



Report of the Executive for Administration

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (15.12.A10.) describe the responsibilities of the executive for administration in the following way:

The executive for administration shall be accountable to the presiding bishop and shall serve as chief administrator of the churchwide organization. The executive for administration shall be elected by the Church Council upon nomination of the presiding bishop and shall serve coterminous with the term of the presiding bishop. At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall:

- a. supervise the day-to-day functioning of the churchwide organization and coordinate the work of churchwide units;*
- b. coordinate the strategic planning and day-to-day staff activities within the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the functioning of the administrative team;*
- c. facilitate the interdependent functioning of churchwide units in the fulfillment of the responsibilities assigned to them;*
- d. develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget; and*
- e. provide staff services and documentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee and the Board Development Committee of the Church Council.*

The following is a summary report of the work of the churchwide organization for the 2017-2019 triennium. See reports provided in Section III of the Pre-Assembly Report for more detailed information regarding the work of the staff and units in the churchwide organization.

Strategic planning

Future Directions 2025

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

For the past triennium, the churchwide organization developed its operational plans to implement *Future Directions 2025*. The operational plans emphasized the two foci, congregational vitality and leadership, identified by the ELCA Church Council, the Conference of Bishops and the churchwide organization's administrative team. As implementation evolved over the triennium, the administrative team consulted with the Joint Leadership Table (executive committees of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops) and engaged the churchwide organization senior leaders and the separately incorporated ministries to assess and refine priorities.

In 2018, the churchwide organization looked more closely at its plans for 2019 and beyond. The administrative team consulted with the Joint Leadership Table, surveyed the full Church Council and Conference of Bishops, and met with the separately incorporated ministries and churchwide organization senior leaders. With the objective of long-term, faithful and multidimensional sustainability, several key decisions followed:

- Beginning in January 2018 at the recommendation adopted by the November 2017 Church Council, the ELCA Foundation (constitutionally known as the Endowment Fund of the ELCA) was established as a separately incorporated ministry.
- The ELCA World Hunger domestic program was redesigned. A major new feature of the program is "Big Dream Grants." These are grants ranging from \$10,00-\$75,000 envisioned as a one-time investment but may present multiyear program plans.
- A new Congregational Vitality team was created as a result of a recommendation from a guiding coalition that reviewed the work of new and renewing congregations.

- The work of Racial Justice Ministries was moved from the Domestic Mission unit to the Office of the Presiding Bishop in 2018 to create a deeper connection with the Theological Discernment team and Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations.
- A voluntary separation incentive program was offered to eligible employees. Eight employees elected to participate in the program.
- The health insurance program for employees was changed from Gold+ to Silver+.
- Travel budgets for 2019 were reduced between 10% and 20%.
- The Mission Advancement unit was restructured. The restructuring is part of plans to bring *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA* to a close on June 30, 2019, and position the churchwide organization for future development ministry, including a new fundraising model to support the development cost.

The churchwide organization annually reported the progress of the operational plan through the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council to the full council. See Section VI for the churchwide organization's 2018 operational plan report.

Churchwide organization budget

The 2017-2019 churchwide organization triennial budget adopted at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly did not include provisions for 2017 compensation and benefits increases. After review of income and expense projections post-assembly, a revised 2017 expenditure authorization was presented to the November 2016 meeting of the Church Council that included a 2% compensation pool for increases and was adopted.

The 2018 and 2019 expenditure authorizations reflected decreases for the current fund operating budget. The organization managed this decrease through realigning tasks, small decreases in grants and programs and leaving open some vacant positions.

Your churchwide organization closed 2018 fiscal year with a balance of income over expenses. We are grateful for the generosity of the members of this church.

The triennium budget presented at this 2019 Churchwide Assembly reflects changes in income resources and corresponding expenses. See the Report of the Treasurer and Exhibit E in Section II for more detailed information on the budget.

Other updates

GrantMaker, a new grant-writing software, was designed and implemented to better coordinate and track grant distribution and impact. The churchwide organization engaged in business continuity and risk management planning this past triennium, including training for responding to violence.

In 2018, the Rostered Women of Color Project was completed. More than 40 stories from rostered women of color are shared in *God's Faithfulness on the Journey*. These reflections are at elca.org/rwoc.

Conclusion

During this past triennium, I have had the privilege to serve as the staff resource person to several major initiatives, including the Future Directions Table and Theological Education Advisory Committee. I have also represented this church as a member of the Augusta Victoria Hospital Board, appointed by the Lutheran World Federation. I am thankful to work with your churchwide staff and for the opportunity to serve with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as one of her executive assistants with and on behalf of this church.

The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, *executive for administration and assistant to the presiding bishop*