resources Management System

In October 2015, we processed our first payroll with Paylocity. Our payroll staff has reported that the process worked well for them, with fewer steps to finalize payroll processing. Paylocity's employee self-service portal allows employees to easily access their employee profiles to change demographic information, and its mobile app is already being used by some supervisors to approve employees' time while away from the office.

Leadership Development Program

The focus of the churchwide organization's Leadership Development Program (LDP) is to provide emerging leaders in the churchwide organization the understanding and the tools to be effective ELCA and senior organization leaders. The program emphasis is on the context in which churchwide leaders operate, the knowledge of and expectations for effective churchwide leadership, characteristics of high performing teams and units within the organization, and identification and development of individual leadership capabilities and performance.

The program's interactive learning process includes readings, presentations, case studies, full group and team discussions, workshops on core churchwide leadership functions, individual performance assessment and coaching, and team projects on real-time organizational issues.

The goals of the program are greater churchwide leadership "bench strength", increased readiness of participants to assume leadership assignments and positions in the organization, and enhanced individual, team, unit, and overall performance. Program participants are selected by their requisite Unit Executive Director or Officer.

The inaugural cohort of 15 participants successfully completed the program requirements and celebrated their completion with a commencement ceremony in May. On the heels of Cohort I's success, a new group of participants started the LDP in September. Like Cohort I, Cohort II meets monthly for eight months with a goal of strengthening churchwide leadership.

Research and Evaluation

This year is the second year of the 2014-2016 Operational Plan. Throughout the year there has been a focus on reporting in two significant ways:

1. The creation of online reporting forms; and
2. An emphasis on reporting about impact and the progress indicators for each objective.

Staff from Research and Evaluation (RE), with the help of Information Technology, created online reporting forms to provide a standardized template for reporting for both the first and second half of 2015. This makes it possible for multiple staff from a unit to report at the same time. The reporting format has increased staff input and ownership of the plan itself. There has also been an increased emphasis on reporting impact.

In addition to its work on the Operational Plan, RE has provided research support for various groups and projects. Reports are forthcoming, in support of the Theological Education Advisory Council

(TEAC) on the network of lay theological education in the ELCA and on the supply and demand for clergy in the present and into the future.

Staff invested heavily in the preparation of a major grant proposal to the Lilly Foundation, which is intended to address clergy debt. If the grant is awarded, RE staff will be responsible both for the implementation and evaluation of the grant's projects.

Staff has been working with the Campaign for the ELCA to assist in the development of their strategy. RE continues to respond to daily requests for information from pastors, congregations, and the synods of the ELCA. It does this through its online survey forms, the analysis of congregational annual reports and the analysis of the ELCA lay and clergy roster.

Rostered Women of Color Writing Project

This year, women of color in this church will celebrate 35 years of ordination. This is the 45th year for our White sisters. In conjunction with the 35th ordination anniversary and the 500th Reformation observation, a writing project is underway to capture the stories and hopes of rostered women of color in this church. I am pleased to serve on this team. The project team is chaired by The Rev. Cheryl Pero, PhD, and includes: The Rev. Marlene Helgamo, The Rev. Idalia Negron, The Rev. Priscilla Paris-Austin, The Rev. Dr. Maxine Washington, The Rev. Vivian Thomas-Brietfeld, The Rev. Dr. Alicia Vargas, PhD, The Rev. Chienyu Jade Yi, and Mrs. Carolyn Foster, Project Coordinator.

This project is being coordinated with the Freed & Renewed in Christ 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation Observance.

Lutheran Mission Cooperation

I was privileged to be invited to present a bible study at the Lutheran Mission Cooperation (LMC) Round Table in Bukoba, Tanzania, October 19-20, 2015. The LMC Round Table is a joint instrument of coordination and cooperation between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) and her partners from America and Europe. The ELCT has 6.3 million members.

The theme was "Women in God's Service." The ELCT has been ordaining women for 25 years. It has 274 female pastors out of 2000. This Round Table encouraged and challenged the ELCT for fuller participation of women in the church's leadership.

While attending the Round Table, I was also able to attend the consecration and installation of Bishop Abendnego Nkamuhabwa Keshomshahara. A delegation from the ELCA companion synod, Metropolitan New York Synod, also attended.

Comprehensive Mission Support Strategy– Draft
2016 - 2018

Purpose

The ELCA needs a clear, comprehensive strategy to more deeply engage its members, congregations and synods in growing in stewardship and Mission Support sharing. A comprehensive strategy for increasing Mission Support will encompass and integrate the various churchwide networks, initiatives and programs that relate to stewardship and Mission Support.

The Comprehensive Mission Support Strategy is first and foremost a call to the spiritual renewal of our church, its synods, congregations and disciples. It is about seeing Jesus, and one another, in the stewardship and mission support decisions we make as disciples who live out our faith individually and communally. It is about a revival in our teaching, encouraging and inspiring every baptized member to grow in their stewardship and faith as they follow Jesus. It is about helping every congregation to see themselves as a generous partner in God's mission in the world; thus being renewed in their own life together. May the death and resurrection of Jesus for the life of the world again pull us forward together into God's future.

Principles

The following principles undergird this strategy:

+ *We are church*. Our Mission Support interpretation should explicitly express our identity as a church in mission *for the sake of the world*.

+ *We are Lutheran*. We will engage ELCA members around our identity as ELCA Lutherans and what it means for our daily life and stewardship.

+ *We are church together*. The ELCA is one church in three expressions, with multiple networks that must be engaged in a renewed effort to create a movement for growth in stewardship.

+ The churchwide organization will reflect a culture of connection, demonstrated by shared vision and strategy for growth in stewardship and Mission Support with clear goals and objectives, accountability and intentional communication.

Mission Support Strategic Initiatives 2016-2108

1. **Establish Mission Support Tables in every synod that are responsible for the development of a Mission Support plan with clear, measurable outcomes.** Our church has made a significant investment in the system of directors for evangelical mission (DEMs) and local Mission Support Tables and it's important that the level of accountability and results match the investment. The following expectations should be met if funding support is to continue:
   a) Stewardship education and training should be provided for staff (including DEMs) and Mission Support Table participants on an ongoing basis.
   b) A synodical mission plan should be developed that answers the questions: *Who are we as synod?* and *What does it mean to be the church together?*
   c) Every synod Mission Support Table will develop a plan for stewardship and Mission Support interpretation.
   d) Every synod Mission Support Table will develop an annual plan to engage its congregations, conferences and the local ecology of the church in a Mission Support "ask" that is theologically grounded, attainable, relational, and based on being church

together. In the case of a healthy and sustainable congregation, 10 percent is the assumed goal.

e) The fruits of the Macedonia initiative will be incorporated into the synod Mission Support Plans.

f) The synod Mission Support plan, activities and results will be shared with the director for stewardship and the director for Mission Support as preparation for the annual synodical-churchwide Mission Support consultation.

g) The consultation process will be shaped so that the synod and the churchwide organization together evaluate the prior year Mission Support efforts, revisions to the annual Mission Support process and commitments for Mission Support sharing in the coming year.

h) The directors for evangelical mission will be responsible for helping foster a culture of connection.

i) In order to honor the premise of the Mission Support pilots, churchwide work with the synod Mission Support Tables will exclude the five pilot synods.

2. **Develop enhanced tools for Stewardship and Mission Support Interpretation**

a) Strategic communications should support a culture where congregations see themselves as a part of the ELCA not in competition with other ministries, but as a critical partner in achieving our shared missional objectives. This includes imparting a deeper understanding of all we do together as church, while also inspiring broader and deeper participation.

b) Mission Support interpretation will help congregations to understand what it means to be part of the wider ecology of the ELCA and their role in supporting its mission and ministry, including Mission Support sharing. Stewardship resources will be directly linked to the ELCA identity and provide interpretation around the use of Mission Support dollars.

c) A took kit will be developed for Mission Support consultations with congregations and synods that includes both the congregational commitment form and Stories of Faith in Action.

3. **Establish Coordinated but Differentiated Roles for Churchwide Leaders**

a) *Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) is Responsible for:*
- Ensuring that Mission Support Tables are established in every synod, an annual stewardship plan is approved and the results shared with the director for Mission Support prior to each annual synodical-churchwide consultation.
- Central staff will focus work on synod Mission Support Tables and directors for evangelical mission will work with individual congregations.
- Adjust reporting process within CSM so that directors for evangelical mission report directly to the stewardship team on matters related to stewardship and mission support to provide enhanced support, strengthen accountability and create efficient lines of communication.
- Works with Mission Advancement to develop stewardship education resources.
- Income Goal: Mission Support income from congregations to synods increases.

b) *Mission Advancement (MA) is Responsible for:*
- Ensuring that all synod-churchwide consultations are scheduled, planned and completed.
- Coordinate with synod bishops and directors for evangelical mission regarding Mission Support plans and results.

- Track Mission Support, compile reports and propose Mission Support actions to Office of the Treasurer.
- Keep all churchwide representatives to synods informed regarding the status of Mission Support plans prior to visits.
- Oversee director, associate and administrative staff for Mission Support.
- Income Goal: Mission Support percentage sharing from synods holds or increases.

c) *Form Inter-Unit Committee for Mission Support Planning*
- The inter-unit committee will be convened by the director for Mission Support and include stewardship staff from CSM, marketing communications staff from MA and synodical relations staff from Office of the Presiding Bishop (OB).
- Will lead planning for Mission Interpreters Network events. The committee will be encouraged to find efficiencies in supporting this network along with the Synod Communicators network.
- Will create opportunities to integrate work around faith practices – Book of Faith.

4. **Grow the Mission Interpreters and Synod Communicators networks.**
   a) Engagement strategy yet to be developed in consultation with the Inter-unit Committee for Mission Support Planning.
   b) Will look for efficiencies in supporting Mission Interpreters Network along with the Synod Communicators and better leverage the capacities of both.

5. **Increase staff learning and planning centered on stewardship and mission support**
   a) Mission Support will be the focus of the 2016 gathering of the directors for evangelical mission, working with MA and OB on agenda and structure, and will be a major emphasis at staff meetings going forward.
   b) Mission Support staff from MA will be included at least once a year on the agenda of meetings of directors for evangelical mission.
   c) Quarterly calls (relator calls) with the directors for evangelical mission will include CSM stewardship staff and the director for Mission Support.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
November 12-15, 2015
Appendix A: Comprehensive Mission Support Strategy Draft
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Appendix 1

Current stewardship and Mission Support systems

The following functions are the key components of our stewardship and Mission Support systems. The functions are listed with the unit currently accountable for guiding the work.

Congregational and Synodical Mission:
- Directors for Evangelical Mission (59)
- Synodical Mission Support Tables (50)
- Adjunct synod stewardship staff (20 - 3 with grant support)
- Stewardship education and related initiatives
- Churchwide stewardship staff (3 FTE – 2 are contract)
- Synod Macedonia Project
- Faith Practices and Book of Faith
- Mission Interpreters network (45 synods)

Office of the Presiding Bishop:
- Presiding Bishop's role with the Conference of Bishops
- Synodical Relations
- Budget – including Mission Support income and related expense proposals

Mission Advancement:
- Director for Mission Support and part-time coordinator
- Synod Mission Support consultations
- Regional gift planning staff (14 plus 5.5 gift planning associates)
- Regional gift planning partnerships (12 plus 3 in planning stage)
- Mission Support interpretation and stewardship resources
- Churchwide Organization marketing and branding strategies
- Churchwide fund raising and development
- Congregational and synodical giving data management
- Synod communicators network

Office of the Treasurer:
- Treasurer is ex-officio and lead staff with Church Council Budget and Finance Committee
- Mission Support income budget estimates
- Tracks changes to Mission Support commitments
- Synod treasurers network

Office of the Secretary:
- Constitutional interpretation of provisions related to Mission Support governance

11/4/2015 version

Report of the Presiding Bishop

It has been two years since I began this call. I am often asked what has been the greatest surprise. Well, certainly the amount of travel has been a surprise, but the greatest surprise has been the complexity and scope of the ELCA. As the bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, I had a pretty good grasp of the ministries in the twenty counties in my territory, but now the territory includes all of the counties in all of the states and the Caribbean, along with international partnerships.

This church does a lot all over the world, all of the time. Just a cursory glance through the CEO overview of actions for this Church Council meeting makes that clear. Here, at your churchwide office, we have spreadsheets that track the progress of the six goals we set for ourselves in the 2013-2016 Operational Plan. This just tracks the work of the churchwide staff, not the work of congregations, synods, social ministry organizations, colleges and universities, seminaries, state advocacy offices, conciliar relationships, camps, campus ministries, the separately incorporated ministries, federal chaplaincies and missionary personnel.

At this meeting, you will receive and deliberate on the report and recommendations of the [Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC)](). One of the striking revelations in this report is the number and variety of ways we deliver theological education in the ELCA. We do this through seminaries of course, but also through colleges and universities, lay schools, certificate programs, synodical schools and congregational schools. This can be seen as a rich flourishing of creative and diverse delivery of theological education, or it can be seen as a symptom-a disconnected and ad hoc approach to finding a way to deliver theological education. With the best intentions, groups within the church see a need and develop a solution for a particular issue without considering what else might be in place or even how the solution fits in with the mission of the whole. We have one synod in the ELCA that has two lay academies, and neither academy knew of the existence of the other. When several of us met with consultants from the Huron Consulting Group-the consultants working with seminaries on the technology platform-they described our theological education system as a "mosh pit."

The ELCA constitution in Chapter Five, Principles of Organization, states that, "The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God's mission" (5.01.c). This is constitutional language for "We are church together." Some days we are, but many days and in many ways, we are not. I am not singling out theological education as an egregious example, but as one example among many where we are not really connected with one another. A colleague working with the churchwide staff said this is the one organization in his experience where anyone at any level at any time can shut down the work of the organization. I would be surprised if that is not the same experience in congregations and synods. It might be overstated, but his observation points to the vulnerabilities inherent in the organizational structure of this church, as well as the cultural sense that the church is a voluntary association, like the Rotary or the Girl Scouts, where one can come and go as one chooses, and not a new creation where we have been joined to Christ and to one another in baptism.

In *[Declaration on the Way]()*, the church is defined this way, "Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth has been assembled by the triune God, who grants to its members their sharing in the triune divine life as God's own people, as the body of the risen Christ, and as a temple of the Holy Spirit, while they are also called to give witness to these gifts so that others may come to share in them." (*Declaration on the Way,* pg. 16) Or, as Peter wrote to the churches in Asia Minor, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (I Peter 2:9-10)

So do we change our governance, or change our behavior? Changing governance, though a lengthy and technical process, might actually be easier than changing behavior. But changing governance presumes recognition of a problem, the will to do something and an agreement about where we want to go and who we want to be. Looking through the lens of Luther's explanation of the eighth commandment, I

believe that good and faithful members, congregations, synods and the churchwide organization have tried to carry out God's mission. The issue, I think, is that the mission has become at once universal and very particular. I mean, we are doing everything and we are doing it in pixels; pixels that don't come together to make a complete picture.

The Bishops' Think Tank on Mission Funding recommended to the Church Council that I "convene a team to generate recommendations to sharpen our priorities as a church and bring greater clarity about what this church will do and will not do in order to serve God's mission more faithfully and effectively in the years to come." The Future Directions and Priorities of the ELCA process design outlined in your materials is my recommendation for accomplishing this. It builds on all of the work on this very issue that has already been done, it will engage all the expressions of the church including agencies and institutions, it will be part of the work of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly and it will clarify and sharpen our mission. This will change behavior. If we know where we're going, what we're doing and who is doing it, it will be possible to function as an interdependent church.

Apart from God, our work is in vain. This process must depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is not merely a technical problem to be solved, but a time for this church to engage intentionally and consistently in a process of communal spiritual discernment. We are not just inviting God into this process at the beginning and thanking God at the end. Instead we, as a church, will open ourselves to the invitation of God to be a part of God's reconciling work through Christ in the world.

I don't know if it is possible to be ambitious and humble at the same time, but in the spirit of Lutheran paradox, I believe we can undertake this ambitious process because we trust that this is God's work and not ours alone. Your churchwide staff is willing to take this on. The Conference of Bishops is on board. I believe this church is ready.

Report of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary is becoming more focused on preparation for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. We gather in New Orleans from August 8-13, 2016, under the theme, "Freed and Renewed in Christ." While we are meeting, we will be joined by those attending the Grace Gathering. Grace Gathering will focus on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and will be an opportunity for other members of this church to experience part of the Churchwide Assembly. Thursday afternoon has been set aside for both the members of the assembly and the participants in the gathering to share experiential learning opportunities.

As of September 14, 2015, 960 of the 980 members of the assembly have been entered into the registration database. We know that some of those not yet identified are synod vice presidents who will be elected next year. Actual registration for the assembly will not begin until next spring. We will communicate with you and with the members of the assembly when we get closer to the actual registration time.

Constitutional Amendments

You will find in ELCA Community under the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee section of the November 2015 meeting the proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.* In the same place you will find a detailed rationale for these proposals. I want to encourage your reading of the rationale and these amendments. We will be voting on these proposals for possible referral to the Churchwide Assembly. I did review these proposals with the Conference of Bishops and received feedback from them. This information will go to the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, then these will come to you for action.

There are a number of amendments for clarification or rearranging of bylaws and continuing resolutions so that each is connected to a constitutional provision. There are also a number of significant proposals. I want to call your attention to:

a. Amendments to Chapter 3, the Nature of the Church to include the Lutheran World Federation.
b. Continuing resolution 5.01.A16 and related continuing resolutions.
c. The re-writing of Chapters 7, S15 and C9.
d. 10.71 and related amendments in Chapter 10 and S15 that move from a uniform percentage for mission partnership support to a system of synodical consultations.
e. Significant housekeeping amendments related to the Word and Service roster proposal.

All amendments to the constitutional provisions need to be proposed by this meeting of the Church Council. Bylaw and continuing resolutions have normally been proposed at this time as well.[1]

I also want to note the two continuing resolutions that will be coming to this Church Council meeting for action. The Church Council may adopt continuing resolutions by a two-thirds vote. You will be asked to vote upon **19.01.A15** and **16.12.C15. 19.01.A15** will provide for a process of pre-identification of potential nominees for the office of Vice President. **16.12.C15** is a description of the responsibilities of the Mission Advancement unit. The significant change in this amendment is the removal of the responsibility for electing the editor of the periodical from the Church Council, making it a normal

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[1] 22.11. a. The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.

staffing decision, and eliminating the Lutheran Advisory Committee. This action would also remove the current **14.32.B13.** If adopted, both of these actions would take effect at this meeting.

The responsibility to propose amendments to the governing documents of this church is an important role for the Church Council. I am reminded by friends and colleagues that not everyone enjoys looking at the details of these documents. It is important that you are aware of and support the directions these changes make in our life together. I commend the work of the Office of the Secretary to you for thorough review and thoughtful action.

Memorials

We do have a number of memorials from this year's synod assemblies. One would expect an increased number next year. As you hear of potential memorials, please let me know about the subject being addressed and if possible the maker of the memorial so that, if necessary, we can work with them and the appropriate synod to ensure language that will facilitate the possible action by the synod and the Churchwide Assembly. Clarity related to the action requested and appropriate assignment of responsibility is always helpful in memorials.

Annual Report of Congregations

One of the duties the constitution assigns to the secretary is "summarizing the information" received from the annual report of congregations. As those who have preceded me in this position have noted, the information is only as good as the number of congregations that respond with their reports. I stated last year that I would hope to work toward a goal of at least 80 percent of the congregations responding. We did not reach that goal last year. 76.6 percent of our congregations have reported. The good news is that this is up from 74.2 percent last year or an increase of 77 congregations.

I want to give special recognition to the bishops and staffs of the Southwestern Texas Synod, the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the La Crosse Area Synod for having 100 percent of their congregations turn in their reports. I would also recognize that the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, the Greater Milwaukee Synod, the Lower Susquehanna Synod, the Grand Canyon Synod, the Rocky Mountain Synod, the Northeastern Iowa Synod and the Alaska Synod all had over 90 percent of their congregations submitting reports.

The bottom line number that most ask about is the baptized membership. The baptized membership of this church is 3,765,403. This represents a decline of 2.53 percent from the previous year and continues a trend that has been seen since the formation of this church and among predecessor bodies. We lost 72 congregations and have 131 congregations under development. The largest category of baptized membership loss was again "statistical adjustment." This might be a fruitful area for further work by congregations to better understand what happened to these members.

Average worship attendance was 1,018,943 or a decline of 3.2 percent. This number has been declining at a roughly 3 percent average since 2007. 2010 and 2011 saw greater decline, but this year seems to continue this ongoing pattern. While the average Sunday attendance per congregation is 109, the fact is that 61.1 percent of our congregations average less than 100 persons in worship per Sunday. Of even greater concern is that 35.6 percent of the congregations averaged less than 50. We are a church with the majority of our congregations classified as small (51-100) or very small (50 or fewer). This fact will impact the ability of congregations to call full-time pastors and to have resources to enable them to reach out into their communities.

With these declines, it is good to observe that the regular giving by members did not decline at the same percentage as the membership or attendance declines. Our members' financial stewardship resulted in $1,752,813,988 given as unrestricted income to the congregations of this church. That represents a .93 percent decline over the previous year. Thus average member giving increased to $544.66 or an increase of 1.58 percent. Designated giving declined 1.3 percent. Current operating expenses increased by $25.7 million over the previous year. This may be a factor in the reduction of capital improvement expenditures and in a decline of overall mission support.

Mission support to synods and churchwide was down 1.13 percent to $99,379,449. The only areas of mission support or benevolence that saw an increase were benevolences outside the US, camps, colleges and other direct recipients. The congregations of this church gave over $13 million to projects outside this country and separate from the Global Mission work of this church. Synod and churchwide appeals received $18 million, which was down 8.4 percent from the previous year. Total benevolence giving, including mission support, was $206 million. This reflected 1 percent decline in total income.

We are not a poor church. Last year, congregations added to their endowments, memorial funds and savings accounts by $62,064,370. This brings the total for these funds to over $2.3 billion. When added to the value of real estate and other assets the congregations of this church have close to $20 billion in assets. How congregations steward these assets is an important question for the whole church. On the surface it would appear that congregations are responding to the declining membership numbers by increasing their savings and endowments in order to face an increasingly uncertain future.

Endorsed Insurance Program

It has been the practice of this office to occasionally report to you the status of the endorsed insurance program of this church. Currently that program is with Church Mutual Insurance. At this time 48 synods participate in the program. 3,290 of our congregations are in this program. Rob Thoma (Rob.Thoma@elca.org), Risk Manager, is able to address any questions related to this.

Synod Bishop Elections

We know that eight synods will be holding elections for bishop in 2016. We also know that new bishops will be elected in six of these synods. The Bishop's Election Toolkit is available in the resources section of the Office of the Secretary page of the ELCA website. There will be a couple of minor changes to what is there now, but essentially the toolkit is serving us well as it is currently written. Walter May and I will be scheduling conference calls for the eight synods in November or December. We will have individual calls with each synod's leadership next spring.

Final Thoughts

I have had opportunities in the Florida Bahamas Synod, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod and a Webinar for the Church Council to make a presentation on the polity of the ELCA. I am surprised that 27 years into this church our pastors and leaders do not know our polity. The language of one church with three expressions is used, but not understood. I would argue that a major reason why Bishop Eaton's emphasis on "church together" is catching on with our members is because we have not understood ourselves as church together. We have seemed to be in competition rather than working together. Congregation, synod and churchwide are foreign concepts to our pastors and a number of our elected lay leaders. I will continue to be available in whatever ways are helpful to work on this disconnect. The results of this disconnect do directly affect our governance, our method of sharing mission support, and our way of working together in this interdependent church. I would enjoy further conversation with you on how we might best address this concern of mine.

I am very thankful to work with the staff of this office. They are a very dedicated and hard-working group of people. The length of service to this church by the people working in the Office of the Secretary is impressive. I will continue to speak highly of them. I invite you to share your appreciation of their work while you meet just down the hall from their cubicles. It is an honor to serve this church with these colleagues.

We continue our preparations for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly reminded that we are "Freed and Renewed in Christ." Our planning, our governing documents, our roster manuals and our statistical reports are all to serve that truth. We are church together because the Holy Spirit has called, gathered and enlightened each of us. We have been freed, and in our renewal, the world is given hope. Thanks be to God.

Report of the Treasurer
2015 OPERATING RESULTS SUMMARY
FOR THE EIGHT MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

The churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had total operating revenue and support of $44.3 million for the eight-month period ended September 30, 2015, $0.9 million higher than expenses of $43.4 million. Net revenue over expenses is favorable to the period budget by $5.2 million, and $1.3 million more than the eight months ending September 30, 2014.

Revenue totaled $41.6 million for the eight-month period compared with $41.2 million the previous year, an increase of $0.4 million or 1.0 percent. In addition, $2.8 million in support was released from restriction or designation during the period. Total revenue and support for the eight-month period of $44.3 million was favorable to the budget by $1.6 million or 3.5 percent. Expenses related to the current operating fund of $43.4 million were below the authorized unit spending plans by $3.6 million, and constituted a decrease of $0.8 million from the previous year.

Income from congregations through synods in the form of Mission Support income for the eight months was $29.1 million, which is on budget, but unfavorable to the prior year by $0.6 million. The annual Mission Support budget for 2015 of $47.25 million is $1.2 million or 2.4 percent lower than the amount received in 2014.

Other unrestricted and temporarily restricted revenue and support available for the budgeted operations of the church amounted to $15.2 million compared with $14.1 million in the previous year. Income from Vision for Mission amounted to $0.4 million is slightly ahead of budget for the period. Income from Global Church Sponsorship (including missionary sponsorship) of $1.8 million is unfavorable to the current year budget, though favorable to the prior year results. Endowment distributions of $2.4 million were favorable to the budget by $0.1 million. Income from bequests and trusts of $3.1 million resulted in a favorable variance to the budget of $1.6 million. Investment income for the eight-month period amounted to $0.6 million, $0.4 million lower than the budget. The Mission Investment Fund provided grant support of $1.0 million to the churchwide organization. Additionally, other income of $3.1 million was received for the eight months.

Total contributions to ELCA World Hunger for the eight months were $9.9 million, favorable to the budget by $1.4 million and favorable to the prior year by $1.2 million. ELCA members and partners contributed $4.1 million for Lutheran Disaster Response in the eight-month period, primarily in support of the Nepal Region Earthquake Relief efforts and general undesignated programs. Lutheran Disaster Response has contributed $5.3 million in support, primarily to the Nepal Region Earthquake Relief, U.S. Tornadoes, and South Asia Disaster Preparedness.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign has now exceeded its $15.0 million five-year campaign goal. We celebrate that the success of this campaign reflects the generosity and commitment of our whole church in this global effort. We celebrate that the success of this campaign has meant life-saving programs and supplies provided through Lutheran companion churches and partners in 13 African countries.

Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA has raised $63.7 million in revenue and commitments to date in this five-year, comprehensive campaign. This amount represents 32.1 percent of the total goal of $198 million by January 31, 2019. In addition to results reported above, strong response to date has been in the areas of New Congregations, Fund for Leaders, and Global Church-Missionaries/Young Adults in Global Mission.

Report of the Vice President

In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

Diane and I taught our children two simple prayers as soon as they could talk: a bedtime prayer and a mealtime prayer. Soon after those prayers were mastered, work began on the Lord's Prayer. What parent hasn't smiled over the mispronunciations of a child saying the prayer Jesus taught us? Despite the difficult words, we know it is important that our children grow up saying this all encompassing prayer.

So from the very beginning, we learn as children to say that mysterious phrase, "Thy will be done." At that point, I would venture to say, the majority of children start the quest of finding just what "Thy" did and how "Thy" finished it.

My point is, we have learned from the very beginning of our praying days to ask God to guide us to do His will. But how do we know what the will of God is? How do we recognize it? From where does it come? Does it come with fanfare? Does a light bulb turn on? Do you feel it bonk you in the head?

Unfortunately, it rarely does any of those.

In order to recognize the will of God, we need to listen to the Holy Spirit. We need to let the Holy Spirit take over. The Holy Spirit knows us and knows the will of God. We do not know what is best for us. We are influenced by worldly things and earthly wants. The Spirit cuts past that and opens our mind to God's will.

Sometimes, what is God's will seems to be the most unlikely turn of events for us. If left to our own devices, we definitely would choose other paths. Those paths may not lead to the best outcome, however. Think of a time when a decision was made for you and you wondered, "Really???" This is how I came to be Vice President of the ELCA. Maybe "Really???" didn't actually come to my mind – it may have been a little stronger reaction….

Looking back over the last 12 years, I can see now that this path I have been on was God's will for me. I feel I was called at a certain place and time to do a job that God willed me to do.

It's hard to believe that it has been 12 years since I boarded that Continental Airlines flight to Milwaukee in order to deliver a report to the 2003 Churchwide Assembly. Coincidently, I was on that flight because I was elected by a one vote margin to deliver the report. Yes, that one vote put me in Milwaukee, in August of 2003, for a vice president election. The events of that week were too hard to believe. I felt totally unprepared but yet God put me there and did not abandon me. I have felt his presence many times throughout this journey.

So I firmly believe it was the will of God that I was called to this position. As elected leaders of this church, I'm sure you too understand the calling of God's will. But there is one thing I haven't yet grasped.

When does a call end?

I guess it all goes back to the words of the Lord's Prayer: Thy will be done. And it goes back to the advice from Romans: "…the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. "

I will rely on the Holy Spirit to speak God's will for me. I will be patient and quiet. I will have faith that what lead me to this place will lead me on in whatever direction God calls me in the future. I am also, however, conscious of a timeline. I will pray for discernment regarding another election/call process for vice president.

By now, I don't need to tell you how much I enjoy attending synod assemblies. This year was no different as I attended the Northeastern Pennsylvania and Metro Washington, D.C. synod assemblies. I am energized by having folks come together in one place and talk about their congregations, their synod's strengths, their passion for God's work and their concern about the future. The Holy Spirit is ever present at these gatherings as folks come to learn and discern God's will for His church. I feel all of us leave the assembly changed and transformed to serve the world with a reminder that we are more together than we are on our own. I am honored to serve the ELCA as a representative to these assemblies.

In June 2015, I attended the Unaccompanied and Migrant Children Consultation that was held in Chicago. During the last four years, the number of children migrating from Central America has been steadily increasing. Last year, almost 70,000 children and 70,000 families fled to the United States, most from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. The surge in unaccompanied children arriving in this country is a result of various risk factors such as lack of protection from drug trafficking, violence, sex trafficking and poverty.

I'm sure you have also read that in February 2015, a delegation of ELCA staff visited the region to hear firsthand why so many are forced to leave their communities and how our Lutheran companion churches are affected by these conditions. This consultation was the joint effort of our domestic and international churchwide organizational units. Its purpose is to create awareness about this issue and give our church's response to it across all its expressions. We hope to address the root causes of this surge of immigration and offer advocacy opportunities. This consultation group was charged with the development of a strategy for engagement with unaccompanied and migrant children (AMMPARO-Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunity) which will come to you for action at the April 2016 Church Council meeting. As members of the ELCA, we are called to love and welcome all. The ELCA is called to bear witness to the conditions affecting so many communities and work to find solutions that will acknowledge the humanity in all God's children.

On another front, the ELCA Malaria Campaign hit its $15 Million goal. Wow. We did it. It seemed like only yesterday that the Church Council and the 2011 Churchwide Assembly approved the goal. While $15 million was an ambitious amount, we were in the midst of both a recession and the impact of the Churchwide Assembly decisions of 2009. But in the words of our Presiding Bishop, "Our people responded generously!" As a result of campaign contributions, malaria programs in 13 African countries have been fully funded. Millions of community members were educated about the disease, thousands of volunteers were trained in disease prevention and treatment methods, 50,000 nets distributed, 32,000 pregnant women received prevention medication, and more. Diane and I were fortunate to serve on the National Leadership Team of the Campaign. I was also fortunate to travel to Zambia in 2013 with a delegation from the ELCA to observe the impact of our efforts. I was thoroughly pleased, seeing the many lives we have touched and the gratitude that poured from the people.

While we have met this important milestone, there is still much work to be done. The ELCA will continue its anti-malaria work after 2015 through ELCA World Hunger.

Finally, I would like to offer a word of thanks to our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton for her recent webcast on confronting racism, and to Bill Horne, a former member of the Church Council, for acting as the host. It was a fine presentation at a time when it is most needed. If you missed it, it's not too late. The web cast is available at elca.org/webcast and is ready to be viewed and shared.

In a world of tribulation, it is important that we come together as a church to discern ways to confront the social issues around us. Some issues may require very unpopular stands, but we are charged to study, confront, and discern God's will.

Thy will be done.

Engaging Others, Knowing Ourselves: A Lutheran Calling in a Multi-Religious World
A Resource for 2016 Synod Assembly Workshops and Beyond

We live and work in an increasingly multi-ethnic and interreligious context. In our daily encounter with diversity, what are the theological and practical challenges we face? What from our Lutheran tradition is instructive for understanding our inter-religious calling and living out our commitments? In short, what does it mean to be Lutheran in a multi-religious world?

In late 2012, the ELCA Consultative Panels on Lutheran-Jewish and Lutheran-Muslim Relations undertook an inter-religious case studies project to explore these questions. A call for submissions went out inviting real-life cases of inter-religious engagement in ELCA ministry contexts. Over 50 case studies were received and woven together with historical analysis, practical tips, and theological reflection, culminating in a book project that will be published by Lutheran University Press in early spring 2016. This book will be a contribution toward the 500th observance of the Reformation, and resource for ELCA-wide study, dialogue, and reflection.

A workshop template based on the key questions in the book will be made available by year-end for use at synod assemblies, convocations, theological conferences, rostered and lay leader gatherings, and other educational settings in 2016 and beyond. Churchwide staff, LEIRN representatives, and the authors of the book are willing resource people to lead such workshops. *Please contact your Synod Bishop/Assembly Planning Team to consider participating and what you need to support this work.* Contact your LEIRN rep or Kathryn Lohre, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop, Executive, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations for more information. Kathryn.Lohre@elca.org 773-380-2613

<u>BOOK OUTLINE</u>

Engaging Others, Knowing Ourselves: A Lutheran Calling in a Multi-Religious World

Foreword	Elizabeth Eaton
Preface	Esther Menn and Peg Schultz-Akerson
Introduction	Darrell Jodock
Chapter 1	Mark Swanson *New Realities, New Thinking Since 1990*
Chapter 2	Carol Schersten LaHurd *Guidelines for Interacting in the Real World*
Chapter 3	Jonathan Brockopp *Exploring the Uncomfortable Questions: The Experience of Inter-Religious Work*
Chapter 4	J. Paul Rajashekar *Our God and Their God: A Relational Theology of Religious Plurality*
Conclusion	Darrell Jodock

Response to Churchwide Assembly Actions

1. **Israel and Palestine**
Churchwide Assembly Action [CA13.06.27]

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Rocky Mountain, Southeast Michigan, Oregon, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Greater Milwaukee, Southwest California, Southeastern Iowa, New England, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana-Kentucky, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods related to Peacemaking with Justice in Israel and Palestine;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to:
- Continue its awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy on behalf of a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine;
- Learn more about the experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians and their mutual fears, aspirations, and hopes;
- Work to convey the concerns and perspectives of Palestinians and Israelis that dispel stereotypes and caricatures and promote better understanding;
- Lift up the voices within both communities, especially those of victims of violence, that seek peace with justice through nonviolent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
- Continue to help alleviate the humanitarian needs of all of those affected by the conflict;
- Support U.S. funding that promotes peace and cooperation for all parties to the conflict; and
- Continue to pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land;

To reaffirm the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action [CA 11.04.27] "to commend the policy, 'ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens,' to the members, congregations, synods, and agencies of this church; and to decline to undertake a review of the investment of funds managed within the ELCA but to commend these recommendations to the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Mission Advancement unit, and the ELCA Board of Pensions for consideration;"

To refer to the Global Mission unit, the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Mission Advancement unit, the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Treasurer, and Portico Benefit Services the matter of evaluating possibilities for investing in specific Palestinian economic endeavors and other projects that would promote peace and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians; and to provide a report with recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from Global Mission unit (April 2014)
At this time, our progress report is that conversations are ongoing with the various churchwide units as well as Portico Benefit Services. We would appreciate the opportunity to make a fuller report, including a comprehensive strategy, to a subsequent meeting of the Church Council.

Church Council Action (CC14.04.13e)
To receive the response from Global Mission and to grant an extension for a final report and possible recommendations; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

Response from Global Mission unit (April 2015)
The 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Action (CA13.06.27) requested, inter alia, a number of churchwide offices and units to evaluate "possibilities for investing in specific Palestinian economic endeavors and other projects that would promote peace and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians". The offices and units were Global Mission (GM) unit (convener), the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit, the Mission Advancement unit, the Office of the Secretary, the Office of

the Treasurer, and Portico Benefit Services. GM convened representatives of these entities and the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) on March 9, 2015.

In addition to those entities mentioned above, GM requested a GM person with accounting expertise who resides in Jerusalem, to undertake an initial informal survey of Palestinian investment possibilities. Other GM and CSM staff collected information about the activities of other churches and church-related organizations with respect to Palestinian investment. The information and findings were shared with those attending the March 9, 2015 meeting.

Staff also held an initial conversation with Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) in January and consultation will continue with him prior to the preparation of a final report. Among the topics discussed on March 9 were: background on earlier policy statements about economic measures; definitions of "investment" (economic, social, etc.) in this context; the range of recent financial support to the region by the ELCA; a continuum of possible economic instruments or measures that should be examined; and an outline of investment initiatives by other church-related entities in the region.

GM staff will continue to study these and other topics, and in the context of a small working group, craft language for the representatives of this ad hoc committee to review and discuss for a final report.

In consultation with Bishop Younan of the ELCJHL, the ad hoc committee, through GM as convener, will bring a final report and possible recommendations to the Church Council meeting in fall 2015.

Church Council Action (CC15.04.31i)

To receive the progress report from the Global Mission unit regarding Israel and Palestine; and

To request that a final report with possible recommendations be presented to the Church Council at its November 2015 meeting.

Response from Global Mission unit (November 2015)

ELCA Global Mission was designated to take the lead in preparing a response to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly memorial. After meeting with representatives from all of the ELCA units referenced in the memorial, the GM-based steering committee pursued four areas of inquiry:

1. Global Mission (GM) engaged our companion, Bishop Munib Younan and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) throughout the process, through initial conversations exploring "positive investment" vehicles in addition to GM's current financial commitments. Also, a GM colleague based in Jerusalem, with accounting expertise, consulted Palestinian entrepreneurs and financial institutions, such as the Bank of Palestine.
2. We interviewed each partner named in the memorial, the Mission Investment Fund and other stakeholders to understand their definitions of investment (economic, social, other) in Palestine, and specifically with those units and organizations who oversee ELCA fund management, to better understand their fiduciary duty in seeking a market rate of return.
3. We reviewed the work of other denominations, specifically the Presbyterian Foundation and The Episcopal Church.
4. We reviewed the range of our past and current financial commitments with the ELCJHL, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) -Jerusalem and other partners.

In January 2015, staff met with Bishop Younan to brief him on the task assigned to staff, seek his advice on the possibilities available for "positive investment," and describe our plans for response.

Determining possible parameters of "investment" was critical to our process and we examined a continuum of investment options available to the ELCA. We began by looking at traditional (financial) investment practices as well as the possibilities for other forms of economic investment (such as microfinance and online commerce). Then, we examined social investment or philanthropy; that is

investing in the lives of people and communities without expectation for a financial return.   In a related development this fall 2015, Portico has revealed a new initiative, Social Impact First. For this report, we speak of social investment as philanthropy, and Portico identifies social investment as one that provides a financial return. Traditional and social investments are both options for the ELCA.

We interviewed staff of Portico, the Mission Investment Fund, Mission Advancement and Office of the Treasurer to understand their specific charters and financial responsibilities. All of these ministries implement ELCA guidelines for socially responsible investing (SRI) along a continuum, while maintaining their fiduciary responsibility to be effective stewards of the funds entrusted to them. Portico's Social Impact First investing strives for greater social impact, by accepting when necessary, a slightly lower return and/or slightly higher risk (for up to 10 percent of assets in existing social purpose funds).

To see if investing in Palestine might be feasible, Portico has been collaborating with ecumenical partners, including the Pension Board of the United Church of Christ and the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church (Wespath), to learn more about potential investments in Palestine. However, it is uniquely challenging to uphold fiduciary responsibility while investing in Palestine. Given the volatility of the Middle East, the economic constraints inherent in the Occupation of Palestine, and the very low volume of options available, the financial return of investment in the region is well below market rate and considered high-risk. Therefore, because of the fiduciary duty of the aforementioned entities, opportunities for financial investment in Palestine are rather limited. Similarly, economic investment, as understood in a free market, is significantly restrained under the Israeli occupation where freedom of movement of people and goods is restricted; where access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities are restricted; and where access to and development of land is restricted. We also researched options in microfinance (Oikocredit and Kiva) and online commerce (Indiegogo and Kickstarter). Neither Oikocredit nor Kiva offered designated investing in Palestine; and the projects seeking funding in Indiegogo and Kickstarter suit individual investors, not large scale investing.

Concurrently, we examined the Presbyterian and The Episcopal Church investment practices in Palestine. We reviewed the work of the Presbyterian Foundation's Transformational Investment, where Presbyterian congregations and other Presbyterian-related entities are able to participate in the program through a revocable charitable trust of the Presbyterian Foundation. Currently, the Presbyterian Foundation and the Presbyterian Mission Agency have committed to invest up to $1.5 million. We also read about The Episcopal Church purchasing, in 2013, a three-year certificate of deposit (CD) for $500,000 in the Bank of Palestine. The investment will be for green loan programs and loans to help start and sustain small businesses. This investment was in response to a resolution at their 77th General Convention that affirmed positive investment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The ELCA is dedicated to long-term social investment with long-standing financial commitments to our companion church and related partners in Palestine. Therefore, the ELCA definition of investment includes social return on the ELCA's engagement with the ELCJHL, LWF – Jerusalem, and other entities. From Fiscal Year 2012 to Fiscal Year 2014, the ELCA has given over $2.2 million in grants to the ELCJHL, the LWF-operated Augusta Victoria Hospital, and to smaller initiatives like the Peace Center for the Blind. The Mission Investment Fund, reaching beyond its primarily domestic mission, loaned $1.2 million to Dar Al-Kalima College (also a beneficiary of the Presbyterian Foundation) and $1.5 million to the ELCJHL for the construction of the Baptismal Pilgrimage Site and Retreat Center at the Jordan River in Jordan. When reporting these financial commitments to those offices and units named in the memorial, many were impressed with the scope and depth of financial investment and encouraged that this information be shared.

In summary, the ELCA continues to stand with ELCJHL and ELCJHL's work to promote a just peace; the ELCA continues its long-term social investment in the region and the ELCA continues to

advocate through the Peace Not Walls campaign for the end of the Occupation at which time a range of financial investments may be possible in a free market environment.

> We recommend that the Church Council:
> 1) commend the ELCA's current social investment commitments to the ELCJHL, the LWF and other companions in the region; and
> 2) consider this report as an appropriate response to the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly on this matter.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To receive the report from the Global Mission unit in response to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action related to the matter of evaluating possibilities for investing in specific Palestinian economic endeavors and other projects that would promote peace and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians;

To commend the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's current social investment commitments to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, The Lutheran World Federation, and other companions in the region; and

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

2. **Social Statement** *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility*
   Churchwide Assembly Action [CA11.04.17]

1. To call upon members of this church to pray, work, advocate and apply genetic knowledge and technology in ways that respect and promote the community of life justly and wisely;
2. To call upon congregations and other sites of ministry to give renewed attention to becoming places of koinonia in Christ that foster a deepened understanding of and commitment to baptismal vocation, everyday callings and moral formation and discernment;
3. To encourage leaders in conferences, synods or other appropriate bodies to compile lists of resources for their jurisdictions to which pastors, counselors and individuals can turn for help when seeking information or guidance in dealing with genetic issues;
4. To call upon this church's advocacy ministries to support and advocate for measures consistent with this social statement;
5. To affirm the study document "Genetics and Faith: Power, Choice and Responsibility" as a resource for ongoing deliberation and discernment, and to direct the Theological Discernment team of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to maintain its availability as long as demand continues;
6. To affirm the 2004 ELCA Social Policy Resolution "Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply" and its continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;
7. To encourage the churchwide organization to maintain a database of ELCA members with expertise related to genetic science and technology that can serve as a primary resource for consultation;
8. To direct the Theological Discernment team of the Office of the Presiding Bishop to assess the feasibility of developing a social message on regenerative medicine, including, but not limited to, a range of stem cell technologies; and to bring to the ELCA Church Council in November 2013 a report and possible recommendations, in accordance with Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns (Chicago: ELCA, 1997, revised 2011); and
9. To call upon the Office of the Presiding Bishop to establish and oversee a process of implementation and accountability for Genetics, Faith and Responsibility and to report annually on implementation to the ELCA Church Council through November 2015, with progress reports made available through www.elca.org.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2015)

In recent social statements an implementing resolution (IR) has been included that directed or called upon units of the churchwide organization to provide for accountability and report on implementation. In IR#9, "Genetics, Faith and Responsibility*" (2011)* called for an annual report to Church Council through the fall of November 2015. While there have been numerous activities to report in previous years, (see Fall Church Council reports 2012-2014), visible activity has waned in 2015 with some important exceptions.

The first two Resolutions #1 and 2 of *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* are unquantifiable or difficult to assess, especially in terms of congregations seeking "to becoming places of Koinonia in Christ." Barring a churchwide survey, it also remains difficult to report accurately on what actions were generated by Resolution #3, which encourages church leaders "to compile lists of resources for their jurisdictions" that might help pastors and others seeking to deal with generic issues.

ELCA advocacy ministries (Resolution #4) have not placed a high priority on genetic issues in 2015 because other concerns have been more dominant across the country. Advocacy staff is familiar with the statement and indicate that they refer to it on occasion. Likewise, the study that led to the social statement remains available as directed in IR#5, but very few copies have been purchased. If staff capacity permits in 2016, a study guide will be created to fulfill ELCA protocol of providing a standing study guide to each social statement and this will replace the dated and lengthy study "Genetics and Faith: Power, Choice and Responsibility."

Although activity has waned this year, there are two significant indicators of the statement's efficacy. As ELCA social responsibility screens and issue paper are being revised, themes and commitments from *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* are altering or reinforcing commitments in those documents, as is evident this year in the case of the Corporate Social Responsibility documents on climate change and environmental. Most notably, The Episcopal Church USA at its July General Convention adopted resolutions and an action plan regarding genetically modified organisms that were explicitly sourced by the ELCA statement. The "Working Paper on Resolution A-013," which led to the Convention's actions, cites *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* and *Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply* [reaffirmed in Resolution #6] as source documents. Further, Resolution A-013 expressly "commends the leadership of the ELCA [for its work.] Noting that the issues are complex, [it] calls upon the [Episcopal] Church to follow the example of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and other denominations in seeking to identify the moral, ethical and theological principles....the ELCA adopted in 2011 a social statement on genetics that reviews theological and ethical issues of genetic engineering in significantly greater depth and with an impressive sense for nuance."

Resolution #7 encourages the churchwide organization to maintain a database of ELCA members with relevant expertise and an initial, brief list compiled in late 2011 remains available. No further efforts have been made to create an integrated database at Churchwide Organization as a matter of staff capacity. It is notable that not a single request has come asking for help in identifying expertise. Resolution #8 directs the Theological Discernment team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop to assess "the feasibility of developing a social message on regenerative medicine..." and to bring a report to the ELCA Church Council by November 2013, but an extension has been requested until November 2016.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To receive the final annual report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop in response to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action related to the implementing resolutions for the social statement, Genetics, Faith and Responsibility.

Responses to Synodical Resolutions

1. **U.S. Government Aid to the State of Israel**
   Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [2015]
   >   RESOLVED, that members of the congregations of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod be encouraged to contact their congressional representatives and their senators to encourage their support and action to terminate U.S. financial aid until the state of Israel seeks a peace agreement, ends its occupation of Palestinian territory and enables an independent Palestinian state; and be it further
   >   RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly through the Synod Council make this resolution known to members of the Illinois Congressional delegation who serve citizens living in our synod and the public at large; and be it further
   >   RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Executive Committee Action [EC15.08.14]
    To receive the resolution from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod concerning U.S. Government Aid to the State of Israel; and
    To refer the resolution to the Global Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Response from the Global Mission unit (November 2015)
    We encourage ELCA members on a near-monthly basis to be in touch with their elected officials with regard to the importance of reaching a just peace agreement between Israel and Palestine. Often the importance of ending the occupation and the need for a two-state solution are included. With regard to U.S. financial aid to Israel and the need for it to be used consistent with human rights provisions in U.S. law, we have raised this issue from time to time, most notably in an October 2012 letter to Members of Congress and most recently in an August 2015 action alert. We are aware of other related memorials that have already been forwarded to the Office of the Secretary and this matter will be considered among the memorials being sent to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
    To receive the response from the Global Mission unit related to the resolution of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod concerning U.S. Government Aid to the State of Israel;
    To note that this matter will be considered along with other memorials on Israel and Palestine already addressed to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly as the response of Church Council to the resolution of this synod; and
    To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

2. **Strategic Plan**
   Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I) [2015]
   >   RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, in assembly, ask the ELCA Church Council to initiate, in partnership with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the synodical expression of this church, a thorough assessment of all churchwide and synodical ministries:
   >   1. to identify and review which ministries each expression is doing individually, cooperatively and in partnership with other agencies;
   >   2. to identify any additional ministries each expression should be doing;
   >   3. to evaluate the importance and effectiveness of those ministries to the mission of this church; and
   >   4. to develop an opinion about which ministries can be done most effectively by each expression individually, cooperatively or in partnership with other agencies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod request that, on the basis of that assessment, the Church Council develop funding proposals for those ministries including new mission support goal percentages; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod ask the Church Council to present recommendations arising from this strategic plan to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly for action.

Executive Committee Action [EC15.07.12c]

To receive the resolution from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod concerning a strategic plan for this church; and

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2015)

At the April 2015 meeting of the Church Council, it took action on a number of mission funding matters. It acknowledged that the "uniform percentage guidelines for mission support are no longer appropriate across all synods" (CC15.04.11). Further, it approved "the development, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Office of the Presiding Bishop, of a contextually sensitive, substantive and collaborative process which will result in synod-specific percentage goals for each of the 65 synods by no later than the April 2018 meeting of the Church Council" (CC15.04.11).

In addition, Church Council asked the presiding bishop to convene a team "to sharpen the priorities of this church and bring greater clarity about what this church will do and will not do in order to serve God's mission more faithfully and effectively in the years to come" (CC15.04.10).

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has been working with a consultant on this request and has developed a process design to address strategic directions for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She has consulted with the Administrative Team, the Executive Committee of the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops regarding this possible process and has received positive feedback. Church Council will be discussing the process design at its November 2015 meeting.

The process will deliver:

- A directional statement on the identity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and high level priorities that provide a sharpened and common focus for leadership of the church. This would be linked to and help to interpret Bishop Eaton's four emphases: We are Lutheran; We are church; We are church together; and, We are church for the sake of the world;
- Ownership of the directions and priorities by church leaders, especially the Conference of Bishops and Church Council;
- Motivation and renewed energy across this church to serve God's mission faithfully and more effectively and to work together to build a thriving, connected and sustainable church; and
- A common strategic framework for other levels of planning, including operational planning by the churchwide organization and synodical mission planning.

Bishop Eaton is seeking broad participation across this church, including the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. As was intended in the Church Council action, the "Future Directions Table" will have a role in generating and drawing together thinking as the process moves forward. A range of processes and mechanisms would be used to achieve engagement and generate conversations.

It is proposed that the directional statement will be launched as part of the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. This provides an ideal opportunity for all church leaders to communicate a shared vision for the future of this church. It is an ambitious process that will require bold leadership, tight management and a very clear communication strategy.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:
 To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to the resolution of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod concerning a strategic plan for this church;
 To note that this matter is currently being initiated through the presiding bishop's process design; and
 To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

3. **Amending the "Model Constitution for Congregations" Regarding Discipline**
   Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D) [2015]
   > RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod Assembly recommend changes in the congregational disciplinary process (C15.01., ff.) laid out in the latest iteration of the "Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA" either to return to the previous wording, which has Congregational Councils part of the process, or to find language which puts Congregational Councils back into the currently prescribed system; and be it further
   > RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho 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.

Executive Committee Action [EC15.07.12c]
 To receive the resolution from the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod concerning amendments to the "Model Constitution for Congregations" regarding discipline; and
 To refer the resolution to the Office of the Secretary for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Response from the Office of the Secretary (November 2015)
 The previous wording that is requested by this resolution had the congregation council acting in multiple roles in the process of the discipline of congregation members. It also allows the member who might be under discipline to appeal to the Synod Council. The current process does not remove the congregation council from the process. The congregation council, instead of being the recipient of the charges, now is the body that prepares the charges for submittal to the appropriate synod committees and represents the congregation throughout the process.
 In fact, the previous system did not work to resolve conflicts in part because the congregation council was placed in an impossible situation. The current process has the council taking a significant role, but not the role of determining the outcome. The current process seeks to establish a method of hearing the complaint and deciding on possible discipline while allowing the council to continue to function in providing leadership for the whole congregation. It is the opinion of the secretary that this resolution's proposed change should not be made.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:
 To receive with thanks the resolution of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod concerning constitutional amendments in the congregational disciplinary process;
 To receive the response from the Office of the Secretary related to the resolution;
 To decline to amend the "Model Constitution for Congregations"; and
 To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

4. **Solar Power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia**
   Northeastern Minnesota Synod (3E) [2015]

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod endorse the Phebe Hospital solar energy project and encourage the intentional efforts of each congregation throughout the synod to raise awareness and funding for this project in the month of August; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod call upon the other synods in Minnesota and across the ELCA to embrace the "Solar August" awareness and funding opportunity; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Solar Power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia
Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D) [2015]

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly answer the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly's call and stand with its brothers and sisters in faith to support the Phebe Hospital solar energy project and encourage the intentional efforts of each congregation throughout its synod to raise awareness and funding for this project in the month of August; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Council to unite with the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council in forwarding this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Solar Power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2015]

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly answer the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly's call and stand with its brothers and sisters in faith to support the Phebe Hospital solar energy project and encourage the intentional efforts of each congregation throughout this synod to raise awareness and funding for this project in the month of August; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council to unite with the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council in forwarding this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Solar Power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia
Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2015]

RESOLVED that the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly answer the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly's call and stand with its brothers and sisters in faith to support the Phebe Hospital solar energy project and encourage the intentional efforts of each congregation throughout its synod to raise awareness and funding for this project in the month of August, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly direct the Upper Susquehanna Synod Council to unite with the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council in forwarding this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee.

Executive Committee Action [EC15.05.09]

To receive the resolution from the Northeastern Minnesota Synod concerning solar power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia; and

To refer the resolution to the Global Mission unit for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Executive Committee Action [EC15.07.12c]

To receive the resolution from the Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Pennsylvania, and the Upper Susquehanna Synods concerning solar power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia; and

To refer the resolution to the Global Mission unit for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Response from the Global Mission unit (November 2015)

The Global Mission unit is working with Women of the ELCA, which is coordinating the fund-raising effort to bring solar power to Phebe Hospital in Liberia. Global Mission staff in Liberia, who has an engineering background, is liaising with the Rural Renewal Energy Alliance for the planning and anticipated implementation phases of the project. Therefore, Global Mission expects to have this staff expertise continue to be available to help oversee the project's implementation if and when the required funds have been received.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*
Recommended:

To receive the response from the Global Mission unit related to the resolution of the Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Minnesota, Northeastern Pennsylvania and Upper Susquehanna synods concerning solar power at Phebe Hospital in Liberia;

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

Resolution 10

**LUTHER SEMINARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND
FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**JOINT RESOLUTION REGARDING
A RESPONSE TO THE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (TEAC)
REPORT OF OCTOBER 2015
October 10, 2015**

WHEREAS, the TEAC Report has been shared and conversations have begun across our ELCA church body regarding our theological education system;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we as the Luther Seminary Board of Directors, and the Luther Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees, (the "Joint Boards") are committing to engage the TEAC report's three recommendations and their content more deeply at our February meeting, which recommendations are:

- to create and sustain a network of theological education that "serves the mission of the gospel";
- to link vocational discernment and theological education for specific target audiences in and beyond the church, particularly on those whose leadership will strengthen the "missional future" of the ELCA; and
- to ensure the mission vibrancy and financial stability of the ELCA seminaries as they serve "their crucial roles in our theological education network." and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Joint Boards encourage our sister seminaries and our whole church body to similar engagement, reflection and discernment, and are thankful for the report we received by Baker Tilly and the discussion that followed which helped us think more deeply; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Joint Boards, find the thought experiments found in the Baker Tilley Report helpful in pushing us to begin to think our way into these potential futures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Joint Boards intend to give further input to the ELCA Church Council for their April meeting; and, finally,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Joint Boards are thankful for the conversations of synods, bishops, seminary presidents, board chairs, deans and encourage these cross conversations inside our seminary system and across the Church.

Resolution 10

_____

Becky Brown,
Secretary of the Board of Directors

_____

Michael Morrow,
Treasurer of the Foundation Board of Trustees
on behalf of
Michael Schwartz,
Secretary of the Foundation Board of Trustees

_____

Date

Resolution from the Board of Directors Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

WHEREAS, the Church Council of the ELCA recognized a need to study the Lutheran theological educational system; and,

WHEREAS, the Theological Education Advisory Council retained the services of Baker-Tilley to undertake a thorough examination of the future of the eight Lutheran Theological Seminaries in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Baker-Tilley and the Theological Education Advisory Council have completed their studies and issued their recommendations; and,

WHEREAS the Conference of Bishops in a statement issued October 5, 2015 voted to reject the status quo; and,

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, is in agreement with the broad observations of the Conference of Bishops;

WHEREAS at its meeting of October 2014, the board of Gettysburg Seminary encouraged ongoing exploration of expanded collaboration and a concept of "Two Seminaries with One Administration and one Faculty," which was lifted up in joint meetings of the officers of Gettysburg and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia;

We as the Board of Directors hereby recognize that theological education in the ELCA is at a critical moment requiring transformative change in the way theological education is structured.

NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Board of Directors develop a task force of seminary community members to explore the ways to move toward a common education enterprise designed to lift up rostered leaders in a meaningful, formative and sustainable manner; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors invite the other seven seminaries to join with us in moving forward in the exploration of ways to develop a sustainable model of theological education that embraces the changes recommended by the Baker-Tilley report and the recommendations of the Conference of Bishops; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors petition the Presiding Bishop that she or her designees provide funding to support these efforts which might lead to radical change in the seminary system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors expresses its gratitude for the conversations of Church Council, synods, bishops, seminary presidents, board chairs, deans and congregants as we mutually join together to find sustainable paths to ensure strong institutions for the education and training of Lutheran theologians and leaders.

Action taken on October 14, 2015

— over —

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is at a transformative time in its history of theological education; and,

WHEREAS, it is the belief of the LTSG Board of Directors that the structure of theological education will be materially different from the status quo within the next two years;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors hereby suspends, for a two year period, its current search for a Dean, after which, if the anticipated reconfiguration of seminaries fails to be achieved, the search will resume.

Resolution of the
Advisory Council of the
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
November 7, 2015

Whereas, the Report of the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) was distributed widely to foster conversations throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) regarding this church's systems and patterns of theological formation and education; and

Whereas, three recommendations of the TEAC report point to the urgent need throughout this church: (1) to create and sustain a network of theological education that "serves the mission of the gospel"; (2) to link vocational discernment and theological education for specific target audiences in and beyond this church, particularly on those whose leadership will strengthen the "missional future" of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and (3) to ensure the mission vibrancy and financial stability of the ELCA seminaries as they serve "their crucial roles in our theological education network"; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, which is part of the School of Theology of Lenoir-Rhyne University of Hickory, N.C., endorses in principle all efforts to be effective and efficient in the system of theological formation throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Columbia, S.C., expresses gratitude for the conversations of members and leaders throughout the ELCA – including members of the Conference of Bishops, members of the ELCA Church Council, seminary presidents and provosts, deans, board and council chairs, faculties, and leaders of congregations in the hope that such discussions will lead to reflection, discernment, and constructive actions – under the guidance of God's Spirit – for a wholesome and productive future in theological formation throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary commits itself to being a full partner in these discussions, and to working with the other seminaries of the ELCA to help shape the future of theological education as a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

((LTSS-11-2015-ADVISORY COUNCIL-LTSS-TEAC RESPONSE.doc))

**TRINITY
LUTHERAN
SEMINARY**

2199 East Main Street
Columbus, Ohio 43209-2334
614.235.4136
www.TLSohio.edu

November 7, 2015

Dear ELCA Church Council:

Grace, life, and hope to you in the name of the living Christ!

We commend the Theological Education Advisory Council for their work and the Baker Tilly report that informed it. Together, with the October 5th letter to you from the Conference of Bishops, they have raised the urgency of attending to our theological educational network. We join our bishops in recognizing that this is indeed a Kairos Moment for theological education. Moreover, we propose that this is a Kairos Moment for the life and vitality of our entire church.

Trinity commits to innovation and collaboration with our kindred seminaries and other institutions of higher education in the formation of thoughtful, passionate, faithful, and evangelical leaders for the sake of God's church in the world. As we write this letter to you, Trinity is already executing a bold strategic plan, fiscally sustainable and grounded in mission, which realizes much of the vision of the TEAC recommendations.

As we move forward, it is our hope that together we pay attention to the whole ecology of the ELCA – congregations, emerging ministries, synods, Churchwide, youth ministries, camps, seminaries, colleges and universities, campus ministries, and all our agencies and ecumenical partners – so that the entire church can experience new life and thrive together. As we understand our God as three distinct and interrelated persons in mission, so we see our calling within God's calling as distinct and interrelated entities serving God's work in the world.

Although only God knows the future, we do know the tomb is empty; thus, we willingly embrace new possibilities and the risk in realizing them. We know the reward is great as we strive to raise up leaders so all can live into God's mission of hope, healing, and reconciliation in the world.

In church together with you,

Carrie E. Cubberley

Carrie Cubberley, Chair

The Board of Directors
Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Columbus, Ohio

Trinity Lutheran Seminary forms leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

LTSP Board Resolution Concerning TEAC's Report and Recommendations
October 28th, 2015

In the belief that we are at a turning point in theological education, in response to the recommendations of the ELCA's Theological Education Advisory Council, with confidence in and full support of LTSP's mission to educate public leaders for a public Church, and prompted by the Spirit to risk significant change for the sake of that mission, the Board of Trustees will explore bold possibilities by which we can re-imagine theological education that is distinctly Lutheran and transparently ecumenical, sustainable to LTSP and affordable to our students, deeply engaged with the other seminaries of the ELCA and our regional partners, and responsive to our local and global context in order to prepare public leaders for a public Church that meets the deepest needs of the world God loves so much. The Board will consider the most promising possibilities at a specially called meeting in January so that we may move with equal measures of creativity and confidence into a future we confess God is fashioning.

David Lose
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

ELCA Seminary Deans Response to TEAC

The ELCA Deans, meeting on October 30, 2015, expressed appreciation for the TEAC recommendations and the supporting data provided by the Baker-Tilly report. We express deep gratitude for the work of the committee members and each of the three recommendations. We offer this collective response.

First, we affirm the attention given to the priority of theological education in our church as demonstrated through the TEAC process. Excellence in leadership is indispensable for the functioning of the church at all levels. Faithful and wise leaders are needed in order that the church remains focused on its identity and mission in Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to working together collaboratively to form and educate the adaptive leaders needed by the church in all its expressions in service to God's mission in Christ for the life of the world.

Second, we underscore the urgency of efforts across the church to raise up and prepare leaders for service in Christ's church. The supply of those entering into rostered ministry in the ELCA is already not meeting the demand expressed by synods for first call pastors. We also affirm the value of seminary involvement in efforts to provide regularized continuing education for rostered leaders and theological education for all the baptized. Models such as Project Connect provide guidance as we organize common efforts for fostering a culture of call in raising up leaders in the ELCA. We believe that this sense of urgency about inviting, encouraging, and preparing leaders for service in the ELCA should serve as the presupposition for all other proposals about theological education.

Third, we commit ourselves to ongoing collaborative engagement around the purposes expressed in these recommendations. There exists a strong spirit of cooperation and innovation among the ELCA deans. At our meeting we expressed particular interest in several possible endeavors at new collaboration: more focussed attention on course sharing (for example, January term and elective offerings taught across the seminaries in areas of specialization); developing some common online courses at the Masters level, as continuing education for rostered leaders, and for members of congregations; a possible online webpage to serve as a clearing house for such offerings; shared teacher training events for faculty members, including training for online teaching; collaborative development of courses in areas such as rural/urban ministry, curriculum taught in Spanish, or interfaith dialogue; exploration of models for collaboration in Ph.D. programs; and exploring the possibilities of shared faculty research in areas of particular importance to the church's life and mission.

Fourth, we intend to advance the innovative work we have already commenced. We especially affirm the contributions of the two embedded seminaries to our common work. At our meeting we resolved to seek advice from the seminary admissions directors related to a common admissions application and shared admissions work. We also invited our colleagues from the ELCIC to provide a response to the TEAC process for the work we share with our partner seminaries in Canada. We also pledge ourselves to active participation in the Academic Learning Exchange project, which demonstrates a high level of commitment to intentional and expanded collaboration among seminaries and with many other partners in theological education.

In conclusion, we note an inner tension in the TEAC documents between fiscal urgency and the call to innovation. It is important that we work together toward both of these ends, not allowing the tension to collapse toward an expediency that would undermine mission vibrancy and the call to innovation here articulated. We are grateful to serve as partners with the church in this process.

Brad Binau, Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Mary Sue Dreier, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
Gordon Jensen, Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon
Craig Koester, Luther Seminary
Kristin Johnston Largen, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
Esther Menn, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Chicago
Craig Nessan, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Chair
Kiran Sebastian, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
Alicia Vargas, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

1   **A Social Message on[*]...**

2   # Gender-based Violence

3   Gender-based[1] violence is an ancient sin that for thousands of years has harmed countless
4   women, children and men. It is a sin that Christians need to recognize, understand and confront,
5   for our religious history also bears its stain. The following story from II Samuel 13 is a case in
6   point. (As a matter of self care, survivors may wish to skip Tamar's story or the side bar boxes
7   that illustrate gender-based violence.)

8   ## Tamar's story: power and sexual violence

Tamar was King David's daughter. Her half-brother Amnon, King David's first-born son, raped her after he tricked her into his house. Then he threw her out on her own.

No one listened to Tamar. Amnon ignored her pleas not to rape her and not to cast her out. She courageously begged Amnon to follow Israel's laws and not sexually attack her. She tried to protect herself but could not.

Absalom, Tamar's brother, told her to be silent about Amnon raping her. Two years later, he killed Amnon.

King David did nothing. Although David was angry when he found out what Amnon had done, he protected Amnon because he wanted him to be the next king. He had the means to hold Amnon accountable and to care for Tamar. Instead, he was silent; he did not seek justice for her or become her ally.

Those who could have intervened on her behalf did not. *They* made her into "a desolate woman."

Read II Samuel 13 (partial passage here)

[19]But Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore the long robe that she was wearing; she put her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went.[20]Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house.

[21]When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry, but he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn.

34   (See II Samuel 13:1-33.) Tamar was silenced and
35   isolated. She alone lamented what others had done to her.
36
37   David and others completely failed Tamar. She is not mentioned again in Scripture. Although
38   God loved Tamar, she suffered from human violence in this broken and sinful world.
39   God also loved David. God sent prophets to confront him because his leadership often created a
40   web of deceit, violence and silence. If only David, God's anointed king of Israel, had supported

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[*] The ELCA Church Council adopted this social message along with foundational documentation that goes deeper into explanation and analysis. Readers are encouraged to use that document as a supplemental resource. It can be found at http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages, select "gender-based violence."

41 Tamar and been her ally in this web of power and violence! Tamar suffered from gender-based
42 violence, and the consequences of that violence reverberated through Israel as a community.
43
44 God loved Israel, too. God's steadfast mercy endured their failures, but out of that same love,
45 God continually confronted them and called them to do good for all people, especially people
46 who are harmed, like Tamar. The story of Tamar, Amnon, Absalom and David challenges us
47 today as a call to God's people in Christ to respond to gender-based violence.
48
49 People continue to be harmed. Gender-based violence is a global evil that marks millions of
50 lives. As a church of Jesus Christ, we deplore this suffering and we confess our collective and
51 individual complicities in this violence in both church and society. The complex factors that
52 contribute to the prevalence of this sin are deeply woven into society and into individual lives.
53
54 As a member of Christ's body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) shares in
55 the brokenness and judgment brought on by gender-based violence. This church's members are
56 survivors, perpetrators and bystanders. Like Amnon, we have violated others. Like David, we
57 have protected perpetrators. Like Absalom, we

> **Types of gender-based violence**
> Gender-based violence is physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or other personal harm inflicted on someone for gender-based reasons. It may characterize or include the following:
> Sexual and other physical assault, including murder; rape; sexual harassment (sometimes called bullying); sexual, physical and verbal abuse, including coercion; stalking; intimate relationship violence that includes employment, housing or educational intimidation and obstruction; elder abuse or child abuse; sex-specific torture; reproductive coercion; female genital mutilation; early and forced marriage; honor crimes; "mail-order" brides; dowry violence; practices used to decrease the number of girl babies, such as prenatal sex selection, infanticide or child neglect; sex tourism; forced prostitution; human trafficking for sex; pornography; and violence during armed conflict, including rape, enslavement, torture and murder.

58 have silenced survivors. Like all of them, we
59 often have created a web of isolation, shame and
60 desolation.
61
62 We also proclaim, however, that God loves us
63 and seeks to restore and heal us through the
64 power of the Holy Spirit. Like Tamar, this
65 church in this message is speaking against
66 gender-based violence. This church, which like
67 King David has neglected to act in the past, is
68 also beloved by God, inspired by the Spirit and
69 called to confront this problem.
70
71 Adopted by the ELCA Church Council, this
72 social message, with its foundational
73 documentation, is one way to express that call.[*]
74 This church commits itself to provide care,
75 become educated, create accountability, and
76 advocate. This church is responding to God's
77 call to engage in this work as allies in the efforts
78 to create safe and healthy communities.

79 **What might this church say pastorally?**
80 This church includes survivors, bystanders and
81 perpetrators. Gender-based violence affects each differently—some with the terror of being hurt,
82 some with the fear that comes from seeing or hearing about violence, and some with the
83 brokenness of those who do violence to others.
84
85 Our bodies, hearts and minds are beloved by a gracious God who created each person in God's
86 own image (Genesis 1:27) and redeemed us through Christ. God weeps with us because we hurt
87 and betray each other. The body of Christ is wounded and longs for healing.

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[*] See previous footnote.

88
89 Words and acts of healing and reconciliation will be different for different people and
90 circumstances. What is not different is each person's need for God's grace. Through words of
91 pastoral care, this church, made of those who, at the same time, are both saints and sinners, can
92 speak by the power of the Holy Spirit.
93

94 *With survivors:*
95 God says "No!" to the violence inflicted on us by others. God is against gender-based violence
96 because through it, someone has treated us like an object and violated our bodies, hearts and
97 minds. God has created our whole being and loves us dearly, heart, mind and body.
98

99 Sometimes it seems as if faith is only about our hearts and minds, but faith is also about our
100 bodies. One of our church's pastors writes, "Bodies which have been assaulted and abused are
101 loved by Christ, anticipated in his death, redeemed through his incarnation and resurrection, and
102 will be healed and restored in God's own time. The body remains precious despite the injury
103 done to it."[2]
104

105 This is good news! God knows and loves us deeply. Our violated bodies are known by Jesus who
106 was also exposed, tormented and wounded. He also cried out to ask why God had forsaken him
107 in his deepest moments of need and fear (Mark 15:34). We are fully beloved, and God promises
108 restoration and healing.
109

110 God does not intend for us to suffer through any abuse or violence. But we live in a broken and
111 sinful world, and we do suffer. In spite of our suffering we need to have the courage to report
112 what has happened. The church is here to accompany us, to remind us that nothing shall separate
113 us from grace and healing in Jesus Christ, not even the one(s) who hurt us (Romans 8:35).
114

115 Together we will speak and act on the promise of resurrection life in Christ, not only for the
116 future but for healing in this life. God seeks to heal the effects of sin that we know too deeply;
117 God's power and presence can bring new life to our bodies, minds and spirits.
118

119 *With those who commit gender-based violence:*
120 Because we are each beloved by God, God grieves deeply when we inflict gender-based violence
121 on someone. The violence we impose hurts someone God created, and this hurt spreads out
122 through the community.
123

124 Without self-control and giving priority to the need of others to be safe and healthy, we are
125 vulnerable to abusing our strength, thought and action by being violent. We are responsible—and
126 even if it does not seem like there is a way to stop, our recovery from being violent is our
127 responsibility. God calls us to repent and to seek forgiveness.
128

129 Recovery is possible and takes a lot of work. We have to recognize that what we are doing or
130 have done is wrong, and we have to want to change. We need professional help. Guilt may make
131 us feel as if we can never really recover, but God's grace beckons us into new life.
132

133 Focus on living into God's grace, trusting God, and letting go of violence. The church is with us
134 through Christ, to hold us accountable for what we have done, to find the help we need, and to
135 help us live in the hope of restoration through God's grace.
136

137 *With bystanders:*

138 By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are connected to the pain and fear of others in the body of
139 Christ. Yet gender-based violence affects not only the Church but entire communities and
140 ultimately all of society.
141
142 We are often compelled into silence and fear when we know about gender-based violence. We
143 don't want to become targets ourselves. Or we may want to protect our status or that of others.
144 But God calls each of us to take care of our neighbors far and near, including those who inflict

145 violence and those who are harmed.

Each one of us has the responsibility through Christ to intervene in appropriate ways, to work toward healing, and to prevent gender-based violence. Just as God commands that no one has the right to kill another person, as Lutherans we also believe that God calls us to protect each other "from the wickedness and violence of others."[3]

1. What is gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence is sin. While it takes many forms, in all its variations gender-based violence attacks, violates and often destroys the good that God brings to life.

Gender-based violence is physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or other personal harm inflicted on someone for gender-based reasons. It is important to remember that gender-based violence is not only domestic violence or violence among family members.

It occurs in the Church, workplaces, the educational system, city streets, war, the military, and the health care system. It occurs, for example, by acquaintances, friends, strangers, caregivers, teachers, clergy, coaches, and work supervisors. Through this violence, someone creates or maintains power and control over someone else. God calls us to love. Gender-based violence is not love.

Governments, activists and experts have amply documented the wide-ranging and long-lasting destructive effects of this violence on victims and survivors, on family and friends, and on the whole human community. It creates not only personal suffering but also losses across the country—of peaceful communities, medical care costs and economic productivity. Gender-based violence is a public health and safety crisis.

As a community of faith, we also insist that this violence is an assault on spiritual life.
- It rejects the created goodness and dignity that God gives to every human creature.
- It violates the joy and freedom of the reconciled life

185 accomplished through Jesus Christ and given by God for all
186 humankind to enjoy, as individuals and in community.

Incidents across the country**

Two men severely beat and tortured a young gay man and then hung him on a country barbed-wire fence in Wyoming to die. (1998)

A sixth-grade New Jersey girl was sexually harassed every day by a boy, sometimes by groups of students. A female aide harassed her. A teacher witnessed one incident. The principal was "too busy" to meet with the harasser. Under doctor's orders the next year, she had to withdraw from school. (2012)

A transgender woman was shot in Michigan, her body so badly burned it took 11 days to identify her. (2013)

Three men broke into a home in Wisconsin and raped a woman who was six months pregnant after they beat her husband. (2014)

Two Ohio teen boys videotaped, photographed and tweeted images and commentary of their rape and hours-long assault on an unconscious teen girl. Dozens of students shared the images. At least three adults were indicted for obstruction. (2012)

**These are descriptive narratives of actual events. For reference information, see endnote number 21

187   • It attacks the gifts in each person that are given by the Holy Spirit for the common good.
188

189   Simply stated, gender-based violence in all its forms is a sinful rebellion against the triune God
190   and a rejection of God's good work in this world.
191
192

193   As a church we recognize and deplore the horrific suffering caused by gender-based violence
194   globally. This message focuses on the United States because we believe that this church has a
195   distinct responsibility to address the violence in our own communities.
196

197   At the same time, we affirm that national and global analysis and efforts must be related. This
198   church's global responsibilities depend upon many ecumenical, interfaith and secular partners
199   with whom we are allies in the struggle against gender-based violence.[4]

2. Who is involved?

201   The scope of gender-based violence is vast. People of all incomes and of all ethnicities and all
202   nations suffer violence inflicted on them by others for gender-based reasons. Gender-based
203   violence happens in both private and public institutions. It occurs globally and nationally. It
204   occurs within this church.
205

206   While many different people are affected by gender-based violence, certain people are
207   particularly targeted. Research shows that women and girls are especially targeted; an estimated
208   40 million in the United States alone have suffered some form of gender-based violence.[5] Girls
209   are more vulnerable than women of other ages. Research also shows that nearly three-fourths of
210   people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and gender non-conforming have suffered some form of
211   gender-based violence.[6]
212

213   The threat of violence shapes and constrains so many lives. All of these children of God live with
214   the fear of or the memory of gender-based violence.
215

216   Heterosexual men and boys are also targets. There is increasing awareness in society of sexual,
217   physical and psychological violence against heterosexual men and boys, particularly in sports,
218   prisons, hospitals, churches and schools.
219

220   Research indicates that heterosexual men make up the majority of perpetrators. Among some
221   gender-based crimes, some studies point to White men as the slightly largest group of male
222   perpetrators, compared to other men[7] in this country. As a community of faith, we need to ask
223   difficult and compelling questions about why certain people are targeted and why certain people
224   are perpetrators. This is an important part of the work toward understanding and healing that we
225   must do.
226

227   All people need to work together to create change. As a community of faith, we cannot leave all
228   the work to survivors. Men and boys are crucial leaders in this work.

3. Why do people inflict gender-based violence?

230   Acts of gender-based violence always involve sinful individual choices to exercise power and
231   control. The choice to inflict violence is a personal responsibility.
232

233   What an individual does is often influenced by personal factors. For example, alcohol and drug
234   use does not cause gender-based violence, but it can increase the severity of harm. A person's

experiences of familial violence or post-traumatic stress syndrome, for example, may increase the likelihood of gender-based violence.

While individuals are culpable, social systems influence individuals' actions. This church has proclaimed that God's grace calls us not only to confront individual sin, but also to confront sin in social systems.[8]

Social systems are interrelated social relations, habits, laws, ideas and beliefs in which *everyone* participates in varying ways. Social systems can contribute to good and evil. Both individual and social power can be used for good or for ill.

In the United States, for example, we have a social system that works in racist ways.[9] It also works in patriarchal ways, that is, in ways that assert and legitimize male superiority and male dominance.

Our society values, tends to identify with, and benefits some men more than other people.[10] A patriarchal social system has various forms of control over people, which can cause fear in women and girls and in people who are gender and sexually non-conforming. Gender-based violence is a powerful tool of fear and control.

The values of a patriarchal social system are readily apparent, for example, in media and gaming portrayals of women and men, the glorification of male sports and athletes, cultural complicity with commercial sexual exploitation,[11] and continuing gender-based bias in the legal system.[12]

The values of a racist social system intersect with patriarchal values in gender-based violence, as is readily apparent in the fact that women of color are particularly targeted. For example, often at the hands of outsiders, American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls suffer from gender-based violence at a much higher rate than all other women.[13] Racism also affects the rate of reporting among communities of color, immigrants and citizens alike.[14]

---

*Voices across the ELCA ***

A week after my hysterectomy, my husband dragged me off the couch by my hair and screamed, "Get off your ass and get to work!" Then he kicked me in the abdomen. I bled profusely while our daughters hid in their closet.

A trusted peer and friend sexually assaulted me at a Lutheran youth event. My mentor had little response. Nothing was ever resolved.

I tried to counsel an abusive husband and abused wife. During a session, he pulled a gun and killed her and himself.

When I was a teen, my pastor made me feel special. He coerced me into a long-term sexual relationship with him.

Four or five men gang-raped me after I marched in a gay pride parade. The only one who stopped to help me was a pastor going by on his bike. He covered my naked body with his jacket.

I attended a Lutheran college and was date-raped as a sophomore. I reported it to my dorm head, but it was hushed up and never investigated.

**These are descriptive narratives shared by members of the ELCA with permission.

274

275
276 The U.S. social system also functions in ways that devalue people according to age, ability,
277 gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status and ethnicity. All of these forms of
278 privilege and oppression play a role in gender-based violence, including who is targeted and how
279 readily a victim feels safe enough to report a crime of gender-based violence.
280
281 These various social system factors can cause immense harm. For example, they can lead to
282 victim-blaming, failures to hold perpetrators accountable, and views that gender-based violence
283 is so ordinary that it is inevitable.
284

285 Understanding the connection between patriarchy and gender-based violence is important in
286 order to create change. There are also religious factors that aggravate the problems of gender-
287 based violence. Most religions contribute in some way.

4. How does Christianity sometimes contribute to these problems?

289 For too long the whole human community has ignored, minimized, covered up, rationalized and
290 justified the destructive effects of gender-based violence. We also acknowledge how the
291 Christian community, a body with bystanders, perpetrators and survivors, has participated in this
292 failing. Too often the Christian community has given its tacit or explicit consent to this violence.
293 In doing so, Christian communities have too often betrayed the sources of faith.
294
295 Some instances of this betrayal demand particular attention. First, Christians have engaged in or
296 tolerated the misuse of Scripture. Second, they have also distorted the message of God's
297 forgiving mercy through Christ into a cruel demand to minimize or justify continued violence or
298 abuse.
299
300 There are a number of ways Scripture is misused that can contribute to legitimizing gender-based
301 violence. For example, the book of Genesis has been misused to argue for a God-given hierarchy
302 of humans and a view that females are more sinful than males. New Testament texts referring to
303 female submission and obedience to men are misused as a guidebook for contemporary
304 relationships and as justification of corporal punishment.
305
306 Christians often ignore the diverse and complex names and metaphors for God in Scripture. This
307 can lead to the impression that God should be viewed as male, further reinforcing the belief that
308 females are more sinful than males and "lower" than males in creation.
309
310 Scripture is sinfully misused when it is used to excuse or legitimize violence that violates the life
311 God gives in Jesus Christ. When Scripture is misused to establish a hierarchy among humans, it
312 can become easy to see women and girls as less valuable and worthy than men and boys, thus
313 legitimizing violence against them.
314
315 We see this, for example, in the long church history of blaming victims for rape and battery[15]
316 and in some of Martin Luther's own writing on relationships between husbands and wives.[16]
317 These views continue to be expressed whenever anyone is told that suffering because of gender-
318 based violence is their cross to bear and that they should suffer like Jesus did.
319
320 Scripture is also distorted when Christians demand that survivors forgive perpetrators or
321 bystanders easily and/or quickly. The treasure of God's forgiveness belongs to God. What God
322 offers to repentant sinners is not for Christians to demand of anyone.
323
324 Christians are not in a position to demand forgiveness by others for others. Coercing someone to
325 forgive may actually subvert healing and accountability.
326
327 Beyond the misuse of Scripture and forgiveness, Christian churches and individuals too often
328 have contributed to gender-based violence through denial, resistance and a lack of preparation.
329
330 We are in denial when we avoid or refuse to see the broad and multiple realities of the problem.
331 We are in denial when we misname problems, saying, for example, that sexual assault and rape
332 are "just" hazing in certain settings. Resistance is apparent in silence and inaction or in the ways
333 we try to discredit hints or reports of violence. Both denial and resistance happen in society in

334 general and in specific communities. It is hard to avoid denial and resistance, but it is important
335 to overcome it.

336

337 At other times, we may not be stuck in denial or resistance, but we may not become the allies we
338 should be through a lack of preparation and prevention. For example, having little or faulty
339 knowledge, lacking partnerships with local organizations and other faith communities, and
340 operating with inadequate policies and practices contribute to the problem.

341

342 In short, we must confess that Christians have too often contributed to victim-blaming, to failures
343 to hold perpetrators accountable, to excuses for violence, and to subversion and curtailment of
344 healing.

5. Where is God in the midst of the problems and pain and suffering?

346 Despite these failures, this church believes that God is at work to heal and to restore. Despite the
347 misuses of Scripture and forgiveness, we will abandon neither.

348

349 Every survivor is loved and cared for by God. God does not intend people to be hurt. God is with
350 every victim. Scripture speaks of this, from God's sorrow over Israel's suffering to Jesus' pain
351 on the cross.

352

353 The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us in Jesus of Nazareth. Time and again, Jesus'
354 ministry took the form of healing pain. God, through the church, continues this ministry.

355

356 On the cross, Jesus Christ took on all sin and death for our sakes. We no longer need to live with
357 death and sin upon us. And in the resurrection, God, through Christ, is making a new creation,
358 mending what is broken and sending the healing presence of the Holy Spirit to dwell among us.

359

360 We know the presence and power of the triune God in word and sacrament, the means through
361 which God is with us and forms us into the one body of Christ. As St. Paul reminded one early
362 Christian community, what affects one member of the body affects every member of the body (1
363 Corinthians 12:26a).

364

365 Both harm and healing within the body of Christ belong to each and every one of us. As Luther
366 taught, through the eating and drinking together in Christ, we participate in "all the unjust
367 suffering of the innocent, with which the world is everywhere filled to overflowing."[17] Having
368 suffered through any member of the body of Christ who suffers, we are all always being made
369 new by the Holy Spirit. Together.

370

371 From a Lutheran perspective, we understand God's work in the world and in us through both law
372 and gospel. We believe that we live under the law while we live *because* of the gospel. The Ten
373 Commandments oppose human beings hurting each other. They are instructions on living
374 faithfully with God and in community. Understanding that God condemns sin and promises
375 grace helps us in the face of gender-based violence to confess our sin as a church, to renounce it,
376 and to set clear boundaries against evil.

377

378 Because of God's love for us, we are freed to live in the same love and care for others. Martin
379 Luther talked about this freedom in Christ as freedom from bondage to sin and freedom for
380 others—freedom to love the neighbor. This love and care—born of risk and listening to others—
381 very often takes the form of justice-making.

382

383 This love and care leads us to join others of good will to be God's hands in the midst of the
384 problem. As Lutherans we affirm the value of good social-scientific analysis of the realities of
385 violence as well as both civil and criminal law. These are God's gifts in creation for countering
386 the violence and bringing change.
387
388 By the power of the Holy Spirit, God's grace is active in us to see the neighbor's need and to
389 respond to individuals and communities in crisis and recovery. God's grace is also active in us to
390 change the social and religious factors that may allow or encourage gender-based violence.

391 ## 6. What should we do?
392 This church, as one expression of the body of Christ, not only laments gender-based violence but
393 also condemns it. This church commits itself to the many acts, steps and forms of healing it
394 requires. We are called to create change in the various expressions of this church and in
395 collaboration with our partners. We are also called to foster change within social and public
396 spheres.[18]

397 ### A. What are we called to do within this church?
398 Everyone can make a difference. Everyone is called to pray and to grow in awareness of this
399 horrific tragedy. Many people are called to respond to particular situations. Like Tamar, many
400 people are called to speak up.
401
402 Church members and leaders are called to be different from King David by actually taking up
403 leadership. This includes becoming long-term allies with each other and with other agencies and
404 institutions in the struggle against gender-based violence.
405
406 Many people in this church are already engaged in important efforts to address such violence, for
407 which this whole church is thankful. They are instrumental in encouraging others.
408
409 Although specific actions will take shape differently among individuals, congregations, church
410 leaders, social ministry organizations, and church-related institutions or other agencies of this
411 church, there are common aims. [See foundational documentation for more detailed
412 descriptions.]
413

414   1. Recognize, name and root out the violence and its sources wherever it is happening.
415   2. Ensure care and create safe communities that foster healing.
416   3. Provide education.
417   4. Create accountability.
418

419 **Recognize, name, and root out**
420 Historically much gender-based violence has not been recognized for what it is. This church has
421 an opportunity to step forward to honestly recognize and name gender-based violence under such
422 guises as "submission," or prostitution, or derogatory talk about people who are gender non-
423 conforming. This church will be committed to careful work to identify sources in both church
424 and society that foster, encourage or tacitly support gender-based violence and to root out these
425 sources by, for example, naming them in sermons or discussing them in educational settings.
426

427 **Ensure care and create safe and healing communities**
428 Varied efforts are necessary to ensure care and create healing communities. When someone is
429 hurt, people in this church need to respond effectively and in collaboration with experts.
430

431   Yet the best intervention and care will be possible when individuals, congregations and
432   institutions have already taken steps in advance. Such steps might include hosting educational
433   events, getting information to people safely, reaching out to experts in the field for guidance and
434   partnerships, or opening a congregation's building to a support group. Intervention and care also
435   include learning to identify signs of gender-based violence in order to respond proactively.
436
437   Survivors most often need expert care and pastoral care. Adequate care requires having in place
438   networks of support beyond the initial crises. It also requires knowing how to access local expert
439   care-giving and advocacy agencies. Caring for survivors takes wisdom, preparation and a
440   position of support, rather than blame, for victims and survivors.
441
442   Perpetrators of intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based violence need expert
443   professional intervention and accountability. This is critical.
444
445   Perpetrators often seek pastoral care. Pastors and other leaders may accompany perpetrators with
446   confession and repentance. Their repentance, however, does not require or automatically ensure
447   forgiveness from the survivor, now or later. There are also times that this church or the civil law
448   requires pastors and others to report violence and actively to seek to prevent further violence
449   from occurring.
450
451   **Provide education**
452   Education is fundamental to creating safe and caring communities and contributes to prevention.
453   For example, practical education about gender-based violence can occur in adult education
454   forums, youth groups, college classrooms and continuing education events for rostered leaders.
455   Such education will seek to offer comprehensive views, challenge mindsets and teach wise
456   responses to gender-based violence and its sources.
457
458   Education should also cover religious-based contributions to the problem. It should include, for
459   example, probing historical and contemporary religious ideas that have caused harm. The
460   benefits will become evident when members and leaders of the ELCA engage in dialogue, study
461   and action among ecumenical partners to discern both roadblocks and resources within Christian
462   theological and practical traditions.
463
464
465
466
467   **Create accountability**
468   Care must also be linked to clear accountability. Those who inflict gender-based violence need to
469   be held accountable even while being cared for. This includes accountability to those harmed, to
470   the public good and, sometimes, to the community of faith.
471
472   The critical need for accountability creates a role for this church in challenging the fact that the
473   majority of perpetrators remain free and in communities. Communities of faith will by necessity
474   have to wrestle with the need for accountability of perpetrators and the safety and well-being of
475   survivors within the same community.
476
477   Careful attention to accountability in institutions will help prevent and counter acts of violence.
478   Every agency, organization and institution should review its policies, or absence of such, to
479   assess how well it provides for prevention, safety and adequate response. Attention to
480   accountability assists in creating justice.

481 **B. What do we seek and advocate be done in the wider society?**
482 This church announces that the God who justifies expects all people and social institutions to do
483 justice and foster practices that serve the common good.[19] Seeking change in the social order to
484 reduce gender-based violence requires multiple and varied measures in diverse spheres with a
485 long-term commitment.
486
487 Advocacy and action will take shape differently when directed toward a local organization, a
488 local community, or the state or federal sphere. They will be different when sought by individual
489 Christians as citizens than when sought through the ELCA's various institutional efforts as a
490 public church. Yet the common aim is to participate in robust advocacy and action that fosters
491 safe and healthy communities. This church is encouraged to: [See foundational documentation
492 for more detailed descriptions.]
493   1. Become allies with others.
494   2. Seek improved laws and social patterns.
495   3. Challenge organizations and agencies to adopt and use policies and practices that prevent
496   and reduce gender-based violence.
497
498 **Become allies**
499 Members of this church, congregational task forces, leaders of social ministry organizations and
500 educational institutions, along with many others, will need to become allies with others in society
501 to make clear what policies and practices will reduce gender-based violence. This church has the
502 opportunity to demonstrate that faith communities can make a positive difference.
503
504 In determining what works and what is needed, the voices of those who are often silenced must
505 be given a preferential hearing. Becoming allies toward change includes, for example, being
506 advocates who seek improved laws and practices, challenging harmful mindsets, and insisting on
507 holding perpetrators accountable.
508
509 In other words, this church's social witness must be prophetic in character.[20] It must call into
510 question long-standing beliefs or practices with loving words and actions that challenge and may
511 be uncomfortable.
512
513 **Improve laws and social patterns**
514 Addressing the root sources of gender-based violence will require time, informed and committed
515 people, and systemic change through the development and application of laws and practices.
516 While varied in form and different for different social spheres, the over-arching goals must be to
517 name, protect, provide care, create accountability, foster education and challenge mindsets. This
518 church, aware of its own failures, still must witness to and urge the pursuit of such goals within
519 the social order, an order that ultimately answers to the God of justice.
520
521 **Adopt and use policies and practices**
522 Within the social order, a vast number of organizations and agents need to be challenged to adopt
523 and use policies and practices that prevent or reduce gender-based violence. Employers and
524 corporations, sporting organizations, educational institutions, the health care system, public and
525 private social caregivers, the judicial system, the military, and members of the media and
526 emerging social media are among those to be challenged. Again, this church has a role to play
527 through its members in these various spheres and in raising its collective and institutional voice.

7. Conclusion

528
529 As God's church we are David, Amnon, Absalom and Tamar. Like King David, we have the
530 means to intervene. Like Amnon, we commit gender-based violence. Like Absalom, we both
531 silence victims and are tempted to retaliate with further violence. Like Tamar, we are targets of
532 violence and try to resist it.
533
534 This is the time to speak and to listen, to deeply and honestly know the pain in the body of Christ
535 and throughout the world. This is the time for survivors to speak and to be heard. This is the time
536 to break the silence. This is the time to respond with wisdom and compassion through action and
537 words. This is the time to wisely care for perpetrators and to hold them accountable.
538
539 This is the time to change policies, strengthen laws and challenge systemic factors that create and
540 foster gender-based violence. This is the time to transform negative religious influences and to
541 improve prevention and response within this church.
542
543 The evil of gender-based violence necessitates different kinds of efforts from congregations,
544 leaders, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related social ministries and
545 educational institutions—and it pleads for a collective response.
546
547 May the triune God empower and direct us to name the problems, ensure wise care, provide
548 education, create accountability, and become courageous and wise allies in creating safe and
549 healthy communities.
550

551   ## Endnotes

[1] Gender refers to categories into which cultures/societies separate behaviors and characteristics that are usually considered masculine or feminine. The most common gender identities are *woman* and *man*, but other identities exist and are becoming more widely used and understood.

[2] Joy A. Schroeder, "Sexual Abuse and a Theology of Embodiment: Incarnating Healing," in *The Long Journey Home*, ed. Andrew J. Schmutzer (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 193.

[3] Martin Luther, Large Catechism in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 411.

[4] See "Churches Say No to Violence Against Women," available on www.Lutheranworld.org.

[5] See the related Foundational Documentation of this social message on Gender-based Violence for statistics at the time of publication and for more extensive analysis and information suggested in this message.

[6] There is, of course, an intersection between these two aggregate groups of people particularly targeted. Girls and women may be lesbian, bisexual or gender non-conforming.

[7] The most recent studies of hate violence show that in 2013, 39 percent of perpetrators were perceived as White by victims, the highest percentage compared to other racial or ethnic backgrounds. Of all men who perpetrate gender and sexuality-based hate violence, the highest percentage is found among those 19 to 29 years old (30.7 percent). 72.45 percent of all perpetrators were male as opposed to female or transgender. See Osman Ahmed and Chai Jindasurant, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2013* (New York, N.Y.: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2014), 51-53.

[8] See ELCA social statement "The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective" (Chicago: ELCA, 1991), esp. 4-5, 7. http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Church-in-Society

[9] See ELCA social statement "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture" (Chicago: ELCA, 1993). http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-and-Culture

[10] See, e.g., "ELCA Message on Community Violence" (Chicago: ELCA, 1994), 4. http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Community-Violence and "ELCA Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation" (Chicago: ELCA, 2001), 2, 4. http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Commercial-Sexual-Exploitation

[11] See "ELCA Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation," esp. 5, 7.

[12] See the Foundational Documentation for further explanation.

[13] American Indian/Alaska Native women are targets of gender-based violence at a rate of 37.5 percent; among all women in the United States, the aggregate rate is 25 percent. For further information, see the Foundational Documentation.

[14] For a discussion of risks for marginalized communities, see ELCA social statement "The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries" (Chicago: ELCA, 2013), esp. 13. http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice

[15] See biblical texts portraying gender-based violence; for further explanation of these texts, see Joy A. Schroeder, *Dinah's Lament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

[16] See, e.g., Martin Luther, "Titus, 1527," *Luther's Works*. (American ed. 55 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress Press; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955-1986), 29:55. [Note: These endnotes will be updated to reflect the most recent edition.]

[17] Martin Luther, "Word and Sacrament, I" *Luther's Works*, 35:54.

[18] For specific resources, please go to www.ELCA.org.

[19] Ibid., "For Peace in God's World"

[20] Ibid, "The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective."

[21] Incident across the Country are summarized from the following sources:
a) Matthew Shepard Foundation, http://www.matthewshepard.org/about-us/ ; b) Michelle Caffrey (July 14, 2014) Williamtown Middle School student faced severe sexual harassment, school did nothing, lawsuit claims, *South New Jersey Times* http://www.nj.com/gloucester-county/index.ssf/2014/07/williamstown_middle_school_student_faced_severe_and_pervasive_sexual_harassment_and_school_did_nothi.html ; c) Gus Burns (December 10, 2013) Medical examiner identifies body of transgender woman found shot, burned in Detroit trash bin, *Michigan Live* http://www.mlive.com/news/detroit/index.ssf/2013/12/medical_examiner_identifies_bo.html ; d) Associated Press (March 13, 2014) Blind man beaten, pregnant wife raped in Wisconsin home invasion, police say, *Fox News* http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/03/13/wisconsin-home-invaders-beat-blind-husband-raped-pregnant-wife-police-say/ ; e) Juliet Macur and Nate Schweber (December 16, 2012) Rape Case Unfolds on Web and Splits City, *New York Times* http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/sports/high-school-football-rape-case-unfolds-online-and-divides-steubenville-ohio.html?_r=0

1
2
3
Foundational Documentation for the
Social Message on Gender-based Violence

4 With the social message on gender-based violence and this accompanying document, the Church
5 Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America speaks to both church and society. This
6 document is intended to be used for in-depth study and analysis.

7 ## Contents

18

19 ## 1. What is gender-based violence?

20 Gender-based violence is physical, sexual or emotional harm directed at a person in order to
21 create or maintain power and control.[1] This power and control is linked to gender, sex and sexuality.
22 Some people hurt other people because of ***biological characteristics,* [font in bold and italics indicates a**
23 **word in the glossary]** because of perceived or self-identified ***gender*** or sexual orientation**,** or because of
24 their difference from social or religious definitions of masculinity and femininity.
25 Gender-based violence expresses power through coercion and threat of another's well-being. The
26 person committing the violence violates someone's physical, psychological and/or spiritual integrity.
27 Gender-based violence occurs in a multitude of forms and may be experienced at any point in a person's
28 life. This violent exercise of power may occur for a brief moment or may be a long-term pattern. This
29 power dynamic is possible in every relationship. Everyone is, therefore, potentially affected by gender-
30 based violence.

31 ### Where is gender-based violence happening in our world?

32 People of all classes and of all ethnicities in all nations suffer violence inflicted on them by others
33 for reasons based on gender. Gender-based violence happens in both private and public situations. It
34 occurs in families, other social relations, the church, the state, education and in society more broadly. It is
35 a problem in the United States and globally. What happens in this church and in this country is
36 interconnected to manifestations of gender-based violence around the world.
37 The ELCA social message and this foundational documentation address the U.S. context in which
38 we have immediate call and responsibility. While focused nationally, however, these documents
39 recognize the global character of the problem and the importance of working worldwide to address it. The
40 ELCA celebrates the relationships of ongoing accompaniment concerning gender-based violence with

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[1] The ELCA has addressed other aspects of violence in God's world in several social teaching documents. As an
illustration, see "A social message on Community Violence" (Chicago: ELCA, 1994), which can be accessed at
www.ELCA.org/socialmessages.

41 global partners and companions. It is through shared service, advocacy, theological dialogue, and
42 ecumenical and inter-faith relations that it becomes possible to care wisely for people's immediate needs
43 and to address the sources and contexts of gender-based violence.[2]

2. Who is involved?

Who is especially targeted?

46 While many different people, including men and boys, are affected by gender-based violence,
47 women and girls[3] are especially targeted. Nationally, 25 percent of women over the age of 18 have
48 experienced sexual or physical violence at the hands of a current or former intimate partner. Globally the
49 percentage rises to 30 percent.[4]
50 Girls are especially vulnerable. Of the 18.2 percent of women who have survived rape or
51 attempted rape, 12.3 percent of those were younger than age 12 when they were first raped, and 29.9
52 percent were between the ages of 11 and 17. Girls ages 16-19 are four times more likely than the general
53 population to be the victims[5] of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.
54 In addition to women and girls, those who are ***gender non-conforming*** also live with the memory
55 and/or the fear of gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence. Three-fourths of people who are
56 gay, lesbian, bisexual and gender non-conforming have been targets of some form of violence related to
57 gender, sexuality and intimacy.[6]
58 There is increasing awareness of sexual and physical violence against men and boys, particularly
59 in sports teams, prisons, hospitals, and in churches and schools.[7] Though much less pervasive, women,
60 girls and gender non-conforming people also may carry out gender-based violence; for example, intimate
61 partner violence can be against men by women. Gender-based violence also includes intimate partner
62 violence within same-gender relationships, as well as some forms of elder abuse.

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[2] The work of The Lutheran World Federation is one example of the global efforts in which the ELCA participates. See, e.g., "Churches Say 'No!' to Violence Against Women" (Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation, 2002), www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/Churches%20Say%20No%20to%20Violence%20against%20Women.pdf, and Elaine Neuenfeldt, ed., "Lutheran World Federation Gender Justice Policy" (Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation, 2013), www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-lwf-gender-justice-policy, which is implemented through all realms of The Lutheran World Federation service, advocacy and dialogue. The ELCA participates in such work in several ways, e.g. The Lutheran Office for World Community.

[3] "Women and girls" is here used as an inclusive term.

[4] All statistics were current as of the writing of this message, see Appendix for more.

[5] The literature refers to both victims and survivors. This document uses both terms. The term *victim* stresses that someone has hurt someone else by exercising their power; the term *survivor* indicates the reality for many people after violence.

[6] To-date there is not enough research in the United States to be able to express the actual number of gay, lesbian, bisexual and gender non-conforming targets, but an estimated percentage is available, given current research. See the Appendix for further information.

[7] See, e.g., Lara Stemple and Ilan H. Meyer, "The Sexual Victimization of Men in America: New Data Challenge Old Assumptions," *American Journal of Public Health* 104, no. 6 (June 2014): e19-e26. This research focuses on male victimization in institutions such as mental health and criminal justice. There is also growing public knowledge of male victimization by clergy, coaches, teachers, caregivers and peers (such as through sexual harassment and hazing). Notable in this research is that when men and boys are in situations in which they are vulnerable to the power of others over them, it can lead to physical and emotional harm to them. Age, race and class can be contributory factors in situations of vulnerability. For greater insight into violence against gender non-conforming men, see Jaime M. Grant, Lisa A. Mottet, Justin Tanis, with Jack Harrison, Jody L. Herman, and Mara Keisling, *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (*Washington, D.C.: National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011), 3.

63 ## Who inflicts gender-based violence on others?

64   Those who perpetrate gender-based violence can be acquaintances, friends strangers, family,
65 intimate partners, caregivers, clergy, teachers and work supervisors. Perpetrators include a surprising
66 number of individuals from every statistical category and yet research indicates that heterosexual men
67 make up the majority of perpetrators. Among gender- and sexuality-based hate crimes, one study
68 identified White men as the largest racial/ethnic group of perpetrators.[8]

69 ## Intersecting identities

70   Every act or threat of gender-based violence, every perpetrator and every survivor is influenced
71 by *intersections* of identities and systems of privilege and oppression. Intersections of race and ethnicity,
72 age, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity can increase the likelihood of violence. In the United
73 States, for example, some women of color experience higher rates of intimate partner violence and rape
74 than all women on average. What is universal about gender-based violence is that gender is a central
75 motivating factor, even while it may not be the only one.

76 ## 3. Why do people inflict gender-based violence?

77   Though the sources and contexts of gender-based violence are complex and multiple, this church
78 recognizes that its fundamental source is sin. This sin is rooted in the ways people create and misuse
79 power over others. It is simultaneously a personal responsibility and a sin rooted in social systems.
80 Faithful work against gender-based violence requires a deep understanding of the pervasive and complex
81 personal, social and religious dynamics of the problems. Thorough analysis helps us to care well for our
82 neighbors.

83 ### Personal choices

84   Acts of gender-based violence always involve sinful individual choices. What an individual
85 chooses to do is often influenced by personal factors. For example, alcohol consumption or drug use does
86 not cause gender-based violence, but some studies indicate that it can increase the severity of injury.[9] A
87 person's experiences, such as familial abuse or post-traumatic stress syndrome, may increase the
88 likelihood of gender-based violence.[10] These factors are important to take into account when seeking to
89 hold perpetrators accountable or to help them change.
90   How human beings think and act, however, is closely intertwined with systemic and social forces,
91 including the dynamics of power and control. While each act of gender-based violence may be an
92 individual's action, it is always shaped by power dynamics and social factors. This exercise of power may
93 occur for a brief moment or may be a long-term pattern. The power dynamic is possible in every
94 relationship. Everyone is, therefore, potentially affected by gender-based violence.

95 ### Social context

96   Regardless who is the perpetrator or target of gender-based violence, this dynamic of power and
97 control is rooted in the values of a particular social system. Internationally, the dominant social system is
98 widely recognized as patriarchal. While the many acts of gender-based violence are each sinful, they are
99 sourced by and interrelated with the more obscure sin in this social system.

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[8] See Appendix for further information.

[9] Brecklin, L.R. "The role of perpetrator alcohol use in the injury outcomes of intimate assaults." *Journal of Family Violence* 17 (2002): 185-197.

[10] See, e.g., P. Tjaden and N. Thoennes, *Extent, nature and consequences of intimate partner violence: findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000), 72.

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100   A patriarchal social system is *dominated* by the voice and authority of men. In such a social
101 system, what is most highly valued is *identified* as male-oriented. A patriarchal social system is *centered*
102 on males; the world is portrayed with men as the main actors in life and reflects their ideas and values.
103 Women, gender non-conforming people and non-dominant men are socially de-valued, diminished or
104 controlled.[11]

105   The definition of patriarchy as a social system is not a description of every person, social
106 relationship, Christian congregation, etc. It is, instead, a description of a complex array of social relations,
107 habits, laws, ideas and beliefs in which *everyone* participates in varying measures.[12] Though there has
108 been much social progress toward gender equity in the United States, patriarchy is still the dominant
109 social system in the United States and within Christianity.

110   Patriarchy remains in place through tools of power and control. Gender-based violence functions
111 as one such tool, whether as threats, discrimination, actual acts or inadequate responses. This tool is used
112 across time and place in varying degrees and in multiple forms. For example, sexual harassment in
113 schools and work places serves to intimidate girls, women and gender non-conforming people from
114 asserting themselves and from developing their gifts fully.

115   Rape also serves as a means of control, whether within dating, marriage or war. As particular
116 targets of rape, women thus learn to live in fear, wrestling with this ceaseless threat and its implication
117 that they are objects of control.

118   In light of this systemic sin, the reduction of gender-based violence requires changes in social and
119 religious beliefs and practices that support conditions for violence. Existing efforts like therapy and
120 counseling focused on different needs in response to cycles of violence must be strengthened and
121 encouraged. Advocacy for changes in law and policy must continue. Both are beneficial and essential.

122   Years of activism, research and scholarship demonstrate, however, that these alone cannot
123 address the depth and tacit approval of this society's gender-based violence.[13] Gender-based violence
124 must come to be understood in the context of the patriarchy in which individual choices or beliefs and
125 multiple social factors operate.

126   Intertwined with personal choice and patriarchy, specific social factors influence and support the
127 nature of gender-based violence. The factors named here include racism, the media, commercial sexual
128 exploitation, fears of sexualities and bodies, economics, and the legal system.

129 **Racism**
130   *Racism increases the likelihood of gender-based violence and decreases the likelihood of **justice**.*
131   Racism is an inherently evil force that has shaped not only the history of the United States and the
132 world, but also individual lives and the social fabric of the present. Racism is rooted in the sinful idea that
133 skin color determines the social value and ability of people.[14] In the United States, racism profoundly
134 affects gender-based violence in at least two important ways.

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[11] See Allan A. Johnson, *The Gender Knot*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University, 2005) and *Privilege, Power, and Difference* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006).

[12] Ibid.

[13] See Elizabeth M. Schneider, *Battered Women & Feminist Lawmaking* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 20-56. Advancement of international human rights – women's rights as human rights – is important in the creation of global change based on universal claims. Working to end gender-based violence and other gender-based discrimination through human rights arguments and standards can provide empowerment for people's legal consciousness, sense of identity, psychological health and political and moral agency. Addressing gender-based violence depends in part on human rights-based arguments. Nevertheless, human rights assertions alone cannot create the conditions to weaken the prevalence and intensity of gender-based violence. Rather, lessening gender-based violence depends upon changes in social and religious consciousness; thus, part of this church's work is to address the ways we see and think about God, the world and ourselves. If there is no social and religious change, people who are harmed by gender-based violence will only be able to continue to ask for mercy and protection in a world that sees and thinks about them as deserving the violence.

[14] See *Freed in Christ: Race Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago: ELCA, 1993), 4.

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135   First, women of color are more often targeted by men both outside of and within their
136 communities. Multi-ethnic women and American Indian and Alaskan Native women are far more often
137 the targets of gender-based violence than all women on average.[15] The legacy of White privilege shapes
138 the way bodies are viewed and treated, causing inordinate suffering for millions of women of color who
139 are overwhelmingly targeted.
140   Second, racism may affect how victims and survivors of color think about turning to the U.S.
141 legal system for justice. In a marginalized community, the risks to expose each other to the U.S. legal
142 system may be high.[16] A survivor in the same racial or ethnic community as the perpetrator, especially an
143 immigrant community, may, therefore, be less inclined to press charges. This situation may account for
144 the fact that women of color are less likely to report intimate partner violence than the average rate of
145 reporting for all women nationally.[17] (See also: ***intersecting identities***.)

Media portrayals
147   *Females are objects of desire, control and violence and are made to seem "naturally"*
148 *subordinate to men.*
149   "Public imagery of women is the text for all the other forms of violence [based on gender]," notes
150 one expert.[18] There is a steady message in this society that women are subordinate to men, which is
151 communicated through advertising, news and magazines, gaming, music, movies and television.
152   As "entertainment," music and many video games, TV shows, movies commonly incorporate
153 images of violence against women or girls as central elements in their story-lines. Viewers of mainstream
154 media are exposed repeatedly to subtle or not-so-subtle messages that women and girls are largely sexual
155 objects, or deserve and enjoy pain and humiliation, or are so irrational that they need to be dominated.[19]
156 This fosters stereotypes learned at an early age and legitimates the "everydayness" of gender-based
157 violence.
158   The steady message that women are subordinate to men is also communicated through a variety
159 of ways in the social glorification of sports and athletes. The history of protecting and excusing star
160 athletes from accountability relating to gender-based violence is one example. This problem exists from
161 high school to professional circles.

Commercial sexual exploitation
163   *Women and girls are targeted as objects of sexual and sexualized violence.*
164   The ELCA defines commercial exploitation as organized, for-profit sexual exploitation. It
165 includes audio or video sex, prostitution, human trafficking, pornography, stripping and related activities
166 that express deep desires for power over and fear of women.[20] Approximately 80 percent of all victims of
167 human trafficking are women and girls. In addition, pornography demeans and devalues people as
168 thoroughly objectified, typically through violence.[21] Most often, the objects of pornography, even when a
169 male is in the scene, are female.[22]

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[15] See Appendix for statistics as of publication.

[16] See *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries* (Chicago: ELCA, 2013), for a discussion of risks such as dramatically higher incarceration rates, effect on employment prospects and others, 13.

[17] See, e.g., "Statistics on Violence Against API Women," *Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence*, accessed Sept. 4, 2014, http://www.apiidv.org/resources/violence-against-api-women.php.

[18] Cooper-White, 66.

[19] See, for example, the film *Miss Representation*.

[20] See "ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation," (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2001), 1-3. See also ELCA study resources on human trafficking. www.ELCA.org/en/Resources/Justice-for-Women.

[21] See Pamela Cooper-White, *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 64-65.

[22] See Cooper-White, 78. According to Cooper-White, exceptions are gay male pornography.

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Fears of sexualities and bodies

170
171 *Fear of and hatred for people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or gender non-conforming is*
172 *connected to patriarchy because both assume the superiority of the heterosexual male and strict gender*
173 *roles for men and women.*
174 Although often not recognized, violence against anyone who does not act according to
175 predominant gender and sexual expectations is also a form of gender-based violence. For example,
176 violence against gay men because they are gay is gender-based violence. So is violence against people
177 who are transgender because they are transgender. The memory or fear of violence shapes the lives of
178 anyone who does not conform to socially dominant gender and sexual expectations. (See also:
179 *intersecting identities*.)

Economic factors

180
181 *Gender-based violence can threaten and destroy survivors' economic security and/or be a means*
182 *for perpetrators to make money at their expense.*
183 There are at least three general ways that experiences of gender-based violence and money are
184 intertwined. First, people who have experienced or are experiencing gender-based violence may lose their
185 jobs. Survivors of gender-based violence may be so significantly traumatized that they are unable to
186 work, or they may suffer severe depression from the experience. They may miss work repeatedly for legal
187 or medical appointments, and they may be seen as a risk by employers *simply* for having been victimized.
188 Any of these situations may be the reason for the loss of a job with the accompanying hardships for a
189 survivor and family.
190 Second, some victim/survivors feel compelled to remain in situations of gender-based violence in
191 order to maintain economic stability. For instance, someone abused by an intimate partner may be
192 compelled to remain in the abusive relationship because that partner earns the necessary income to care
193 for children. In other instances, victim/survivors remain in jobs or situations, such as schooling, in which
194 they are sexually harassed, coerced or abused because the job or the education is their only means to
195 economic stability.
196 Third, some victim/survivors of gender-based violence are psychologically, emotionally and
197 physically forced or coerced into gender-based violence by people who want to make money at their
198 expense. Such is the case in the systems of human trafficking, prostitution, pornography, "mail-order
199 brides" and other forms of forced marriages.

Laws and the legal system

200
201 *Despite significant progress, gender-based bias in the law and its enforcement still foster a*
202 *culture of gender-based violence.*
203 This church recognizes and affirms the proliferation of laws pertaining to gender-based violence
204 in the last 50 years. For example, it is now illegal to sexually harass a co-worker, to rape a spouse and to
205 abuse a spouse. It is good that there is increased realization that people should not have to experience
206 gender-based violence in various forms.
207 Research reveals, nevertheless, continued gender bias in the law and the legal system. For
208 example, in many jurisdictions a substantial proportion of intimate partner defendants are given deferred
209 prosecution or dispositions that do not involve findings of guilt. A trio of studies found that at least 25
210 percent of the defendants that received deferred sentences will re-abuse or re-offend.[23]
211 A recent study also found that only approximately *half* of sexual assault cases that resulted in an
212 arrest were ever prosecuted. Prosecution was more frequent when the victim was viewed by the

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[23] See "Practical Implications of Current Domestic Violence Research: For Law Enforcement, Prosecutors and Judges: Chapter 6. Prosecution Responses." National Institute of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. United States Department of Justice. June 2009, accessed Sept. 17, 2014. www.nij.gov/topics/crime/intimate-partner-violence/practical-implications-research/ch6/pages/diverting-first-offenders.aspx .

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213 prosecutor as "blameless." It was less frequent where the victim was viewed as having engaged in "risk-
214 taking behavior" or where the person's "reputation or character were questioned." [24]
215 　　　Rape is not solely a crime by men against women. However, until 2011, the Federal Bureau of
216 Investigation defined rape exclusively as a crime against a female involving the use of physical force. The
217 FBI now uses a much more comprehensive definition.[25] Despite this advance, the law and the legal
218 system continue to be more consistently biased in cases of gender-based violence against gender non-
219 conforming individuals or people in same-sex relationships. In other words, laws and the legal system do
220 not yet properly protect the freedom, autonomy and full participation of all people within our
221 communities.

222 ## Social institutions
223 　　　*While policies have been put in place on institutional levels, change requires everyone's*
224 *consistent participation in them.*
225 　　　The nature of violence against women in institutions of higher education and in the military
226 further illustrates how multiple factors combine to support gender-based violence. [26] In 2009, the U.S.
227 Department of Education found it necessary to write to all colleges to remind them of their obligations
228 under federal law to provide a "prompt, thorough, and impartial" inquiry into allegations of gender-based
229 violence. It reminded them of their obligations, consistent with state law, to determine "whether
230 appropriate law enforcement or other authorities should be notified."[27]
231 　　　Sexual violence also occurs at a high rate in the U.S. military. Women are over five times more
232 likely to be the targets of sexual assault than men are in the military, even though women make up only
233 14 percent of U.S. armed forces. [28] According to a Department of Veterans Affairs mental health
234 screening report, 1 in 4 females and 1 in 100 males say they were sexually assaulted while serving in the
235 military. The extent of the problem suggests the difficulty in redressing and curbing systemic violence.

236 ## 4. How does Christianity sometimes contribute to these problems?

237 　　　While religion is not the sole contributor to gender-based violence, this church acknowledges
238 how religious factors often contribute extensively. Religions across the globe must wrestle with their
239 contributions; among Christians there are several failures that need to be addressed. These include the

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[24] See C. Spohn and D. Holleran. "Prosecuting Sexual Assault: A Comparison of Charging Decisions in Sexual Assault Cases Involving Strangers, Acquaintances, and Intimate Partners." www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/199720.pdf. Among the author's observation was that sexual assault prosecutions were most likely when prosecutors believed "the evidence is strong, the suspect is culpable, and the victim is blameless." "In cases that involved friends, acquaintances, and relatives, prosecutors were significantly less likely to file charges if the victim engaged in risk-taking behavior at the time of the incident or if her reputation or character were questioned."

[25] Prior to December 2011, rape was defined as "the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will." According to the new definition, anyone can be a victim of rape, as it is "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." See Federal Bureau of Investigation, "UCR Program Changes Definition of Rape: Includes All Victims and Omits Requirement of Physical Force," accessed Feb. 11, 2015, www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/cjis-link/march-2012/ucr-program-changes-definition-of-rape.

[26] www.publicintegrity.org/2010/02/24/4360/lack-consequences-sexual-assault

[27] One in five women is sexually assaulted in college, but colleges often fail to respond appropriately. In a study of data submitted to the Department of Justice by 130 colleges, the Center for Public Integrity found that just 10 to 25 percent of perpetrators were expelled from college, leaving many victims of sexual assault to attend classes or live on the same campus as their rapist. www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.html.

[28] These statistics come from http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/09242013_Statutory_Enforcement_Report_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf . See also http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/mst_general_factsheet.pdf .

240 harmful use of Scripture, church tradition and theology, as well as the problems of silence, denial,
241 resistance and inadequate practical responses.

Harmful interpretations of Scripture

243 Some interpreters point to Scripture as an expression of God-ordained gender and sex hierarchy.
244 In particular they point to the depiction of humanity's creation in Genesis and to New Testament texts
245 associated with Paul. Likewise, interpretations of sin, based on Genesis 3 for example, have led to
246 ongoing ideas that some people are more inherently sinful and responsible for sin than others. Such
247 interpretations create a hierarchy of sin among humanity.
248 From these angles, it can seem that some people deserve sexual violence. The ELCA, however, is
249 called to speak out against interpretations of Scripture that cheapen the treasure of faith and give license
250 to those who harm and fail to stand with victims.
251 This church has its own treasures to address the harmful ways Scripture and its interpretation
252 contribute to gender-based violence. At the heart of Lutheran biblical interpretation is Luther's own
253 ardent priority: Interpretation of Scripture should reveal God's love to humanity. Interpretation of
254 Scripture should "carry Christ" to the listener or reader.[29]
255 This biblical interpretation challenges some contemporary Christian theology in the United States
256 that supports the "value" of submission, the praise of suffering as a "good," and forgiveness without
257 accountability. For example, some Christian leaders argue that if people would act according to biblical
258 gender roles ("feminine" if you have female biology and "masculine" if you have male biology), violence
259 would not happen. Other Christian leaders are hesitant to support the well-being of women because they
260 interpret Scripture to say that women must be obedient and submissive to men.
261 This church has the opportunity to engage communities of faith and wider society to affirm a
262 biblical understanding that does not explicitly or implicitly support gender-based violence. At the same
263 time, this church has the opportunity to attend to its own theology, seeking to address what is harmful and
264 remaining attentive to the needs of the neighbor. [30]

Harmful church traditions

266 The faith community also participates in perpetuating gender-based violence whenever it holds to
267 ways of thinking and speaking that deftly reinforce gender-based violence. These ways can include
268 holding onto certain church histories, harmful biblical interpretations and harmful theologies.
269 Historically, church and society both have supported the idea that there is a necessary earthly
270 hierarchy accorded to gender and sex. This pattern serves to reinforce women's lesser status and deprive
271 them of legal and economic rights necessary to make their own decisions and care for themselves and
272 sometimes their children.[31] Lutherans need to acknowledge our own history in perpetuating these,

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[29] The ELCA has an important opportunity to lift up and support reinterpretations of texts that have for centuries been used to keep women and girls in social and religious positions "below" men and boys, such as creation and sin in Genesis and New Testament epistles commonly referred to as the "domestic texts."

[30] Texts that portray violence against women that the ELCA at-large has not addressed include, for example, Abraham's use of Sarah for his own safety (Genesis 12:10-20); Lot offering his daughters to rapists in order to protect male guests (Genesis 19:1-11); Schechem raping Dinah (Genesis 34:1-19); King David's response to do nothing in order to protect his son Amnon when he rapes his half-sister Tamar (2 Samuel 13); and the second wife who was betrayed by her husband and raped and murdered by a gang of men (Judges 19). Texts that reveal God in diverse ways include Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 49:15; Matthew 23:37; and Luke 15: 1-10.

[31] Only by 1993 was marital rape declared illegal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Historically, this slowly formed change is related to the common-law doctrine of "coverture," which stipulated that a free, married woman did not have a separate legal existence from her husband. Married women could not own property in their own names, sign binding contracts, file suit, or, except under specific circumstances, control their earnings; in the event of their husband's death, they were not able to act as guardian to their own children. See "Women, Enterprise & Society: Women and the Law" (manuscript collection), Harvard Business School and President and Fellows of

273 including the use of Martin Luther's writing on women and "domestic discipline" and the long church
274 history of blaming victims for violence.[32]

Harmful theologies

276 This church needs to reckon with forms of Lutheran theology related to the cross, suffering and
277 forgiveness that urge people suffering from gender-based violence to unjustly endure it. [33]

278 The sacrifice of the cross sometimes is interpreted to mean that any suffering "like Jesus" is good.
279 In instances of gender-based violence, this can be an incredibly harmful teaching because people can be
280 led to believe that any suffering is being like Jesus.

281 Instead, the New Testament reveals that Jesus does not seek suffering for its own sake. Rather,
282 Jesus sought above all to live out God's love in the world and then accepted the cross as the consequence
283 *for him.* Those who follow Jesus, likewise, are called above all to live out God's love in the world.
284 Sometimes suffering will be the consequence of living God's love, but this does not require living with
285 gender-based violence.

286 In a similar vein, sometimes the ideas and practices about forgiveness are problematic. When
287 forgiveness is encouraged in a gender-dependent way – when victims are told they should easily and
288 quickly forgive perpetrators – people are more likely to continue to be hurt. Coerced or premature
289 forgiveness runs the risk of re-inflicting trauma. We must distinguish accountability, justice, confession,
290 and repentance from forgiveness.

291 Because language shapes how people know and understand reality, a further Lutheran theological
292 consideration involves the language of faith. Some people are asking this church in its concern about
293 sources of gender-based violence to wrestle more particularly with the predominance of male references
294 to God. They are asking this church to consider the ways that predominantly masculine and male-
295 associated language for God not only denies the fullness of who God is but perpetuates the assumption
296 that men are closer to the image and likeness of God.

Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., 2010, www.library.hbs.edu/hc/wes/collections/women_law/. Slave women had no legal existence apart from those who claimed to own them: They were traded, used and sometimes forced to have children by those with power over them. See "Women, Enterprise & Society." Early laws and judicial decisions gave "legitimacy" to these concepts by permitting physical "chastisement" by husbands of their wives, permitting marriage to be asserted as a defense to rape, and by denying aid to victims based on their theory that judges should "not interfere with family government in trifling cases." It would take more than 100 years before a state would enact a law criminalizing a physical assault by a husband on his wife. See *Bradley v. State*, 2 Miss. (Walker) 156 (1824) in "History of Battered Women's Movement," *SafeNetwork: California's Domestic Violence Resource*, 1999, www.icadvinc.org/what-is-domestic-violence/history-of-battered-womens-movement/.

[32] See, e.g., Mary Pellauer, "Lutheran Theology Facing Sexual and Domestic Violence," 2nd ed. (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2011), http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Violence_Theology_Booklet.pdf. Pellauer outlines Luther's strong writing on the "proper" submission of women to men and his ambivalence on child abuse and wife-beating. Although he exhorts husbands to be peaceable, he writes, "[T]he female sex inclines naturally to what is forbidden to it, to reign, to rule and to judge. From this there come marital discord, blows and beatings." ("Titus, 1527," *Luther's Works* 29:57). See, e.g., Joy A. Schroeder, *Dinah's Lament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007) for a disquieting historical explanation of Christian theological victim-blaming.

[33] Careful analysis of the way that religion and culture are intertwined and attention to the effects of religious ideas and beliefs on gender-based violence is key to Christian action. See, e.g., Jimmy Carter, *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). Thus, Christian attention to all doctrine and theology is in order. This includes the doctrine of God, theological anthropology, the doctrines of sin and salvation, christology, ecclesiology, eschatology and ethics.

297 ### Silence, denial and resistance

298   Far too often people of faith have been silent even when becoming aware of horrific acts. Silence
299 sometimes seems to flow from not seeing what is everywhere. Sometimes it takes the form of willful
300 ignorance: when we choose to be uninformed or deliberately turn away.
301   Christian people and institutions often deny the presence of gender-based violence because it is
302 easier to resist naming what is happening than to confront it. For example, when intimate partner violence
303 is misidentified as marital misunderstanding or anger mismanagement, what is really happening is denied
304 and resisted. In such cases the dynamic of power and control that is strategically used by one partner to
305 harm another is not seen or acknowledged.
306   Resistance is manifest in congregational or institutional attempts to discredit hints or reports of
307 gender-based violence by victims. Resistance is often rooted in fears of confronting people, appearing to
308 take sides, or triggering traumas for others by talking openly about gender-based violence.
309   Different forms of silence, denial and resistance result in failures to care for victim/survivors of
310 gender-based violence. Far too often, far too many of us have failed God and others by remaining silent or
311 oblivious and by failing to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. God calls God's people to care
312 for the neighbor: God calls us to stop, listen, see, name and minister in the midst of ugliness and pain.
313 God calls us to confront honestly these realities for the sake of those whose lives are affected by gender-
314 based violence.

315 ### Inadequate responses

316   When Christian people or institutions respond, they must take care to do so wisely. When the
317 response is carried out inadequately, it actually may intensify the problem. Insufficient and misguided
318 Christian responses include victim-blaming, failure to demand accountability, and remaining ill-equipped
319 to respond.
320   Direct and indirect forms of victim-blaming, on either religious or social grounds, do irreparable
321 harm to survivors. Likewise, when the church fails to hold perpetrators and society (i.e., the law and
322 criminal justice system, health care, child care, education, etc.) accountable to prevent, address and
323 redress gender-based violence, we fail to care and so participate in the perpetuation of gender-based
324 violence.
325   Being ill-equipped to respond to and prevent gender-based violence also perpetuates the violence.
326 For example, those ministering to a person abused by an intimate partner cannot provide appropriate care
327 if they do not understand the cycle of power and control in abuse or do not seek out the help of
328 professional advocates. Likewise, an emphasis on saving the relationship above all else enables abusers
329 and denies the needs and safety of the person who is being abused.
330   Finally, faulty practical responses include Christian institutional policies that stand in the way of
331 caring for people suffering. These policies are harmful and inadequate when they, for example, do not
332 make victims the priority of situations, do not allow everyone to name and respond to gender-based
333 violence, or are outdated or inaccessible.

334 ## 5. Where is God in the midst of this pain and suffering?

335

336   God's beloved creatures suffer gender-based violence at the hands of each other. Such violence
337 violates human dignity, divides humanity and abuses power. The pain and suffering of people confronts
338 this church as a body and as individual members. Where is God in all this, where do we turn, and what do
339 we do to end such terrible violence? We turn simultaneously to God and to neighbor. While reaching to
340 care for people suffering from violence, we remember that our faith resides in the triune God. God's grace
341 through Jesus Christ binds the Christian church to God and the body of Christ one to another.

342 ### God with us in pain and suffering
343   Within the Lutheran tradition, there are a number of theological emphases with implications for
344 understanding, addressing and preventing these problems. The biblical theme of the incarnation teaches
345 that God shares fully in human life. In particular, on the cross Jesus Christ shares fully in our deepest
346 need and vulnerability. Jesus was betrayed, laid low, and his very being was ripped apart; his whole body
347 suffered from the evil of violence. Whoever is likewise laid low, made into non-being, and ripped apart
348 by gender-based violence is fully known by God. God is there, in the depths of suffering.

349 ### The sacraments: being one in Christ
350   Scripture proclaims there is a future determined by the risen Christ as ruler of God's realm of
351 peace and justice. This means that the marked body of the risen Christ is drawn toward healing and
352 transformation. To confess Christ means that the church as the body of Christ knows and sees itself as the
353 violated body, as the body that is marked in the flesh, together. Not them, us. We are marked.
354   God draws us into this future now through word and sacrament. Through these means of grace,
355 God binds us with God and each other. Sacraments are enacted Word, God's communal acts that are the
356 very meaning and root of our relationships.
357   Through baptism, we die and rise in Christ as we are washed by the Spirit through water and
358 marked with the sign of Christ, the cross. Through the gift of baptism, God holds the body together in its
359 vast plurality, in its dying and rising in Christ.
360   In sharing bread and wine, our very bodies become part of Christ's body. And through the work
361 of the Holy Spirit, we experience the body of Christ as relational – "one inseparable body and flesh."[34]
362 Through Holy Communion we participate in "all the unjust suffering of the innocent, with which the
363 world is everywhere filled to overflowing."[35]

364 ### Confession of sin[36]
365   Through the means of grace, we are knit together in our vulnerabilities through Christ, who is
366 active in our beings. This church and its members are, therefore, free first to confess our failures and then
367 free to begin anew to understand, to care, to educate and to take action.
368   As part of the church catholic, the ELCA confesses its sin. We have contributed to gender-based
369 violence through actions and inaction as individual and corporate sin in which we are bound and cannot
370 free ourselves. Such confession allows the truth to be told and orients our efforts to address all aspects of
371 gender-based violence (1 John 1:5-9).
372   We believe confession is not the end but a beginning. We pray that such confession would turn us
373 by the power of the Holy Spirit to new paths that completely alter our understanding of and our response
374 to gender-based violence. We give thanks that we are freed to take the risks of the cross to love and serve
375 others and pray such confession might turn us to work that better conforms this church to the life-giving
376 ways of God.

377 ### Law and gospel
378   Lutherans emphasize that we simultaneously live under the law while we live because of the
379 gospel. When this church thinks and acts together in the face of gender-based violence, it does so in light
380 of God's relationship with creation. That relationship is expressed through the civil use of the law to order

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[34] "Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 6-8," *Luther's Works* 23:149.

[35] "Word and Sacrament I," *Luther's Works* 35:54.

[36] Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes the call to communal confession very well: "It is not enough for individuals to repent and be justified. … [T]he church must likewise repent and be justified. The community that is from God to God, that bears within itself eternal meaning, endures in God's sight and does not melt into the fate of the many. It is willed and created and has become culpable; it must seek repentance, believe in and experience justification and sanctification, and experience judgment and grace at the limits of time." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio: A Theological Study of the Sociology of the Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 119.

381 society. God's law is expressed summarily as a baseline for the common good in the Ten Commandments.
382 The commandments refute the belief that any human being has the authority to make someone else into
383 an object, especially through violence. The Fifth Commandment, for instance, teaches that we should
384 "neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbor, but instead help and support them."[37]
385 Christians live by God's grace, which frees us to take action so that every neighbor is served with
386 love and justice and not harmed. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God's grace is active in us to see the
387 neighbor's need and to take action for change now.

6. What should we do?

389 The following recommendations identify means to confront and change the problem of
390 gender-based violence. This church commends those individuals, communities and
391 institutions already engaged in any of these efforts. Yet, it clearly is time for wide-spread
392 efforts toward change in the face of the multiple sources supporting gender-based
393 violence.

A. What are we called to do within this church
395 The commitment of this church to recognize violence, ensure care, provide for education and
396 create accountability calls for efforts among:
397 *Congregations and other ministry sites to*
398 • pray for healing, wisdom, guidance and the courage to face the issues.
399 • put in place and enforce congregational policies and practices that promote safe and
400 healthy congregations.
401 • provide information for visitors and congregants on access to crisis care and safety plans
402 in ways that maintain confidentiality and safety.
403 • provide safe spaces for members or others who experience gender-based violence to tell
404 the truth of what happened to them.
405 • provide support for survivors that entail very practical needs: safety, shelter, food,
406 clothing, mental health care, legal counsel, work and transportation, child care and
407 education.
408 • be clear with anyone experiencing gender-based violence that God condemns how they
409 have been hurt.
410 • be clear that God calls perpetrators to repentance, accountability and the obligation to
411 make amends; this includes calling church leaders to the same.
412 • provide support for perpetrators seeking to repent and change.
413 • understand and uphold ELCA "Vision and Expectations" for church leaders.
414 • employ liturgy, steadfast prayer and Bible study to counter those forces that legitimate
415 or encourage gender-based violence in any way.
416 • engage in education through dialogue, analysis and careful study of the social and
417 religious factors that contribute to gender-based violence.[38]
418 • learn about and be prepared to respond to the specific contexts, needs and characteristics
419 of various forms of gender-based violence.
420 • learn about social science theories and practices that have proven effective in addressing
421 gender-based violence and dialogue with others.

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[37] Small Catechism. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 352.
[38] See for instance the resources available at www.elca.org/justiceforwomen or the document "Churches Say No to Violence Against Women," available at www.Lutheranworld.org .

422   •   support and teach healthy relationships, including sexual relationships.

423   •   love unceasingly, in the midst of pain, violence and ugliness, as a visible manifestation
424   of the love of Christ for all.

425 *Rostered and lay leaders to*

426   •   be prepared to respond to crises with the help of experts in the fields of gender-based
427   violence through training, education, dialogue and collaboration with local and national
428   partners.

429   •   care for people experiencing gender-based violence by believing them and helping them
430   to find the resources they need.

431   •   collaborate with local experts in care and advocacy to respond to survivors' needs.

432   •   preach about gender-based violence in order to speak the truth and care for others.

433   •   provide leadership to foster discussion, education and discernment.

434 *Synods to*

435   •   review and put in place transparent policies and practices that provide for safety,
436   confidentiality and due process for survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence.

437   •   provide and make public their policies on sexual harassment at public and sponsored
438   meetings and events.

439   •   identify a means to make available lists or guides to resources for those responding to
440   gender-based violence.

441   •   partner with local experts and agencies to provide services to survivors and education for
442   the community.

443   •   support education for congregations and pastors about laws and practices concerning
444   mandatory reporting of domestic and other forms of gender-based violence.

445   •   require training and education of their leaders on responding to and preventing all forms
446   of gender-based violence.

447 *The churchwide organization and its ministries to*

448   •   review its organizational policies and practices to ensure that they provide for the safety,
449   confidentiality and due process for both survivors and perpetrators of gender-based
450   violence.

451   •   review ELCA "Vision and Expectations" to ensure the text adequately expresses
452   standards and expectations regarding gender-based violence.

453   •   provide a concise online resource communicating the core ideas of this message
454   appropriate for a catechism setting, or one like it, for middle school age youth.

455   •   provide a study guide to this social message that includes resource lists and ministry
456   illustrations.

457   •   collaborate with leaders in all expressions of this church to encourage discussion and
458   discernment around the ways that theology serves to prevent or contribute to gender-
459   based violence.

460   •   collaborate with theologians and ecumenical and interfaith partners to discuss the ways
461   theology serves to prevent or contribute to gender-based violence.

462 *Seminaries to*

463   •   review or put in place policies and practices that ensure safety, confidentiality and due
464   process for both survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence.

465   •   include theological and practical preparation among seminarians that considers the
466   problems and resources found in Scripture and the Lutheran theological tradition.

467   •   provide the means for seminary communities to discuss and reflect upon the intersections
468   of gender, violence, theology and ministry.

469 *Church-related educational institutions to*

470   •   review or put in place policies and practices that ensure safety, confidentiality and due
471   process for both survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence.
472   •   give appropriate attention to policies intended to curb gender-based violence and to foster
473   appropriate responses that avoid "re-victimization" of those who have suffered gender-
474   based violence on their campuses.
475   •   review their curriculum to break silence by ensuring that matters regarding gender-based
476   violence are treated fully in courses appropriate to the subject matter.
477   •   review the possibilities for educational or informational events that encourage awareness
478   among students of the nature of gender-based violence and the means to dialogue.
479   •   provide for community-based conversations on gender-based violence, its sources and
480   ways to respond.
481 *Social ministry organizations to*
482   •   review their organizational policies and practices to ensure that they provide for the
483   safety, confidentiality and due process among clients and staff, who may be both
484   survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence.
485   •   provide care through protection and support of the many needs of survivors for safety and
486   well-being as appropriate to the kind of service offered by the organization.
487   •   communicate crisis-based expertise with appropriate ELCA partners.

488 ## B. What do we seek and advocate be done in wider society?

489   The intent to become allies, seek improved laws and social patterns and adopt improved policies
490 leads the ELCA to call upon:
491 *Congregations, church leaders and members to*
492   •   be local advocates within schools, judicial systems, health care and social services for
493   transparent and appropriate responses to survivors and perpetrators and for measures to
494   decrease the possibilities of gender-based violence.
495   •   collaborate with others who advocate for legislation that reduces and prevents gender-
496   based violence and provides services for intervention, protects victims and ensures
497   accountability for perpetrators.
498   •   advocate for improved crisis response in their communities through dialogue and
499   partnership with various public services.
500   •   advocate for improvements in social discourse and practice about the intersections of
501   gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation and age.
502   •   serve as witnesses and advocates for individuals going through legal processes.
503   •   speak words of both law and gospel that counter religious contributions to gender-based
504   violence.
505   •   call for accountability from prosecutors, the judicial system and those in power when
506   they fail to respond, appropriately, to gender-based violence in society or their
507   institutions.
508 *The churchwide organization to*
509   •   advocate for legislative and administrative efforts that reduce gender-based violence,
510   provide care for victims and survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, and empower
511   people to work for continual safeguards and change through local, state, federal and
512   global initiatives.
513   •   make clear in appropriate public address that this church opposes religious contributions
514   to gender-based violence.
515 *Social ministry organizations to*

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516   •   seek from their experiences in ministry with survivors to support passage of preventive
517   laws and the encouragement of alternative models of responding to gender-based
518   violence.
519   •   expand means that empower survivors of gender-based violence to be leaders for change,
520   advocates and caregivers on behalf of others also hurt by gender-based violence.
521
522   --------------------------------------

Glossary

Biological characteristics: The physical and physiological traits that we often associate with either males or females, but observation and research show that such physical and physiological traits do not exclusively belong to one or the other. These traits include not just genitalia, but also body hair, facial hair, height, muscle mass, body fat, body shape, breast tissue and the size of hands and feet, to name a few. These traits often shape how people are perceived or identify in terms of their gender.

Gender: Categories into which cultures/societies separate behaviors and characteristics that are usually considered masculine or feminine. The most common gender identities are *woman* and *man*, but other identities exist and are becoming more widely used and understood.

Gender non-conforming: Within this message, gender non-conforming refers to people whose gender identity, gendered way of acting in the world, and biological characteristics do not completely fit within predominantly expected ways of acting as a man or a woman. There are many identities and experiences included under the umbrella of gender non-conforming.

Intersection: Human identities that are tied to systemic privilege and oppression can *intersect* with one another and thus shape the unique ways that people experience gender-based violence. These identities have to do with sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, race, ethnicity, nationality/citizenship, social class, economics and religion, to name a few. This means that the gender-based violence and oppression experienced by a lesbian woman of color will be different than that experienced by an economically impoverished gender non-conforming White person. All human identities and all forms of privilege and oppression are made up of many intersections.

Justice: Generally justice refers to an underlying sense of fairness, right treatment and reciprocity. When someone uses the word, that person may have a particular kind of justice in mind. Some of these include: retributive justice, corrective justice, distributive justice, restorative justice, structural justice, fair or equal treatment under the law, ending oppression based on power differences, or biblical righteousness. In this document, the term justice emphasizes the latter half of these meanings but always with the biblical emphasis on justice as right relationship with God and within community.

Patriarchy: The social, institutional, legal, political, educational, economic, religious and interpersonal systems of society that best serve men and the interests of men with status and power. While all people within a patriarchal system participate in it, the system functions with men at the center. This means that, sometimes unconsciously, people participate in systems that control and oppress women, girls, gender non-conforming people, LGBTQ people, and all those who are not normative, heterosexual men.

Appendix: Global and national statistics

- Globally, an estimated 30 percent of women who have been in a relationship have experienced sexual or physical violence at the hands of their intimate partner.[i]
- Nationally, 25 percent of women over the age of 18 have experienced sexual or physical violence at the hands of a current or former intimate partner.[ii]
- Nationally, race and ethnicity significantly affect the frequency of intimate partner violence.[iii]
- Globally, an estimated 38 percent of female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner.[iv]
- Nationally, almost 33 percent of female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner.[v]
- Globally, one in five women will be a victim of attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.[vi]
- Nationally, one in six women will be a victim of attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.[vii]

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564 • Nationally, 97 percent of rapes committed against adults (both men and women) are committed by
565 men.[viii]
566 • Nationally, 60 percent of sexual assaults are not reported to the police, and 97 percent of rapists
567 will never spend a day in jail.[ix]
568 • Nationally, 83 percent of girls aged 12 to 16 have experienced some form of sexual harassment in
569 public schools.[x]
570 • Nationally, of those people who express a gender non-conforming identity while in grades K-12, 78
571 percent are made the victim of harassment, 35 percent are made the victim of physical assault, and
572 12 percent are made the victim of sexual violence.[xi]
573 • Nationally, 25 percent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people have been the victim of rape, and 72
574 percent have been the victim of other forms of sexual violence.[xii]
575 • Nationally, an estimated 20-25 percent of lesbian and gay people experience hate violence within
576 their lifetimes.[xiii]
577 • Nationally, of gender- and sexuality-based hate-crime homicides in 2012, 53 percent of victims
578 were transgender women.[xiv]
579 • Nationally, of gender- and sexuality-based hate-crime homicides in 2012, 73 percent of victims
580 were people of color.[xv]
581 • Nationally, in 2013, White men were more likely than any other racial and ethnic demographic to
582 be perpetrators of gender- and sexuality-based hate violence. Of all men who perpetrate gender-
583 and sexuality-based hate violence, the majority by age were 19 to 29 years old.[xvi]

[i] World Health Organization, "Violence against Women: Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women," *WHO*, last modified October 2013, www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/.

[ii] According to this survey, almost 64 percent of women who reported being raped, physically assaulted and/or stalked since the age of 18 were targeted by a current or former husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend or date. Likewise, those reporting assaults within the past year averaged more than three assaults per year. See Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2000), iii.

[iii] According to *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence*, women of color are more likely to be victimized than average, with American Indian/Alaskan Native women experiencing significantly higher rates of intimate partner violence (37.5 percent) than do women of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. According to the Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, 41-60 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander women experience intimate partner violence, "Statistics on Violence against API Women," *APIIDV*, accessed Sept. 4, 2014, www.apiidv.org/resources/violence-against-api-women.php. See A. Raj and J. Silverman, "Intimate Partner Violence against South-Asian Women in Greater Boston," *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association* 57, no. 2 *(*2002): 111-114, and Mieko Yoshihama, "Domestic Violence against Women of Japanese Descent in Los Angeles: Two Methods of Estimating Prevalence," *Violence Against Women* 5, no. 8 (1999):869-897, cited in "Statistics on Violence Against API Women," *APIIDV*, accessed Sept. 4, 2014, www.apiidv.org/resources/violence-against-api-women.php.

[iv] World Health Organization, "Violence Against Women."

[v] Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports "Crime in the United States, 2000," (2001), cited in National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Domestic Violence Facts," *NCADV*, accessed Aug. 28, 2014.

[vi] United Nations, "Ending Violence against Women and Girls," *Resources for Speakers on Global Issues*, accessed Aug. 28, 2014, www.un.org/en/globalissues/briefingpapers/endviol/.

[vii] Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1998), 11.

[viii] Percentage was calculated from data in Tjaden and Thoennes, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women*, 47.

[ix] The 3 percent statistic has been calculated by taking reporting rates into consideration. See, *National Crime Victimization Survey,* Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008-2012, and *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Countries*, Washington, D.C.: Department of Justice, 2002-2006, cited in "Reporting Rates," *RAINN*, accessed Sept. 5, 2014, www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/reporting-rates.

[x] American Association of University Women, "Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing, and Sexual Harassment in School," (Washington, D.C.: AAUW, 2001), 20-21, cited in United Nations, "Facts and Figures: Ending Violence against Women," *UNWomen.org*, accessed Aug. 28, 2014, www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures.

[xi] Jaime M. Grant, Lisa A Mottet, and Justin Tanis with Jack Harrison, Jody L. Merman, and Mara Keisling, *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011), 3.

[xii] Of the 25 percent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people who have been the victim of rape, survey statistics showed that all of them were lesbian or bisexual women. Both percentages were found from our own calculations of survey data from Mikel L. Walters, Jieru Chen, and Matthew J. Breiding, *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation* (Atlanta, Ga.: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013), 6-11.

[xiii] Shelby Chestnut, Ejeris Dixon, and Chai Jindasurant, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2012* (New York, N.Y.: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013), 10-13.

[xiv] Ibid., 8.

[xv] Ibid.

[xvi] The most recent studies of hate violence show that in 2013 39 percent of perpetrators were perceived as White by victims, as opposed to other racial or ethnic backgrounds, 72.45 percent were male as opposed to female or transgender, and 30.7 percent were between 19 and 29 years old. See Osman Ahmed and Chai Jindasurant, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2013* (New York, N.Y.: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2014), 51-53.

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

Table and font: Who is welcome?

An invitation to join the conversation about Baptism and Communion.

Report to the ELCA Church Council
November 2015

The Reverend Kevin L. Strickland,
Assistant to the Presiding Bishop/Executive for Worship

This report is in response to the 2012 Memorial and subsequent CWA action in 2013 and Church Council action in 2014.

A survey was fielded to a random sample of 1,000 ELCA congregations asking about the communion practices and welcome statements used in their Sunday worship folder(s). Forty-eight percent of the congregations responded. There was a good distribution by region and by congregational size. (See Figures 3 and 4 at the end of this document).

Each of the statements was coded into one of several categories which ranged from explicitly stating that Holy Communion is the meal of the baptized and to receive it, one must accept the real presence of Christ, to Holy Communion is God's meal and all are welcome regardless if you are baptized or what you believe. The responses show there is considerable diversity in communion practices and welcome statements. (See Figure 1.)

**Figure 1: Percent of Congregations by Type of Communion Practice Statements**
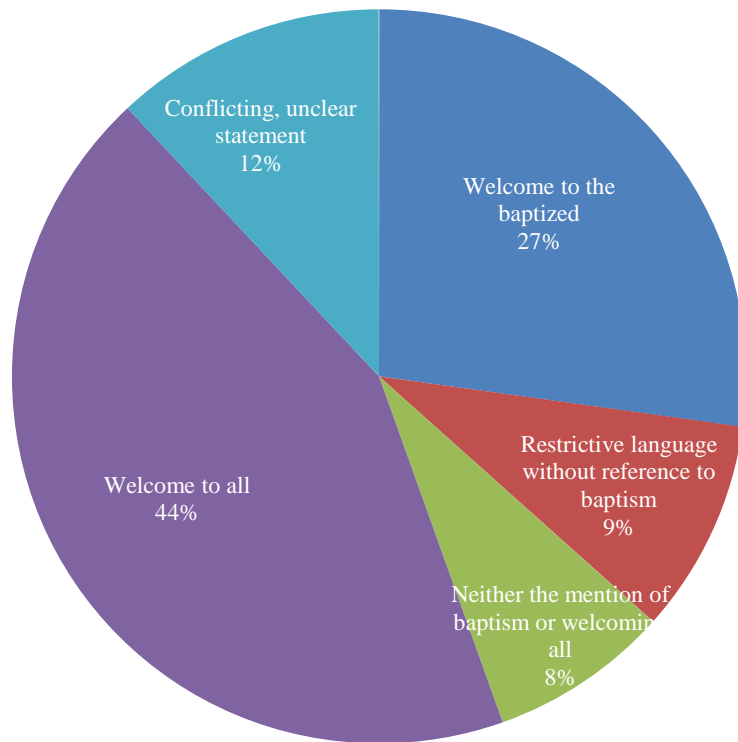
Figure 2 shows the differences by region. Congregations in the West (Regions 1 and 2) are most likely to welcome all. Regions in the East and South (Regions 8 and 9) are most likely to extend the welcome to baptized.

Figure 2: Percent of Congregations Using Welcome All in Their Communion Practice by Region
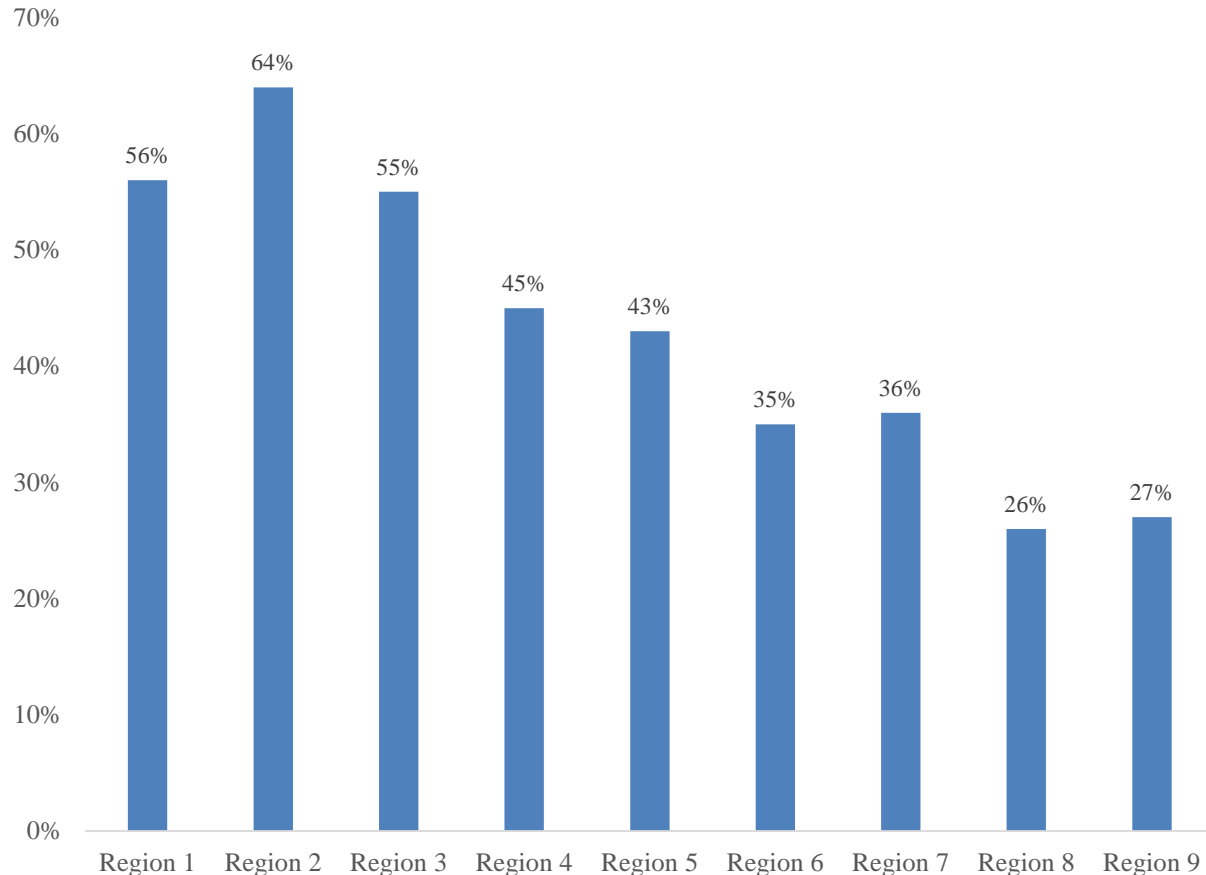
Following the survey, a study guide, "Table and Font: Who is welcome?" was created. Responses were received from 134 individuals and 138 congregations or groups (As of the deadline of June 30, 2015). We also received a letter from Lutheran Core and approximately 30 responses after the deadline. In addition to these formal responses, there have been multiple threads of conversation occurring on the ELCA Clergy Facebook page and other social media.

There is a diversity of practice from, *"The consensus of our discussion was that our theology should shape our worship practices. Traditional Lutheran theology understands Holy Baptism as the entrance rite into the church. Holy Communion follows this entrance into the family of faith. Therefore, we feel that the current practice of the ELCA concerning Communion practices as outlined in* The Use of the Means of Grace*, should continue to be the practice of the ELCA going forward.* The Use of the Means of Grace *states that there occasionally may be times when a person who has not been baptized may receive communion, but this should be the exception and not the rule. Our hope is that the current practices of the ELCA Font and Table (in that order) will continue."*

To, *"Thank you for involving local churches in this study. We see a more inclusive approach now than attitudes were in Martin Luther's time, when many aspects of life and culture and worship practice were more legalistic. Today's more global world view is more inclusive and accepting of everyone. Christ invites everyone to the banquet.* The Use of the Means of Grace *is almost twenty years old. It is encouraging that the ELCA continues to move forward as people of God, with dividing walls coming down and with more ecumenical flexibility and cross-pollination."*

To, *"We believe that it is our responsibility as faithful stewards of the Sacraments to emphasize to all communicants (baptized or un-baptized) the centrality to our shared Christian faith of both Sacraments, and to proactively engage any of God's children who commune with us and are not already baptized (or who are unsure about their baptismal status) in a loving conversation about the importance of their sharing with us fully, through Baptism, in a life joined to Christ in mission. We also believe that Holy Communion should never be received flippantly, disrespectfully, or without some level of appreciation for the gift that God so graciously offers us in the marvelous body and blood of Christ, coupled with the living Holy Spirit."*

In reflecting on all the responses, I made two observations: One, there seems to be a sense of anxiety that the discussion itself will cause divisions in the church and produce a divisive "vote" on the sacraments of the church.

Second, many (even those who faithfully did the study) have asked why are we having this conversation and what is the goal. On the other hand, about as many have said how thankful they were for the opportunity to have this conversation within their congregations and even synods.

The ELCA has been guided by "The Use of the Means of Grace," since 1997. This document set out the sacramental practices of our church and addressed good stewardship for the care and fidelity of God's gifts of grace. "The Use of the Means of Grace," while describing preferred practices, noted this "statement grows out of the church's concern for healthy pastoral action and strong congregational mission. It does not address our practice of Word and Sacrament out of antiquarian or legalistic interests but rather to ground the practice of our church in the Gospel and to encourage good order within our church." (The Use of the Means of Grace, Background 4a)

We are a church that centers itself on the central things of our faith—Water, Word, and Meal; central things that point us to Christ who is our center. We remember that, "In every celebration of the means of grace, God acts to show forth both the need of the world and the truth of the Gospel. In every gathering of Christians around the proclaimed Word and the holy sacraments, God acts to empower the Church for mission. Jesus Christ, who is God's living bread come from heaven, has given his flesh to be the life of the world. This very flesh, given for the life of all, is encountered in the Word and Sacraments." (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 51)

The ELCA Worship staff sees no further need to research the practices of congregations with respect to "The Use of the Means of Grace" and sees this report as the conclusion of its work related to the 2012 Memorial and the subsequent actions by the 2013 CWA and the 2014 Church Council.

Figure 3: Percent of Responding Congregations by Region Compared to the ELCA as a Whole
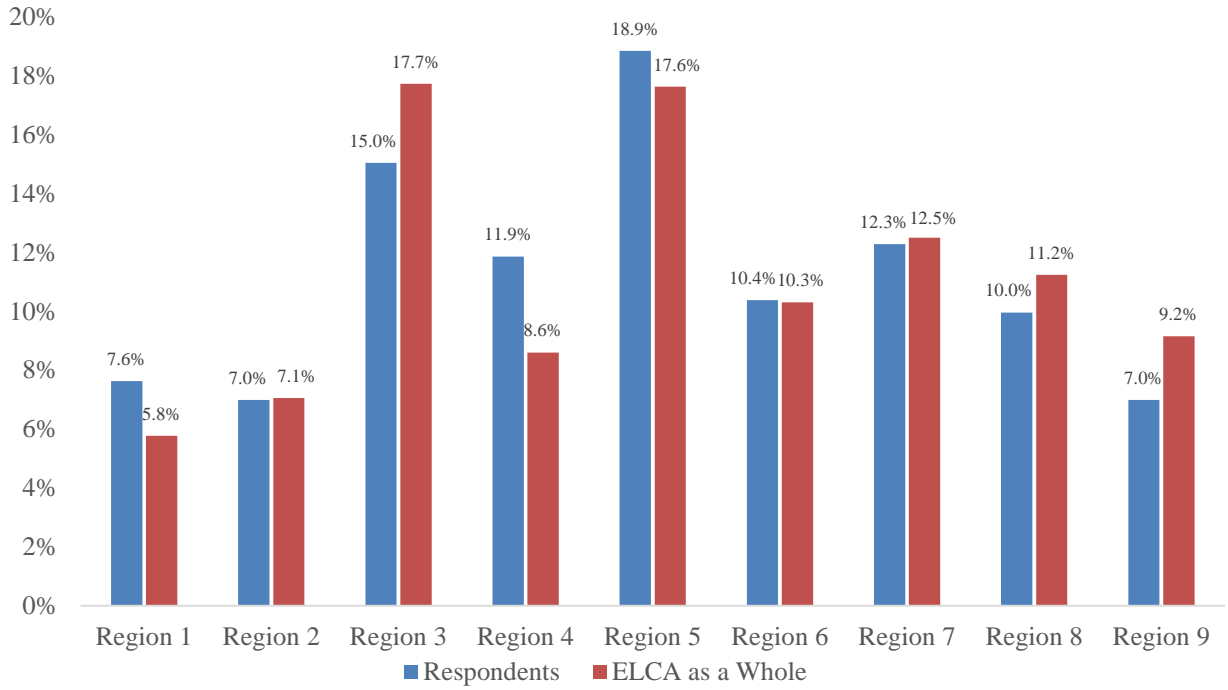
Figure 4: Percent of Responding Congregations by Worship Size Compared to the ELCA as a Whole
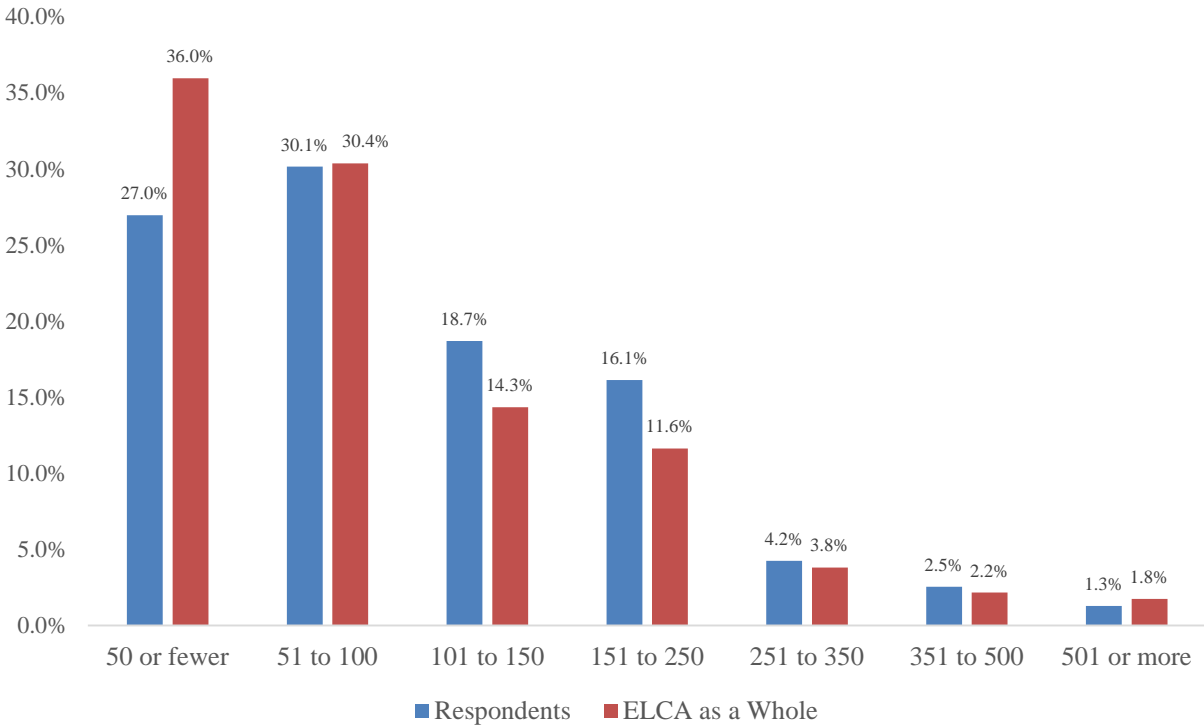
Report and Recommendation of the Word and Service Task Force

1. Background

Since 1993, the ELCA has maintained four public ministry rosters: the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, and three lay rosters: associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers. For each roster, a unique function, set of standards and required preparation has been maintained. The integral role of rostered lay ministry in the ELCA has contributed much to the life and mission of the church in the world.

Beginning in 2007, a series of regional consultations, study and dialogue began to examine the work and ministry of these three lay rosters, and these conversations eventually led the ELCA Church Council to form a Word and Service Task Force. Early in its work, the task force began to focus its work on recognizing the essential nature of diaconal service to the mission of the people of God in the ELCA. The task force believes that this calling would be strengthened by the convergence of the three lay rosters of the ELCA into one and by a redefinition of this one new roster.

Based on an interim report from the Word and Service Task Force (hereafter WSTF) delivered in November 2013, the Church Council voted in part:

> To affirm the preliminary conclusion of the Word and Service Task Force that this church should move toward creation of a single unified lay roster of Word and Service ministry…

> To authorize the Word and Service Task Force to continue its work in order to facilitate the creation of such a unified roster, to develop a process outlining how the existing lay rosters would be closed, and to provide a process for transition of existing associates in ministry, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses into such a new roster, and, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, to consider and propose possible amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* to accomplish its recommendations;

Informed by widespread communication with persons on existing rosters, the WSTF recommended that the question of entrance rite for this new roster be considered by a different group. The Church Council created a separate team, the Entrance Rite Discernment Group, to consider and make recommendations on this matter.

2. Theology and Practice

In every age, the church has responded to changing contexts and changing needs through its proclamation of the Gospel, its ministry in the world, and the leaders it has called to serve. The recommendation to establish a single roster of ministry of Word and Service is thus not only about merging leadership rosters. It is rather a matter of addressing with new urgency the church's response to the needs of the world in the 21st century.

Christians have always emphasized the need to live faithfully and actively with care for the neighbor, our own individual identity and purpose already having been secured for us by the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. Diaconal service strengthens this church's right emphasis on evangelical mission as our personal and social expression of the love of God. Consequently, we seek to live out our catholic faith in service to the neighbor and, with our ever-reforming Lutheran attitude, we are free to do so in whatever ways prove most effective in particular contexts. One way we practice faithful discipleship is by constantly sharpening the shape and emphasizing the content of public diaconal ministry.

In a distinctive manner, the ministry of Word and Service can add a new quality of agility to this church's commitment to God's mission through the church with a renewed vision of the meaning of discipleship and a renewed appreciation of the essential role of diaconal service for all the people of God. A ministry of Word and Service not only aids the ELCA's own members' growth in discipleship, it also expands the presence of this church in the world. Ministers of Word and Service could inspire the imaginations of innumerable ELCA members with a hunger for personal purpose and a passion for public service. Partnerships between ministers of Word and Sacrament and Word and Service open innumerable opportunities for creative and enriched evangelical outreach and mission in the world.

Whatever their particular role or context, those on the new roster of Word and Service would strive to empower, equip and encourage the people of God for their daily baptismal vocation of service to the neighbor and care of creation. Ministers of Word and Service would be distinctive from and work in complementarity with the ministers of Word and Sacrament and with and for the ministry of all the baptized. The two rostered ministries will work collaboratively to inspire the whole ministry of the church.

We believe that the leadership of the church is a key asset for church renewal. The revised office of-Word and Service will strengthen and enrich that leadership for the sake of the Gospel. Achieving the expected benefits from the complementary rosters of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service will require extensive and persistent advocacy for a new vision of ministry leadership that ultimately extends across and through all the baptized people of God.

Therefore, our recommendations below reflect a belief that a renewed diaconal ministry, designed to stand alongside the ministry of Word and Sacrament, will enhance this church's ability to better realize its mission today. Such a diaconal ministry is biblically rooted, historically informed, ecumenically related, and missionally driven (For a more expansive and formal discussion of the theological rational, see Appendix A: *A Theology for One Lutheran Diaconate in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).*

3. History and Proposed Title: Deacon

The Task Force recommends that the title "Deacon" be given to ELCA ministers of Word and Service. While no title may be universally accepted at the start of this roster in the ELCA, the term deacon is nevertheless perhaps the best single term encompassing biblical, ecumenical and popular understandings of servant leadership. From the Book of Acts through all the reforms of the church catholic into contemporary ecumenical practices around the globe, the term deacon is most used and understood.

In popular usage, the church has used the terms deacon, deaconess, diaconal or diakonia for many years. The church has utilized the word deacon in various ways in the past, and forms of training and the formation for deacons, as well as public or ecclesial recognition for this ministry, have varied. For example, the ELCA, in its three expressions, has experienced these types of diaconal service contexts just in recent history:

Deaconess of the ELCA

Rostered Diaconal Minister

Synodical Deacon

Congregational or Parish Deacon

Lutheran Deaconess Association (while not an agency of the ELCA, some members are on the ELCA roster)

Diakonia Program

Finally, many of our full communion partners, including the United Methodist Church and The Episcopal Church, include diaconal offices in their ministry, as do many members of The Lutheran World Federation (For further examples, see the Appendix B: *Here a Deacon, There a Deacon, Everywhere a Deacon).* Conversation with our full communion partners demonstrates that they respect our decisions and appreciate our approach to complex questions. Our partners in mission and ministry have already

indicated that any decision the ELCA makes on the movement to one roster and on an entrance rite will be honored and respected. Developing a roster of deacons could enhance the opportunities for partnership in mission.

Whatever the particular role or context, those who perform the ministry of deacon worldwide and in the ELCA carry responsibility for some form of service ministry. While this service ministry often takes place on the frontiers of the church's outreach, it also includes service in local congregational and other gathered faith community settings through the proclamation of the Word in preaching, leading public prayer, teaching, and leading music as well as through leadership in such areas as education, administration, and youth ministry. In carrying forward these traditions, all deacons on the roster of the ELCA will maintain responsibility to empower, equip and encourage the whole people of God for their own daily baptismal vocation of service to the neighbor and care of creation.

4. The Character of a Deacon

The WSTF has developed a set of expectations for this new roster. Every deacon shall:
- Be rooted in the word of God, fulfilling a gospel-centered purpose that proclaims and furthers the reign of God among us in the community, the nation, and abroad;
- Daily return to baptism with prayer and attention to their spiritual lives;
- Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service both within the church and on the frontiers of the church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- Work for justice in solidarity with the poor and oppressed proclaiming God's love for the world;
- Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world, affirming the gifts of all people;
- Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents and resources;
- Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

In sum, whatever their particular role or context, whether deeply engaged in proclamation and service in non-ecclesial contexts or serving in congregational or other church settings, those on the roster of Word and Service will strive to empower, equip and encourage the people of God for their daily baptismal vocation of service to the neighbor and care of creation. Consequently, the new roster will consist of those who have been identified, formed, trained and called for ministries of Word and Service throughout the whole church through locally stewarded churchwide processes as outlined in the Candidacy Manual. Rostered deacons will be supported by and accountable to churchwide standards and commitments as well as the synodical and local accountabilities and support of the ministries they serve. Rostered deacons will have responsibility and opportunity for engagement in broader ecumenical ministerial and ecclesial relationships. Unlike synodical or congregational deacons currently serving in particular settings, the ministry and rostering of deacons on the roster of the ELCA may be recognized and transferred across synods and institutions.

5. Transition

Giving thanks to God for the ministry of all who have served and are serving on the present lay rosters, as well as working to make the transition from three rosters to one unified roster as smooth as possible, the task force believes the following matters deserve attention:

- All members (active, including on leave from call; on disability; or retired) on the current three rosters should automatically be transferred onto the new roster, unless they choose to resign from their current roster.
- On the new roster, the date of entering public ministry for each transferred leader should correspond with the original date of consecration or commissioning onto their previous roster.
- Rostered leaders and candidates in process should be encouraged to attend gatherings (regional or however most practical) of transition to celebrate the new roster and provide formation for a common ethos of the diaconate, including its biblical, historical, ecumenical and missional emphases. We recommend the ELCA investigate financial support for these gatherings.
- At the time that the 2016 Churchwide Assembly adopts the proposed change to the Word and Service rosters, the existing rosters should be closed to new candidates. The new unified roster will officially replace the existing rosters on January 1, 2017, to give existing roster members time to decide whether or not they wish to make the transition.
- The formation of a new roster will require a time of education for existing rostered leaders and for congregations, synods and candidacy committees. Resources for use in these settings should be developed. In particular, resources should be developed that will assist and deepen the church's understanding of *diakonia.*
- New financial resources and efforts, including both transitional events for 'grand-parented' deacons and ongoing events for candidates will be required during this time of transition.
- The new roster will require reconsideration of the representational principles in the constitution.
- Realizing the promise that could result from new partnerships between ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service will require extensive and persistent advocacy for a new vision of ministry leadership, among both rostered and non-rostered leaders of the church.
- Questions regarding appropriate entrance rite will continue to be addressed by the Church Council-appointed Entrance Rite Discernment Group. This group is encouraged to continue their conversation utilizing the work of the 1993 Task Force that produced the *Study of Ministry.*
- Recognizing that new patterns of ministries and opportunities for mission will continue to emerge in the future, the ELCA should engage in broad-based, intentional, open conversation and discernment focused on various leadership needs to determine what forms of leadership might best serve God's mission for the sake of the world.
- The time leading up to and including the 2016 Churchwide Assembly should be utilized to facilitate these discussions and to equip and empower voting members to continue these conversations in their congregations, conferences and synods.
- The church should continue to provide opportunity for reflection on a theology of servant ministry in the world, on ways in which the church can more fully honor, support and uplift the gifts of ministers of Word and Service, and reflection on the future for these ministers of Word and Service in the face of changing opportunities for call.

6. The ELCA Word and Service Task Force recommends that the ELCA:

1. Establish a single, unified roster of Word and Service;

2. Give the title Deacon to those persons on the new roster;

3. Ensure that the existing rosters of Associates in Ministry, Deaconess, and Diaconal Minister be automatically transferred to the roster of Deacons unless a person on an existing roster declines, and that the existing rosters be then eliminated by January 1, 2017;

4. Modify the ELCA candidacy process to include this new roster;

5. Charge the Office of the Secretary to propose appropriate constitutional amendments to effect this change;

6. Use consecration as the entrance rite for this new roster until such time as the Entrance Rite Discernment Group makes a final recommendation for an appropriate rite;

7. Arrange for funding for transition events and ongoing leadership and formation events to ensure growth and understanding of the Word and Service roster;

8. Arrange for the preparation of appropriate and informative materials for the church's ongoing study; and

9. Refer the resulting amending/amended documents to the 2016 CWA for approval as necessary.

Word and Service Task Force Members

The Rev. Dr. Said Ailabouni, Chair
Sr. Krista Anderson, deaconess
Madelyn Busse, diaconal minister
Tammy Devine, diaconal minister
The Rev. Dr. William Gafkjen, bishop of the ELCA Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Rebecca Kolowe, diaconal minister
Sr. Melinda Lando, deaconess
The Rev. Dr. Duane Larson, interim minister/teaching theologian
Dr. John Litke, lay leader
Dr. Susan McArver, Church Council Representative
Agnes McClain, associate in ministry
Sr. Janet Stump, directing deaconess
James Valentine, associate in ministry

ELCA Churchwide Staff

The Rev. Cherlyne V. Beck, program director for Support of Rostered Leaders
Sue Rothmeyer, associate in ministry, Office of the Secretary
The Rev. Dr. Gregory Villalon, director, ELCA Leadership for Mission/Candidacy

**A Theology for One Lutheran Diaconate in the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The tri-fold character of our life in God

Those who love and know God through the good news of Jesus Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit intuitively practice a life of proclamation-thanksgiving-service (*Kerygma-Eucharistia-Diakonia*). Proclaiming the gospel of justification, joyfully offering thanksgiving even with every breath, serving the neighbor near and far simply because love cannot help but do so: to do these is the desire of every Christian. It is also the rhythm "down deep" in every corner of creation, as the biblical writers, mystics, and Martin Luther himself proclaimed.[1] The practice is not sequential, however. It is organic. Just as there "is" no God the Father without the Son and Spirit, no one without any of the others, so also proclamation never arrives without thanksgiving and service and no one of these three actions without the other. This is simply the character of the full Christian life.

The character of the Christian life depends upon the very character of God. Christians are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is the eternal event of the three divine persons living with, for, and through each other as the consummate expression of inexhaustible love. The love of, in, and from God Trinity has no bounds. This love eternally and infinitely sends and receives itself. The flow and flux and flowering of love in God cannot be contained even in God. It is not enough for God to enjoy the love within; the love wills to create and sustain others. To know and confess that God is love, then, is to state that *diakonia* (neighborly care or service), too, is innate and integral to the character of God. *Diakonia*, too, flexes and flows and flowers. *Diakonia* within God ensures that the creation by God is respected, loved, and served. The character of the full Christian life *theologically* understood reaches ever outward with care for the neighbor and all the creation. This is also part of what it means for the human being to be created in the very image of God.

Diakonia includes apostolicity

Another aspect of the Triune life is the self-giving, the "sent-ness" of the divine persons. As the very energies of God Trinity go ever beyond God to and through all that God loves, all who are sent by God are impelled by God's essential apostolicity. As the divine persons are sent, so also are God's children. As we are sent, so also we are charged by the same apostolicity that energized the prophets and disciples. Apostolicity belongs to the language and vocation of our baptism into Christ. A robust missional imagination, then, characterizes all who would daily live from the joy and impulse of our baptism. So this missional imagination, this apostolicity, this "sent-ness," is integral, too, to diaconal service.

In turn, diaconal service strengthens this church's right emphasis on evangelical mission as an en-fleshed expression of the love of God that sends and receives. God's children-servants daily find Jesus' promise of human fulfillment satisfied when we give ourselves away and then receive ourselves and more in return. Likewise, *diakonia* does not possess itself while it serves others. *Diakonia* is always a giving and sending of one's self *to* the other, especially *for* and *to* the other, however and wherever the other is. Indeed, when God's servants are sent, we carry not ourselves, but God's strength clothed in weakness to serve precisely the weak. In this cruciform way God sends God. We who also are in and with God are sent out *to* wherever those who need God's love through us are, *however* they are. Sent-ness and self-giving all resound with the wonderful urgency of God's love that is always outward bound. And God's love is urgent because of the urgency of all who are bound by suffering, those whom God loves so particularly.

Sent to serve at the cross

So we proclaim, we thank, and we serve. This Christian "tri-fold rhythm" within the Triune life clearly indicates God's character and what God intends for our life and where we find our life wanting. *Diakonia* is precisely the call to the disciple to serve because on the mortal side of eternity it denotes the practical need to fulfill that to which *Kerygma* and *Eucharistia* aspire, even as we already live in the fullness of God's grace. At the root, in the cracks, on the edges, and at the center of the daily grind everywhere and anywhere, God intends abundant and peaceful life.

This is also the meaning of the Lutheran "Theology of the Cross." The *theologia crucis* is rooted in God's diaconal character. God in Jesus Christ is Emmanuel with humankind in all our situations. God suffers where any suffer. Yet, despite, in and beyond suffering, God promises resurrection. Resurrection begins with God's healing of the creation now, whenever and wherever the Gospel is received. The new life transforms into the celebration of perfect peace, justice, and joy forever.

This is the presumption of every more formalized Lutheran theological theme. God in Christ through the Holy Spirit lives in intimate solidarity with every suffering person. Therefore, wherever one works to announce God's forgiveness, to heal, to bring peace, to establish justice, to harbor hope and proclaim promise—especially at the suffering places where stands the crucified God—there one serves Christ himself and there the servant makes visible to the served the God who insistently and selflessly is with us. "Whatever you did to the least of these who are members of my family, you did also to me" (Mt. 25:40). To the "least of these" and more—all in their uniqueness of spirit, time and place—the Christian in gratitude is sent and self-giving. Would that all Christians, all the church, be more evidently so diaconal.

By what authority?

So who is it who makes Christ visible so trenchantly in the suffering places and easily in the joyous places? And by what authority? All Christians are called by God to serve wherever Christ's cross is planted. This poses a problem for the self-preserving church, that church which prefers its own maintenance over its God-given mission. To acknowledge that mission comes before self-preservation of course does not mean that there is no place for self-care. Self-care is necessary insofar as it empowers mission and it is mandated by mission. This is as true for healthy institutional forms as it is for individual persons. But God's desire that all are to serve poses also a freeing possibility for the church more to be "a church for others." When Jesus asked us to follow him, he did not provide rubrics and caveats as to who is or is not qualified to serve. In the ultimate sense, personal or learned qualifications have nothing to do with the matter. Only Christ's grace and Christ's call matter. Whomever Christ graces, Christ calls; and all whom Christ calls Christ graces: all whom Christ has called to serve and all who have heard that call have been given the gifts to love, serve, heal, forgive, proclaim; to be and to present Christ himself.

Christ's call to serve is the Christian mandate and Christ himself the final authority. If we do not love and follow in response, without condition, it is only because we have not yet or again not heard. All Christians are called to bring their and God's joy to every place of suffering and shame, the cruciform places, whereby the God who bears the pain of our darkness will be revealed as the God of greater light. God's light overcomes the darkness and perfect love casts out all fear. The authority to serve and "be" Christ is the authority of God's own creative life-giving love uttered as the call for those who love God to love all others: daily, randomly, regularly, systematically, and even institutionally.

It is the tragic truth, though, that only the naïve and innocent can love and serve with pure abandon. Even then, those who are served by love need service that is appropriate to their circumstances. They need a knowing love and response-able service. Because of sin, "our age-old rebellion," none really are innocent, and love in service to the neighbor must therefore be all the more enabled by God's grace and resourced by human wisdom. Thus the church through the ages has rightly not only organized and re-organized itself to serve the neighbor, but has educated and re-educated itself on how best so to do given the challenges of its ever changing contexts. At various times in the life of the church, the degree of dramatic change in the cultural context has called for urgent and dramatic re-shaping of the church's

witness and service. For such a time, that for which the church stands and its public means for doing so need to be clear, simple, and coherent with its own and the Great Tradition. The church's convictions and the ways by which the convictions are expressed also must be adequate to the needs of the newly urgent time.

To serve in *this* time

This is such a time. Technologized globalization has brought the neighbor from afar to within our daily consciousness. She with her hijab and he with his aggressive secularity, yet both and all previously "others" appear to us as more regularly gracious and surprisingly "human" than stereotypes entertain. Today the parable of the Good Samaritan is far less an abstraction from another distant culture and far more a daily opportunity for concrete neighborliness. Close friends and real faces speaking from what only a generation ago were unknown value systems make real for us the challenges and opportunities of postmodernity: that there is no longer a "universally accepted" religious disposition or common story, but only one massive and diverse public market wherein values, meanings and commodities all are the stuff of campaigns to buy and vote.

To compound the challenge of this popular philosophical shift that has introduced the Areopagus (Acts 17:22ff) to this digitized day with even more pluralism than recognized by St. Paul, the literature of the educated "millennial" generation today redounds with nihilism and insignificance. Given the dour and connected global economy, as well as the over-abundance of "options" for self-meaning construction (from a surplus of fundamentalisms to a surplus of mere metaphors), life for too many today is experienced as if the presence of so much means the endurance and eternal meaning of nothing. How shall Christianity answer this but by way of beginning again with what only has "worked" in every previous urgent time: gospel-inspired acts of simple love that bring healing and comfort to the needy, the *diakonia* which for St. Francis was the preferred mode of proclamation? Postmodernity, religious and philosophical pluralism, multiculturalism, globalism, the complexification of life: all call for clearer and simpler forms (offices) of modeling service that can be understood more readily within and beyond the church.

The complexities of this post-modern time notwithstanding, there is clear understanding and even surprising agreement within and beyond the church as to what the office of "pastor" means. For Lutherans, this is expressed in the ordained Ministry of Word and Sacrament and is given its "constitutional" basis in the Augsburg Confession, particularly Articles 5 and 7. While the role of pastor through the ages has, of course, borne the character of *diakonia*, it is fair to say that the pastoral office by design emphasizes much more the formal presentation of *kerygma* and *eucharistia*.

There has not been such a clear understanding of *diakonia/service*, however, as a public office in the Lutheran tradition. While there is no explicit commendation for a ministry of service in the early Lutheran movement, Luther and the reformers did not shrink from advocating faith active in love to neighbor. Indeed, one can argue forcefully that much of Luther's energy for reform was driven precisely because the current practice of the church hierarchy inhibited the active love of neighbor precisely. In turn, this inhibition was and is the child of anxious selves; as Luther diagnosed it, salvation by "works" was so overwhelmingly burdensome to the individual conscience that one was never free from insecurity about one's own future.

But once faith was freed from this errant church system, on which most reforming energy was necessarily spent, Luther could see nothing more natural and right than a Christian serving one's neighbor. Put otherwise, Luther could not even imagine the "humanity" of anyone who would not care for his or her neighbor, even when directly threatened by a plague.[2] Luther did occasionally advocate for a formal diaconate to aid the poor, as well as to free priests of "the burden of temporal matters." But any following of his encouragement was as sporadic as the counsel itself.[3] Faith freed so to be active in love for neighbor and world was the Lutheran movement's first goal. If focus was therefore more necessary on

a clerical restructure so that evangelical preaching and care could abound, faith with reason (!) would find its own way to love the neighbor.

Very early with the Reformation, Lutheran ministry also became defined by two German words, *Pfarrer* (which primarily meant pastor-preacher) and then also by *Dienst* (service), which provided the content of the office (*Amt*). The two ways of seeing the one renewed reality of the ministerial office perhaps already showed, too, that it was difficult to distinguish public neighbor-care from the priestly liturgical role. In other Protestant experiments, as with John Calvin's project in Geneva, ministry was more explicated to include a formal role for *diakonia*. With Lutheranism, sometimes the pastoral office has assumed the role of service (mostly as circumstances demanded). The absence of a formalized public order for *diakonia* was noted and corrected in the work of pioneers like Theodore and Fredericke Fliedner in Kaiserwerth, Johannes Wichern in Hamburg, and Wilhelm Loehe in Neuendettelsau, all in Germany in the early 19th century. Deacons and deaconesses have a wonderful, though largely underappreciated, presence in Lutheranism since then, thanks especially to the founding work of John Passavant and Sister Elizabeth Fedde, among many others.[4] The ordained office of deacon belongs to the order of other Christian traditions, as with, for example, in the Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Icelandic Lutheran churches. It is noteworthy, too, that ecumenical full-communion partners have instituted the ordained diaconate. For the ELCA today, 20 years of Diaconal Ministers, along with the longer lived numbers of Associates in Ministry and the Deaconness communities, have demonstrated a growing, significant, but still small part of the public office representation of *diakonia*. These stand alongside and within the excellent many institutional ways that service to and for the neighbor has been carried forward, as with hospitals, rehabilitative and convalescent services, homeless shelters, orphanages, and the outstanding ministries of Lutheran Social Services.

Making it more "personal" and re-formed

These are all celebrated and needed forms of *diakonia*. They must be sustained and prospered. But they also, perhaps with some irony, do not convey the immediacy and *integral* necessity of service within the trifold rhythm of full Christian life. They are not even necessarily visible as acts from and within our congregational centers of Christian life. Too often they can be regarded only as para-church agencies deserving of a congregation's financial support (to be sure!), though not necessarily expressive of one's "personal" stake in their missions.   How might we better model, honor, and grow the daily life of the Christian with fulsome proclamation-praise-service? And—surely also an important matter—how might we honor and grow those already in the ELCA who serve in roles of *diakonia*, the unification of whom can mean more common and effective witness/service for them and a clearer, even evocative, opportunity of formal service for others in discernment about their own vocational futures?

The very nature of the church's mission, those already who serve formally in diaconal ministries in the ELCA and "the times" suggest that this church would do well to clarify and make more compelling the ways by which we serve the needs of God's world, always for *this* day. We are also free to do so in whatever ways prove adequate, as the history of the church has shown, even on "ad hoc" bases, as the circumstances of *diakonia's* formalization in Acts 6 show. Beyond ensuring that the Word is properly proclaimed and the sacraments rightly administered by way of the ordained Ministry to Word and Sacrament, the church must and is free to arrange its other ministries as best fits the day, as best evokes response in daily vocations, and as best sets example for how all the baptized can fulfill our vocations. There is nothing more theologically and confessionally right to do than this, if even the role of *diakonia* is less explicitly addressed in our confessions than in our theological premises.

There is enspirited genius already in the "constitution" of the Lutheran movement to be so. AC 5, 6, 7, and 28 taken as a group call for the Gospel to be proclaimed and structures freely adopted to serve the Gospel's advance. We infer, with the vast majority of the tradition, that so we may proclaim the Gospel more robustly and serve the neighbor, we are free to adopt new structures and ways of "performing" faith-freed-to-love that neither subtracts from what is essential to our confession nor adds new essentials to it.

We seek rather to perform our catholic faith with our ever-reforming Lutheran attitude. Indeed, we believe on theological grounds that we best "perform" God's character—that is, practice faithful discipleship—by sharpening the shape and emphasizing the content of public diaconal ministry.

Many write today about what is required for the church's renewal. This is not a new practice. All church history is composed of new voices singing variations on one song and of what happens when the song becomes unrecognizable. Sometimes creativity for its own sake turns the ear away, particularly when what is familiar and loved is not honored. Sometimes ancient and not so ancient rote does the same with what may be very familiar, but appears to have no bearing on one's present personal and public life. This inevitable dynamic of history is recognized and respected by the Lutheran movement's principle of *semper reformanda*, always reforming. We reform freely so to be true both to the Gospel and to present ears, eyes, mouths: all persons and all senses, wholly. We change—which is to reaffirm daily, for *this* day our baptismal covenant—so to perform our faith expressly for *this* day like no other day. We change to address and love *this* day because we really do want to face head-on "wearied religions" and a "wearied planet" and because we believe "God does not heal without human hands."[5] We believe down deep in our life in God that we are meant for neighbor-service, *diakonia*. And we need servants who are both neighbor-servants and exemplars, hands-on diaconal coaches to be with us and all fellow-sufferers wherever we are on the daily journey. For today, this age-old expression of Christian service may indeed look like something wholly in keeping with our history and yet emergent with a new vigor and face for this day.

Conclusion

We believe that the world, as well as this church, would be better served were a new unified diaconal ministry to stand alongside the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. It would be a ministry that is "flexible enough to offer a wide range of ministries and models for supporting the baptized in daily life."[6] Such a diaconal ministry is biblically rooted, historically informed, ecumenically related, and missionally driven. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America lives from a theological foundation that allows for a Ministry of Word and Service. More significantly, this foundation and the trajectory it has propelled in the ELCA's young life commend that we adopt and adapt such a ministry for the empowering of all who proclaim-give thanks-and serve as the right rhythm of our life together in God.

The text authored by the Rev. Dr. Duane Larson was adopted by the Word and Service Task Force.

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[1] Marc Lienhard, "Luther and the Beginnings of the Reformation," in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*. New York: Crossroad, 1988, 291ff.

[2] "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague (1527)," *Luther's Works*, 43: 119-38.

[3] "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," (1520), *Luther's Works, 36: 11-57.*

[4] For an excellent overview of the topic, see Susan Wilds McArver, "A History of the Diaconate," in Duane Larson (ed.), *From Word and Sacrament, Renewed Vision for Diaconal Ministry (ELCA: 1999).*

[5] See Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion, The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2012) 239.

[6] Stephen P. Bouman, *From the Parish for the Life of the World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000) 219.

Here a Deacon, There a Deacon, Everywhere a Deacon, Deacon
A Brief Sampling of Current Uses of the Role/Title "Deacon" in the ELCA and Beyond
Bishop Bill Gafkjen on behalf of the Transition & Communication Sub-Group + July 2014

This document was prepared for internal use in support of the work of the ELCA Word and Service Ministry Task Force. Three intentions its shape its content: (1) to briefly explore current uses of the term "deacon" in ELCA contexts, (2) to similarly explore current uses of the term in ecumenical, especially full communion partner, contexts, and (3) to provide a descriptive paragraph that highlights the distinctive characteristics of Rostered Deacons of the ELCA in reference to those uses and contexts.

A cursory exploration of synodical documents and congregational websites accompanied by conversation with a variety of folks across the church suggests that the word, title, and role of deacon is alive and well in the life of the church, albeit in a wide variety of expressions and tasks. The forms and levels of training and formation, as well as public or ecclesial recognition of this ministry, also vary greatly, from local/congregational to synodical, from informal recognition to a freestanding graduation ceremony, from volunteer service to churchwide rostering. The rites of initiation also vary. What follows is a small, simple sampling, not an exhaustive list, either in breadth or depth.

<u>ELCA Local, Synod, and Churchwide</u>

ELCA Deaconess. As a consecrated roster of the ELCA, "the Deaconess Community consists of theologically trained, professionally prepared women, called to ministry and service by congregations and synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada." Theological training of ELCA Deaconesses typically includes a Masters of Arts in Religion or similar degree. Deaconesses are engaged in intentional community with one another, are professionally trained for particular vocations, and serve under call from a congregation, synod council, ELCA church council, or other agent of the denomination with a focus on service ministry.

ELCA Diaconal Minister. As a consecrated roster of the ELCA, Diaconal Ministers offer a ministry of Word and service, sharing the hope of Christ, helping where there is need, and equipping others for healing and justice in the world. Diaconal Ministers hold a theological Masters Degree and training or degree work in a professionally focused area. Diaconal Ministers serve under call through agencies, institutions, synod councils, and traditional church programs as they build bridges between the church and the world.

Synodical or Parish Deacon. A number of ELCA synods have established some form of synodical deacon (e.g. Metro New York, Upper New York, Florida Bahamas, Metro Chicago). In most cases, synodical deacons are trained through a two-year program of study and formation (usually using an extra-synodical program like Diakonia*;* see description below). After completion of the course, participants are considered for certification by synod leadership and serve in congregations, most often their home congregation, engaging particular tasks under supervision and in partnership with the congregation's pastor. In most cases, the deacon's term of service is coterminous with that of the congregation's pastor. In some synods such deacons may serve on behalf of synod leadership at the conference or synodical level, primarily engaged in administration and non-sacramental ministry (e.g. preaching, liturgical leadership) for and with congregations. Most such deacons serve either as volunteers or under contract with a small stipend.

Congregational Deacon. Some ELCA congregations use the term "deacon" to indicate all elected members of the congregation's leadership council. In other congregations deacons are specific congregation council members who are tasked primarily with some aspect of the administration of the congregation or worship leadership. Some congregations use the term deacon for those lay people (whether elected or not) who assist in leading worship at or around the Table in some way (e.g. assisting ministers, communion servers, etc.). While some of these folks might receive training in partnership with other congregations, most are elected or appointed, trained, and installed by and for the local congregation.

Independent Lutheran Organizations

Lutheran Deaconess Association Deaconess/Deacon. A pan-Lutheran organization located in Valparaiso, IN, the LDA says that it "prepares women and men for ministries of service to those in need in the church and world, supports deaconesses and deacons in their various ministries, affirms the whole people of God in their own diaconal service, and assists the church in its diaconal mission." Upon completion of a non-degree program of coursework, community life, internship, and formation LDA deaconesses and deacons (a recent addition) are consecrated by the LDA community for their ministry in the world, which may occur through formalized call, employment, volunteer ministry, or in daily life. Those who are members of the ELCA and desire to be rostered typically also move through candidacy for commissioning as an Associate in Ministry or consecration as a Diaconal Minister.

Diakonia Program. Operating in one form or another and through various relationships with a number of synods and their leadership, the independent Diakonia program describes itself as "a two-year process of spiritual formation and theological education for baptized members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or anyone wishing in good faith to study these teachings…to provide each participant the opportunity to discover their God-given gifts, strengthen their faith and their abilities, and give them purpose within their own congregations, synods, and the church-wide body of Christ." Some synods use this program as the primary locus of education and formation for synodical deacons. Others in which the program operates do not have a formal relationship with it and most graduates (who sometimes call themselves deacon or deaconess) do not move through a process of synodical or other recognition for more public ministry. Rather, in these situations they either serve on a volunteer basis in their home congregations or simply continue to grow in their own daily discipleship.

Whatever the particular role or context, on the whole those who bear the title or role of deacon in the ELCA carry responsibility for some form of service ministry. Some also proclaim the Word through preaching and teaching in local settings. Very few deacons or deaconesses preside at Holy Communion or Holy Baptism, and then only under episcopal authorization. Many also carry the stated responsibility to empower, equip, and encourage the whole people of God for their own daily baptismal vocation of service to the neighbor and care of creation.

Deacon of the ELCA. This last responsibility of deacons, to empower and equip others, is a keystone for the emerging ministry of Deacons of the ELCA. Whatever their particular role or context – whether deeply engaged in proclamation and service in non-ecclesial contexts or serving in congregational or other "church" settings – every Deacon of the ELCA has a two-fold focus to serve the neighbor and to empower, equip and encourage the people of God for their daily baptismal vocation of service to the neighbor and care of creation. This ministry is understood to be distinct from, alongside, and in mutual complementarity with the ministries of Pastors of the ELCA. Consequently, the "new" unified Roster of Deacons of the ELCA consists of those who have been identified, formed, trained, called, and consecrated or ordained for ministries of Word and Service throughout the whole church through locally stewarded churchwide processes. Deacons of the ELCA are supported by and accountable to churchwide standards and commitments as well as the synodical and local accountabilities and support of the ministries they serve. Deacons of the ELCA have responsibility and opportunity for engagement in broader ecumenical ministerial and ecclesial relationships. Unlike all other "non-rostered" deacons in ELCA settings, the ministry and rostering of Deacons of the ELCA may be recognized and transferred across synods and institutions.

Deacons in a Troika of Ecumenical Full Communion Contexts

Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church has two formally defined orders of deacon: Transitional deacons and those whose lifelong call is to serve as deacon. The former, transitional deacons, are those who are preparing for ordination to "the presbyterate," or priesthood. The latter are more relevant to this discussion.

It is difficult to find a clear, universally applicable description of the role of ordained deacons in the Episcopal Church. This is due, in part, to the responsibility of each diocese to shape this role (and preparation for it) according to its needs. Nevertheless, there are some common foundations.

For example, the Canon to the Ordinary[1] of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis characterizes the role of deacons this way: "The mission of the deacon is to be a holy person who walks out of the church to deeply encounter the world at large, and then walks back in to explain to those inside what was discovered. The lay people and priests are seen more as the evangelists to the world, while the deacon is the conscience of the church, reminding us of our role as servants to those outside the doors."

Each diocese determines its own requirements for the formation and education of deacons. The most common current practice today is for deacons to be trained within the diocese over a multi-year period using volunteer instructors (both ordained and lay people), meeting on weekends and evenings.

Although deacons are not compensated for their ministry, they are considered clergy, voting in conventions as clergy, filling clergy positions on boards and commissions that have defined clergy and lay seats, being accountable to all clergy disciplinary canons. They are expected to dress when on duty in a clerical collar and to vest as a deacon at worship. Only priests and bishops can offer sacramental blessings and consecrate the elements of the Eucharist, but deacons are supposed to have the first priority over other clergy in reading the Gospel at a Eucharist, and also offer the dismissal at the end. By rubrics deacons are supposed to offer the Prayers of the People, but in practice many congregations prefer that a layperson offer the prayers. Otherwise, deacons are not supposed to take strong leadership roles in congregations except in social justice/outreach ministries.

The Episcopal canons dictate that once a deacon has been ordained "the Bishop, after consultation with the Deacon and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, may assign a Deacon to one or more congregations, other communities of faith or non-parochial ministries. Deacons assigned to a congregation or other community of faith act under the authority of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight in all matters concerning the congregation."

Presbyterian Church – USA. Following the development of Reformed ecclesiology, the Presbyterian Church – USA ordains persons to three ordered ministries: ministers, elders, and deacons. These three ministries represent two ecclesial functions: ministries of the Word performed by presbyters (pastors and elders) and ministries of service performed by deacons. Deacons are elected and ordained by and serve in a local congregation for particular, renewal terms as part of a board of deacons or as individual deacons elected to particular positions of responsibility. They lead the local church in its ministries of compassion (distributing aid, caring directly for the poor, the sick, refugees, and prisoners), and justice (working for equity in society). Deacons often also assume other duties as assigned by the congregation's session (council), including worship responsibilities like assisting with Holy Communion. Many deacons are also tasked with care of congregational members and their particular needs or work with new member welcome and incorporation.

According to the denomination's *Book of Order*, once deacons are ordained, they remain ordained even if not currently serving on the congregation's session or board of deacons. In fact, they remain so as long as they are active members of any congregation of the denomination, unless and until the ordination is revoked through disciplinary or other formal measures.

United Methodist Church. The United Methodist *Book of Discipline* (paragraph 303.2) says that "Men and women who respond to God's call to lead in service and to equip others for this ministry through teaching proclamation, and worship and who assist elders[2] in the administration of the sacraments are ordained deacon." Deacons are said to be called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifelong public ministry of Word and Service. This is expressed in teaching and proclaiming the Word and assisting elders in administration of (but not presiding at) Baptism and Eucharist in worship, forming and nurturing disciples,

conducting marriages and funerals, and both serving in the world and creating opportunities for other disciples to become aware of and to address the needs and hopes of the world.

United Methodist deacons may work primarily in congregations or they may work primarily in settings like hospitals, social service agencies, etc. When a deacon serves in a setting beyond the local congregation, such a deacon is to be given a "secondary" appointment by her or his bishop to a congregation where they "take missional responsibility for leading other Christians into ministries of service." In rare and carefully defined situations, a deacon may or may not be authorized by the bishop to preside at Holy Communion in the absence of an elder.

United Methodist Deacons are categorized as clergy. In addition to engaging a candidacy process, all deacons, like all elders, are required to complete a minimum of 24 semester hours of theological education at an approved seminary. This may or may not be part of a degree program.

The United Methodist Church once consecrated Diaconal Ministers, but no longer consecrates new ones. Diaconal ministers were understood to be laypeople who lead in service ministries. This lay ministry now falls under the church's office of home missioners and deaconesses.

Finally, A Brief Word About the Word Deacon and Gender

It is interesting to note that in nearly all of the above usages of the term "deacon," the word is used in a non-gender specific manner. In other words, "deacon" refers to both men and women who serve in that office. The most common exceptions appear to be where there are established communities that consist primarily or exclusively of women. In those cases, the term "deaconess" is used for women and, as in the case of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, "deacon" is employed for men as they have recently been added to the community. This appears to be the case, on the whole, across traditions, with some exceptions, of course.

The non-gender specific use of the term deacon appears to be the most common norm over time and geography. This practice appears to follow that of the apostle Paul, who, for example, does not use a feminine form in referring to "our sister Phoebe, a deacon [diakonon] of the church" in Romans 16:1.

It is also of interest to note that in many aspects of contemporary North American life, the use of feminine forms (which are sometimes referred to in linguistic literature as "diminutives") of many titles or roles has begun to disappear or to even be regarded as inapproprite. For example, those who travel by air are no longer tended to by "stewards" and "stewardesses," but by "flight attendants." Note also the increasingly frequent transition in public discourse from the use of "actor/actress" to "actor" and from "waiter/waitress" to "server."

Consequently, as it carries this consistent, persistent biblical, historical, ecclecial connection with the sort of servant (diakonia) ministry engaged by those who hold this office, the term "deacon" appears most appropriate for contemporary usage with a new unified roster of Word and Service in the ELCA which will include women and men alike. Use of the term and title "deaconess" will likely continue for those who have used it in the past and may also be used by some women who enter this roster in the future. This need not be cause for conflict or correction, but, rather, may be honored as yet another expression of the rich diversity of life and ministry in the Spirit and opportunity for conversation and clarity about this important role in the life of the church.

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A smattering of documents and sources consulted:

Colleagues in judicatory offices of full-communion denominations

Constitution and Canons, Episcopal Church -
https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/648

diakonia – http://www.thediakoniaprogram.org

ELCA Candidacy Manual and other documents –
http://www.elca.org/en/Our-Work/Leadership/Vocation-Become-a-Leader/Lay-Rosters

Episcopal Diocese of Kansas –
http://www.episcopal-ks.org/resources/documents/Deacon_guidelines_2008.pdf

Lutheran Deaconess Association members and web site – http://www.thelda.org

Upstate New York Synod, ELCA –
http://upstatenysynod.org/download/deacons/Brief%20Guide%20for%20Pastors%202-13.pdf

Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church, USA –
http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/ministers/ordination/

The Presbyterian Deacon: An Essential Guide by Earl S. Johnson, Jr.

United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry –
http://www.gbhem.org/clergy/deacons

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[1] Similar to a synodical Assistant to the Bishop in the ELCA.
[2] United Methodist elders correlate, essentially, to ELCA pastors.